



Nutrition News

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Brought to you by:

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Let's Talk About Flavor!

You probably learned about the five different flavors we sense in foods: sweet, salty, sour, bitter, and umami (a savory, meaty flavor) in school. How we sense flavors is a complicated process that involves smell, taste buds and genetics.

Olfactory cells in our mouth and nose sense smells. Taste cells are clustered in taste buds throughout our mouth, tongues, and the backs of our throats. Taste combines both smell and flavor. Since flavor is the number one reason why we choose to eat certain foods, understanding flavor plays an important role in our health.

To boost the flavor of foods, use moderate amounts of healthy fats, fresh herbs, dried herbs, and spices.

By Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDE, CPT, CHWC



Holiday Beet Salad



Ingredients:

- 2 red beets, rinsed to remove the dirt
- 2 golden beets, rinsed to remove dirt
- 2 bunches of kale, rinsed and chopped without the stems
- 1 shallot, peeled and diced
- olive oil spray, cider vinegar
- 1 bunch rainbow carrots, peeled and sliced thin lengthwise
- 1/4 cup roasted and shelled pistachios
- 1 cup carrot or butternut squash puree
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- Garnish: radicchio leaves or red cabbage

Directions:

- Roast the beets in a roasting pan for 1 hour at 350 degrees. Remove from oven, allow to cool, then slip the beets out of their skins. Slice into 1/4-inch thick pieces.
- Meanwhile, peel and dice the shallot. Sauté in a little olive oil and then add the chopped rinsed kale. Add a big dash of cider vinegar. Cover and cook for 3 minutes.
- Assemble the salad close to serving time. Place the radicchio or red cabbage leaves in 6 little piles on a large platter. Fill each one with the cooked kale. Place the sliced beets in between each pile. Add the carrots and pistachios in the center.
- Place the butternut squash or carrot puree in the center. Top with pistachios. Spray with olive oil spray and cider vinegar.

Serves 6. Per 2 cup serving: 109 calories, 3g fat, 0g saturated fat, 0g trans-fat, 0mg cholesterol, 139 mg sodium, 19g carbohydrate, 5g fiber, 8g sugars, 5g protein .

Ginger Tea-Tail

These tomatoes add flavor and color to a holiday table.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups of water
- 1 cup soda water (0 calories)
- 2 hibiscus tea bags
- 4 pieces plain or candied ginger for garnish
- zest of 1 lemon



Directions:

Bring the water to a boil and pour over the tea bags. Allow to steep until room temperature. Discard the tea bags. Add the lemon zest. Chill until ready to serve.

To serve, place ice cubes in tall glasses. Divide the tea between the glasses. Add the soda water to fill up the glasses. Top with the candied ginger. Serve chilled as a holiday beverage or mocktail.



Chef's Tips:

You can experiment with different flavors and colors for the tea. The hibiscus tea has a beautiful color and refreshing flavor and it is found in any tea aisle of a grocery store.

Nutrition Information

Serves 4. Each 1 cup serving: 24 calories, 0g fat, 0g saturated fat, 0g trans-fat, 0mg cholesterol, 11mg sodium, 5g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 4g sugars, 0g protein.

Meet the Hot Air Fryer

By Judy Doherty, BS, PC II



I just got a hot air fryer, and wow, is it fantastic! Not only does it do what it promises, but it has a few pleasant surprises as well.

The first surprise was that you can make all kinds of entrees and side dishes in the hot air fryer, like kale chips, fries, crispy Brussels sprouts, fried fish, or chicken, and many other items. The fryer handles vegetables very well. And it can make a whole dinner if you are willing to add items and take them out while cooking. There was no issue with stopping and starting its process. My first whole dinner consisted of fried chicken and oven roasted potatoes. The potatoes were done before the chicken, so I just took them out a little sooner.

The next surprise was how quickly the air fryer cooked the sweet potato fries and how it did so much better than the oven! The sweet potato fries were puffy, crispy, and nearly identical to

their grease-fried counterparts, plus they contained zero grease. Cleanup was a breeze.

All I did was cut them up, throw them in the pot, and press the “chips” button. In 10 minutes, they were cooked perfectly and very crisp. This usually takes 45-60 minutes in a very hot oven.

The hot air fryer does a great job on many different kinds of vegetables. Small red potatoes came out very crispy on the outside while being soft and steamy on the inside.

Since the fryer cooks protein items very quickly (like oven fried chicken fingers) it is a good idea to allow your items to sit for a few minutes so that the protein will relax and not be tough.

