

June 2021



Nutrition NEWSLETTER



Inside:

2. Summer Lentil Bowl by Judy Doherty, BS, PC II
3. Vegetarian Donabe by Judy Doherty, BS, PC II
4. Positive Resolutions: Eat a Plant! by Cheryle Jones Syracuse, MS
5. What Are Processed Meats? by Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDCES, CPT, CHWC
6. Alternatives to Processed Meats by Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDCES, CPT, CHWC
7. Whole Grain Review by Cheryle Jones Syracuse, MS,
8. Weight Management and Your Brain by Jill Weisenberger, MS, RDN, CDCES, CHWC, FAND

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Summer Lentil Garden Bowl

Ingredients:

Lentil salad:

2 cups black lentils
2 tablespoons chopped parsley
1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
1 tsp olive oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

Squash salad:

1 medium zucchini
1 medium yellow squash
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sliced green onions
1 tsp olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
Cracked black pepper to taste
1 tablespoon fresh chopped basil (or dried)

Lettuce leaves for the base



Directions:

Cook the lentils in boiling water until tender, about 20-35 minutes. Drain and rinse. Place them in a mixing bowl and toss them together with the rest of the ingredients for the lentil salad.

Grate the squash into a mixing bowl. Toss together with the rest of the ingredients.

Place both salads in a bowl with a lettuce bed on the base. Serve immediately or refrigerate for later use.

Chef's Tips:

This bowl can be a great base for grilled chicken and fish, or it can remain vegetarian. It is great to serve it with more summer veggies like tomatoes and peppers.

Nutrition Facts:

Serves 4. Each 1.5 cups serving: 388 calories, 4g fat, 1g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 20mg sodium, 63g carbohydrate, 31g fiber, 6g sugars, 26g protein.

Donabe Family Style

A donabe is a Japanese clay pot. It is like a crockpot or Instapot in its culinary application. You can find one online or use a crockpot or a Dutch oven.

The idea is to cook a flavorful broth and add veggies, protein, and seasonings so you have a delicious one-pot meal. The soup is made quickly and served hot.

Ingredients:

- ❖ 2 cups vegetable broth
- ❖ 2 cups sliced mushrooms
- ❖ 1 tablespoon each of red pepper flakes, minced garlic, grated ginger
- ❖ 1 cup kale
- ❖ 1 cup broccoli
- ❖ ½ cup sliced red pepper
- ❖ ¼ cup sliced scallions
- ❖ 14-ounce package firm or extra firm tofu, sliced
- ❖ Toasted sesame seeds



Directions:

Bring the broth to a boil in a donabe over medium high heat. Add the mushrooms and lower the heat to a simmer. Cover with the lid and cook for 5 minutes or until the mushrooms are tender to impart their flavor and umami essence. Add the seasonings and vegetables. Cover again and simmer until the broccoli is tender, about 5 minutes. Add the tofu and sesame seeds and heat all together for about another 5 minutes.

Cook's notes:

Serve the donabe vegetable stew over brown rice or by itself. You can also add chicken if you don't like tofu.

Serves 4. Each 2 cups serving: 169 calories, 7g fat, 1g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 62mg sodium, 14g carbohydrate, 4g fiber, 3g sugars, 16g protein

Eat a Plant!

t's June and we're six months into our [Positive Resolution project](#). This month's resolution topic focuses on plant proteins and encourages everyone to eat a plant! This topic continues the themes from the past three months which were [whole grains](#), [fruits](#), and [vegetables](#). Adding plant proteins easily builds upon these earlier achievements. This veggie burger is an example!

According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, plant-based diets lead to reduced risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, some types of cancer, and obesity. More and more studies recommend we eat more plants and less animal products. A plant-based diet consists mainly of vegetables, fruits, grains, and legumes, with modest amounts of meat. This is good for us and good for the environment.



The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) shows the average American gets 46% of their protein intake from animals, 16% from dairy products, and 30% from plants. The main plant proteins currently eaten by Americans include yeast breads, seeds and nuts, beans, peas, legumes, potatoes, tortillas, beer, cookies, brownies, and ready-to-eat cereal.

This month's goal is to select nutritious plant-based protein choices. In addition to the protein in these plants, you also get fiber, probiotics, antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals. Good plant-based protein choices include tempeh, edamame, lentils, beans, quinoa, brown rice, tofu, peanut butter, and nuts.

Be mindful of what you're eating. Think about how and why you could add more nutrient-dense plant proteins to your meals. How can you make it a habit? Take the time to evaluate and reflect on this month's goal and what will work for you.

