



# Nutrition News

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## Brought to you by

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3. Diabetes Meal Planning by Jill Weisenberger, MS, RDN, CDE, CHWC, FAND
4. A Mediterranean Diet May Prevent Cognitive Decline by Lisa Andrews, MEd, RD, LD

## Holiday Party Tips:

*The holidays are full of parties and events that can make it hard to stick to a healthful eating pattern. Here are some tips to help make that easier!*

- **Plan Ahead:** Eat an apple, pear or other light snack before parties and festivities to curb hunger.
- **When You Contribute Food, Be Thoughtful:** Bring a nutritious holiday dish to the party. Try a plate of vegetables with a flavorful dip or a beautifully-arranged tray of fresh and dried fruits like the one pictured here.
- **Keep the Focus on the Holiday Itself:** Celebrate what the holidays are really about – spending time with family and friends. Find creative activities, play a game, or get active together instead of focusing solely on food.



## Winter Squash Salad

**Pull out all the stops this winter!**

### Ingredients:

6 cups arugula or raw spinach (pre-washed and ready to serve)

1 acorn or butternut squash, whole

1 cup toasted walnuts

1/2 cup diced sourdough bread (about 1 slice)

Dressing: Light spray of olive oil, balsamic vinegar to taste, cracked black pepper, chopped fresh parsley, small squeeze of lemon



### Directions:

Roast the acorn or butternut squash until it is tender. Cut it in half, remove the seeds and then remove the squash from the peel with a spoon. Allow to cool and dice into large 1-inch cubes. Place the arugula in a bowl with the toasted walnuts, squash, and bread. Toss lightly with the dressing ingredients and serve immediately.

### Nutrition Information

Each 2 cup serving: 447 calories, 26g fat, 3g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 126mg sodium, 50g carbohydrate,

12g fiber, 4g sugars, 11g protein.





## Winter Squash: Nutrient Powerhouse

By Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDE, CPT, CHWC

Both summer and winter squash are available year-round, but in the depths of winter, it feels good to turn on the oven and roast some squash or make it into a delicious, smooth-textured soup.

**A half cup serving of winter squash** on average contains 38 calories, 9 grams carbohydrate, 3 grams fiber, less than 1 gram fat and 1 gram protein.

Small and round, the **acorn squash** is often sliced in half and baked. It's a good source of potassium, magnesium, thiamin, and vitamin B6.

**Butternut squash's** beige-colored outer rind is softer than other types of squash, which makes butternut squash easier to peel. The flesh is often roasted or used in soups.  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup provides 25% of your daily vitamin C needs.

**Delicata squash** has a thinner, edible outer skin and a creamy flesh. You can roast them in the oven and top with a little cinnamon for a winter treat.

When cooked, the flesh of the **spaghetti squash** separates into spaghetti-like strands and can be used in place of pasta. It's lower in total calories and carbohydrate than other types of winter squash, with only 20 calories per  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup serving.



## Get to Know Squash

*There are several different varieties of winter squash, and what they all have in common is an **inedible, hard outer rind and large seeds.***

*Most winter squash have **orange-colored flesh,** which means that they're an especially rich source of **vitamin A and beta-carotene,** antioxidants that play an important role in healthy bones, vision, and a great immune system.*

# Eating Mediterranean

By Lisa Andrews, MEd, RD, LD

## Overcoming Hurdles

Following a Mediterranean eating patterns is often considered a wise idea, but there are a few common pitfalls that can make it difficult to implement in daily life. Try these tips to sidestep these traps and make the Mediterranean eating pattern work for you!



## Reduce Cost

- Buy seasonal fruits & veggies -- they're less expensive and more nutritious.
- Canned beans, canned tuna, and lentils are cheap protein sources.
- Choose stores that offer low prices without compromising food quality.

## Prioritize Nutrients

- Choose whole grains instead of refined grains for a nutrient and fiber boost.
- Limit your purchases of foods with empty calories.
- Stock up on frozen spinach, broccoli, and peppers for extra vitamin C.



## Boost Flavor

- Flavor your food with dried and fresh herbs like basil, oregano, and thyme.
- Add depth and spice to your meal with garlic.

## Defeat Diabetes with Legumes!

If you need one more reason to eat less meat and more beans, look no further. A recent study published in *Clinical Nutrition* looked at data from the PREDIMED study, research of over 3,000 subjects with elevated risk for heart disease, but without type 2 diabetes. The study found that after 4 years, **participants with the highest intake of legumes had a 35% reduction in risk for diabetes.**

The study was led by Jordi Salas-Salvadó from Rovira i Virgili University, University Hospital of Sant Joan de Reus, and Institute of Health Carlos III in Spain. The author maintains that substituting legumes, especially lentils, for other high-carbohydrate or high-fiber foods was linked with the reduction in risk, though more research is needed to support these conclusions. Salas-Salvadó and his research team reviewed diet histories of his subjects at the outset of the study and annually for four years. Incidence of type 2 diabetes was evaluated based on dietary intake. Compared to lowest intake of legumes (about 1 ½ servings per week), participants with the highest consumption (approximately 3 1/3 servings), had a 35% lower risk of getting type 2 diabetes.

The researchers compared types of legumes consumed and found that **lentils in particular were linked with a 33% reduction in diabetes risk.** This was observed with just one serving of lentils per week versus less than ½ serving. Chickpea consumption showed a smaller effect in lowering the risk of diabetes, while other

dried beans and peas showed no significant link. Substituting half a serving of legumes daily for half a serving of grains or high-protein foods like eggs or meat may aid in reducing risk for diabetes.

### Add More Legumes to Your Eating Pattern:

Here are some simple ways to add more legumes to your diet:

- Make lentil soup or chili
- Add cooked lentils to casseroles or salad
- Add chickpeas to soups or salads
- Make your own hummus from chickpeas or lentils

*By Lisa Andrews, MEd, RD, LD*

### Reference:

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