There is almost no steam left in cooked items so there was not anything wrong with allowing things to sit after it shut itself off.

Is a Hot Air Fryer Right for You?

I shopped on Amazon to find an air fryer that had good reviews yet was small and reasonably priced. I always enjoy oven fried potatoes and think they are a nice accompaniment to many dishes. Usually you have to bake oven fries at a high temperature for 40 or more minutes. This makes the kitchen excessively hot and ties up the oven for a long time.

This specialized appliance can perform a specific cooking function without an abundance of attention. The fact that my fryer has a small countertop footprint and a timed system for cooking items is great. The non-stick pan that comes with it is also very easy to clean. I give it a thumbs up for healthy cooking.

Great Kitchen Resources

By Judy Doherty, BS, PC II

A Kitchen Refresh

I've been changing things up in my kitchen in the name of efficiency and delicious meals. Here are a few of my recent favorites. These would make fantastic holiday gifts or treats that you get for yourself to help make your New Year's resolutions even more fun. What's your favorite kitchen appliance?



Toaster

Recently, I got rid of my toaster oven in favor of a small toaster. I found that I was not using the toaster oven all that much anymore and it was hard to keep it clean. Now I have a small toaster that is very accurate for toast and veggie burger buns. It's super easy to clean and it takes up little room on the counter... plus it can be easily stored away.

Rice Cooker

When it comes to making rice, I have run the gamut of pressure cooker to instant pot and now I have happily settled down with a small rice cooker. It has so many advantages! First, it is much more than a rice cooker. It can cook oatmeal, quinoa, lentils, and just about anything you put in it as long as you get the ratio of water to grains correct. Second, it cooks everything unattended without boiling over or burning. Third, since my new rice cooker is small and has a nonstick pot, it is very fast and easy to use. And finally, it takes up very little space and I am using it so much that I am keeping it on the counter.



Cast Iron Skillet



I have made a lot of one-pan meals using my skillet. It's versatile in that it cooks lots of items perfectly and in various cooking settings (stove, oven, etc). This is my go-to for weeknight meals. It is important to season it. You can season it by brushing with oil and baking for an hour on top of a sheet tray. This helps prevent sticking and rusting.

Struggling with Healthy Eating?



Obesity and other consequences of a poor diet are not just affecting Americans. According to a recent study published in the Lancet, researchers from the Global Burden of Disease study have discovered 15 factors in 195 countries that could be improved through better diet. The study, which tracks trends in consumption, estimates that internationally, one in five deaths

(11 million) is linked with poor diet. A range of chronic illnesses around the world could be prevented with better eating patterns. According to the study, in 2017, diets with limited amounts of whole grains, fruit, nuts, and seeds and high intakes of trans fat, sugar, red, and processed meats were key causes of many deaths.

This research focuses on an urgent need for global collaboration on improving diets, including policies that enforce and encourage healthier diets. It highlights this need based on its investigation of the impact of poor diets on death and disease from cancers, cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes. Trends were tracked from 1990 to 2017.

In the past, population assessments of the health impact of poor diets has been difficult due to variations in dietary intake across nations. This study includes and evaluates data from epidemiological studies without the use of long-term randomized control trials, which are not always able to be completed in nutrition. Research was done to find associations between dietary factors and non-communicable diseases.

The research identified 15 dietary factors to evaluate -- diets low in fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts and seeds, milk, fiber, calcium, seafood omega-3-fatty acids polyunsaturated fats and diets containing high amounts of red meat, processed meat, sugar-sweetened beverages, trans fatty acids and sodium. Varying levels of data were available for each dietary element, which affects the statistical uncertainty of estimates. As an example, data on the number of people eating most of the dietary elements was available for most countries (95%), information for sodium estimates was available for only four countries.

Diets low in whole grains and fruit and diets high in sodium were responsible for over half of all diet-related deaths. Causes of these deaths were attributed to cardiovascular disease (10 million), 913,000 deaths from cancer, and nearly 339,000 deaths from type 2 diabetes. Deaths due to poor diet increased from 8 million in 1990, primarily due to the increase in population and the aging population.

For nearly every region of the world, the study authors discovered that consumption of 15 dietary elements were less than optimal. No region ate the desirable amount of all 15 dietary factors and not one dietary compound was consumed in the right amount by all 21 regions of the world.

By Lisa Andrews, Med, LD, RD