Here are some possible goals (pick a few to try or make some of your own).

- For one dinner this month, instead of a beef burger, try grilling a portabella mushroom or a veggie burger.
- Pack a nut butter and banana or apple sandwich in your lunch once a week.
- Make a pot of chili this month using beans instead of meat.
- Twice this month, when a recipe calls for ground beef, use lentils. Or try lentils as a main dish.
- Try a new recipe each week that includes a plant protein.
- Vow to experiment with at least one type of plant protein that is new to you such as tofu, tempeh ,or a commercially-made plant protein product.

Take one more step this month to a healthier lifestyle....eat a plant!

What Are Processed Meats?

We hear a lot about consuming fewer processed foods as a key strategy to improve health. The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans encourages choosing unprocessed meats instead of processed meats.

But just what are processed meats and why should we avoid them?

What are Processed Meats?

According to the Meat Institute, meat processing started centuries ago. Salting and smoking preserved meats and kept them safe to eat for longer periods of time in the days before people had refrigerators or freezers. While those practices made it possible to preserve meat for later use, today processed meats aren't a necessity. Yet they are often part of our daily or weekly food choices.

The American Institute for Cancer Research/World Cancer Research Fund expert report defines processed meat as meat preserved by smoking, curing, or salting, or by using chemical preservatives. Some processed meats are ready-to-cook such as breakfast sausages, kielbasa, hot dogs, or a marinated turkey breast or salmon filet. Other processed meats are ready-to-eat without cooking, such as bologna, salami, summer sausage, and other types of lunchmeat.

Why are Processed Meats Unhealthy?

A number of studies found links between processed meat and various forms of cancer, heart disease, and diabetes.

In 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified processed meats as a Group 1 carcinogen for human colorectal cancer which means that there is sufficient scientific evidence that processed meats cause cancer. Nitrates and nitrites added during processing are believed to damage the cells that line the colon and rectum, which can lead to cancer. Heterocyclic amines and polycyclic amines produced when meat is cooked at high temperatures during processing can also cause damage to these cells that in turn leads to cancer.

According to The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, nitrate is chemically reduced to nitrite in the curing process. Nitrite is then converted to nitric oxide when it reacts with the pigment in meat. This reaction stabilizes the color we associate with processed meat products like hot dogs, bacon, and ham. Nitrate also protects against the deadly bacteria *Clostridium botulinum* which causes botulism. Consuming nitrates and nitrites have been shown to damage DNA, which makes them carcinogenic.

By Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDCES, CPT, CHWC

Article and references at <https://foodandhealth.com/processed-meats-what-replace/>



How Much Processed Meat Can I Eat?



The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines suggests replacing processed meats with fresh seafood or poultry to decrease saturated fat and sodium.

The current consensus is to limit processed meat to no more than 1-2 times per month, and of course less often is healthier.

Even better, choose dried beans or peas such as lentils, chickpeas, kidney beans, or pinto beans instead of processed meat for increased sources of fiber in addition to lower sodium and no saturated fat. Soups and chile dishes are a way to eat more beans.

Our Tips:

- Choose least-processed meats as often as possible. For example, instead of chicken nuggets, roast chicken breast yourself or use an air fryer at home to make crunchy, unprocessed chicken nuggets.
- Don't be fooled by lower-fat processed meats such as chicken or turkey sausage, turkey bacon, or turkey hot dogs. These foods may be lower in fat, but they're still highly processed.
- Check the ingredient list on food labels for words that include nitrate, nitrite, cured, or salted which indicate the meat has been processed.
- Instead of adding sliced lunchmeat to a Chef's salad, opt for canned tuna or salmon, or sliced roast chicken or turkey.
- Order a grilled chicken sandwich or fresh fish tacos instead of a lunchmeat deli sandwich.
- Enjoy a breakfast sandwich with eggs, spinach, and tomato instead of sausage or bacon.
- If you enjoy a sandwich for lunch, choose a cheese sandwich with a variety of vegetables, tuna salad (make it yourself and add chopped vegetables), or the favorite peanut butter and jelly to avoid processed lunch meats.

By Lynn Grieger, RDN, CDCES, CPT, CHWC

Article and references at <https://foodandhealth.com/alternatives-to-processed-meats/>

WHOLE GRAIN REVIEW

The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend including more whole grains in an eating pattern while limiting refined grains. There are lots of different ways to approach this recommendation, and a review of basic grain terms is a great place to start!

Whole Grains: Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel -- the bran, the germ, and the endosperm. These contain nutrients, phytochemicals, and fiber.

Refined Grains: These grains have been milled. Processing removes one or more of the three key parts (bran, germ, or endosperm) of the grain. It also removes dietary fiber, iron, and B vitamins.

Enriched Grains: Enriched grains are milled or refined grains that have had some of their B vitamins added back in. Enriched products also have added folic acid, which is important for the prevention of neural tube birth defects.

Sprouted Whole Grains: To make sprouted whole grains, manufacturers allow the dormant seeds of the whole grains to sprout. Then the grains are used in breads and cereal products. This sprouting makes the grain's nutrients more bioavailable and easier to digest. There is currently no registered definition of what is "a sprouted grain." To get a whole grain health benefit, look for products labeled "sprouted whole grain."

Ancient Grains: These are grains that have been unchanged for several centuries. Heirloom varieties of common grains include black barley, red and black rice, and blue corn. Ancient grains can also be grains that may have been ignored or forgotten until recently such as: buckwheat, teff, millet, quinoa, and amaranth. These exotic grains can add variety to meals, but they're also more expensive.

Gluten-Free: The phrase "gluten-free" does not mean grain free. Many whole grains are naturally gluten-free. These include buckwheat, corn, popcorn, millet, oats, brown rice, quinoa, teff, and wild rice.

Whole Grain Stamp: The whole grain stamp was developed by the Whole Grains Council to help shoppers find whole grain products. This voluntary stamp appears on products that contain all whole grains or at least a whole grain component. Since the Whole Grains Council recommends eating 48 grams of whole grains every day, the numbers on these stamps can help.

Whole Grain Health Claim: Here is the main health claim approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which can appear on food packaging: "Diets rich in whole grains goods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers." This FDA-approved health claim can only be included on a food package if the food contains at least 51% whole grain ingredients and meets the other health elements outlined in the claim.

Misleading Label Claims: There are some claims on product packaging that indicate that an item is wholesome when it may not in fact be made entirely of whole grains. Keep an eye out for "stone ground," "honey wheat," "multi-grain," "whole wheat," "nine grain," or "organic grains." Careful label reading is needed.



WEIGHT MANAGEMENT & YOUR BRAIN

Losing weight is so hard. Keeping it off is even harder.

It turns out there are some strong biological reasons for this challenge. The brain regulates all of our eating in 3 ways.

1. Thanks to our ancestors, we have primitive pathways in the brain that drive our **hunger** and fullness to help us stay alive.
2. The **reward** centers in the brain make eating enjoyable.
3. Using the brain's **executive function**, we consciously try to decide what, when, and how much to eat.

Metabolism Gone Haywire:

"The disease of obesity causes overeating. Overeating does not cause the disease of obesity," explains Gabriel Smolarz, MD, MS, FACE, Diplomate of the American Board of Obesity Medicine, medical director of obesity for Novo Nordisk. With the disease of obesity, the primary problem is a mix up of signals in the brain. The hunger and fullness cues have gone awry. The brain tells the person to eat more even though the energy supply or fat stores in the body are sufficient. Cognitive skills, based in executive function, like calorie counting and portion control strategies, are no match for the primitive brain in the presence of an imbalance in the hunger and fullness centers, so weight gain occurs, he adds.

What's worse, after weight loss, the body tries to return to its higher previous weight as a survival mechanism. The new, smaller body is more efficient and burns fewer calories. Hormones become unbalanced. Ghrelin, the hunger hormone, increases, telling you to eat more. And GLP-1 and other fullness hormones decrease, so you don't get the message that it's time to stop eating. All of this makes weight management a constant tug-of-war.

There Are Solutions:

While losing weight and keeping it off are very difficult, they are not impossible tasks. First, keep in mind that small amounts of weight loss can have significant health benefits, such as decreased knee pain, lower blood pressure, less urinary incontinence, greater blood sugar control, and more. Losing as little as 5% of the starting weight -- say 10 pounds for someone weighing 200 pounds -- may improve health.

Second, you don't have to do it alone. Seek help from a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) to help you create a personalized food and lifestyle plan. If diet and exercise modifications don't achieve meaningful weight loss, make an appointment with a medical provider for diagnostic testing, evaluation, and advice about medicine and surgical interventions.

And keep trying. Most people with overweight and obesity try many times to lose weight alone. You can likely improve your results with professional help.

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