

NutritionWise

Winter Edition

Nicole Meadow, MPN, RD

'Tis The Season: To Be Healthful



The holiday season brings out many wonderful feelings: giving, sharing, love, kindness, warmth, friendship and many others. Whether you are celebrating Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa or another holiday this season, there are usually many festive meals associated with these celebrations. Try including some of the holiday "superfoods" into your menu this year to increase the nutrient density of your celebration: (1) **Cranberries:** an excellent source of antioxidants that have been shown to help reduce the risk of many chronic diseases; (2) **Sweet potatoes:** an excellent source of dietary fiber, beta-carotene and antioxidants. Try baking them instead of serving it with butter, sugar and marshmallows. (3) **Quinoa:** (pronounced keen-wa) this super-grain was a staple of the ancient Incas of South America. It is a gluten free grain that contains more protein than most other grains. Try the recipe on p2 for a healthful salad this holiday season. (Please see the article on p3 for more information on quinoa).

Holidays are a special time to celebrate and be with family and friends, but it does not mean that the celebration has to include overeating. Holiday meals can be upwards of 2000-3000 calories (that's more than most of us need in an entire day!) Many Americans gain a significant amount of weight between Thanksgiving and New Years. This can be avoided by following some simple guidelines. First, even though the holiday meal is a special one, do not treat it as a time to overeat.

Remember, you are a role model for your children and if they see you overeating at these times, they will think that it is OK for them to do the same. Do not come to the holiday table starving! Make sure to have a healthful breakfast and lunch before arriving for the holiday meal. When you are extremely hungry, you eat very fast and tend to overeat. Eat slowly... put your fork down every few bites... your brain will have time to catch up with your stomach and you will find that you are satisfied with less food! Drink plenty of water, sometimes we confuse thirst with hunger (and it is always important to stay hydrated). Fill your plate with salad and veggies first and then leave a small amount of space for higher calorie options. Do not deprive yourself of your favorite dishes, think in terms of moderation!

Enjoy your food, savor the flavors and the time spent making the various dishes. Always keep in mind (especially for desserts and sweets), the 3rd, 4th and 5th bite will not taste any better than the 1st and 2nd bite. If you are comfortably full, stop eating! There will always be delicious leftovers to eat the next day.

Inside This Edition

'Tis The Season To Be Healthful	p.1
Breakfast Boosts Brainpower	p.2
Kids in The Kitchen	p.2
Getting to Know Your Grains	p.3
What Exactly Are Trans Fats Anyway	p.3
Keep Moving, Cold Weather Fun	p.4
Coming up In March...NNM 2007!	p.4
Websites Worth the Surf	p.4

The information contained in this newsletter is not intended as a substitute for medical advice. See your physician and/or Registered Dietitian for individual health and/or dietary concerns.

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Breakfast Boosts Brainpower



Breakfast is an important part of a healthful diet, yet tends to be the meal that is most often neglected or skipped. Research has shown that children who eat breakfast perform better academically than children who do not eat breakfast. Why, you ask? Eating breakfast is very important for both the brain and the body first thing in the morning. Breakfast is the first time that the body has to replenish its stores of glucose (blood sugar- the brain's main source of fuel) after at least 8-10 hours of fasting! Having a meal in the morning jump starts your metabolism and gives your body the energy that it needs to start the day. For those who are not in the habit of eating breakfast, it takes a little time to develop the hunger pattern of becoming a "morning eater", but the health benefits are well worth the effort. Try having a small snack in the morning, for example a piece of fruit and a small serving of yogurt or a trans fat free cereal bar to stimulate your hunger. After a week or two you will see that you are hungry in the morning and will be able to eat breakfast... a crucial part of a healthful diet. For children, in order to help them get in the "breakfast mode", make sure they have enough time in the morning. Many children are not hungry right away and rushing puts pressure on eating. Offer your child 2-3 choices, which helps them feel in control of breakfast eating. Try having your child help prepare breakfast

or be a part of choosing breakfast foods while grocery shopping.

Try some of these ideas at breakfast:

- Whole grain cereal with nonfat milk and fruit
- Oatmeal with fruit
- Vegetable omelet with a slice of whole grain bread and fruit
- Whole grain toast or waffle with peanut butter (or soy nut butter) and bananas
- Breakfast quesadilla or burrito (whole grain tortillas filled with eggs and veggies)
- Smoothie (fresh fruit, yogurt, a teaspoon of wheatgerm or flaxseed oil blended together)

There is no rule that you have to have breakfast foods at breakfast. If your or your child's taste buds crave other types of foods in the morning try:

- A toasted whole grain English muffin with turkey or ham and a piece of fruit
- Vegetable pizza (on a whole grain English muffin or pita bread)
- Rice and beans
- Anything that appeals to your tastes (and is healthful)!

Kids In The Kitchen: Quinoa Salad

Ingredients:

-Dressing: 4 cloves garlic, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine vinegar, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp basil, juice of 1 lemon, salt and pepper to taste

-Salad: 4 cups cooked quinoa, 1 cup grated carrots, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped green onions, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped celery, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped mushrooms, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sunflower seeds*, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup slivered almonds*

Directions:

-Combine dressing ingredients and let stand for at least 10 minutes.

-Combine quinoa, veggies and seeds (omit for allergies and young children).

-Toss with dressing and serve

(Children can help rinse the quinoa, measure the liquids and veggies and stir the salad.)

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How Well Do YOU Know Your Grains???



The most recent 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans suggests "making half of your grains whole". This means having about three servings of whole grains per day! What exactly is a whole grain, you ask? Whole grains are made up of all parts of the grain- the bran (or the fiber-rich outer layer), the endosperm (the middle layer), and the germ (the nutrient-rich inner layer). Whole grains are an important part of a healthful diet because they contain essential vitamins and minerals and are a good source of complex carbohydrates needed to maintain energy levels. Whole grains are also a great source of both insoluble and soluble fiber. Soluble fiber plays a role in satiety and has also been shown to play a role in maintaining blood sugar levels and in decreasing blood cholesterol levels. Insoluble fiber helps the digestive system and maintains regularity.

Try some new whole grains in addition to the old favorites like brown rice, whole grain bread and oatmeal to make meals a bit more interesting and fun. **Barley:** is a good source of fiber, iron and B-vitamins. It can be used in soups and breads. **Buckwheat:** (kasha) is a gluten free grain high in protein, calcium, iron, B-vitamins and vitamin E. It can be used in soups, stuffing, casseroles, burgers, cereals. **Millet:** is a gluten free grain high in protein, iron, niacin and potassium. If you toast it lightly in a skillet before cooking, it will have delicious nutty flavor. It can be used in vegetable dishes, soups, cereals, breads. **Quinoa:** (pronounced keen-wa) is a gluten free grain high in protein, phosphorous, iron, B-vitamins. Quinoa must always be rinsed well before cooking to prevent a bitter flavor from a naturally occurring substance called saponin. You can try it as a substitute for rice. (Hint, for children who are a resistant to change, try mixing these new

grains in with the familiar grains like rice until their taste buds adjust.)

Cooking Tips For Grains

- In general, 1 cup of uncooked grain per 2 cups liquid.
- Most grains are cooked by adding the grain to boiling liquid, reducing to simmer, & allowing them to cook until tender/soft. Fluff with a fork when done.
- Try using a low sodium vegetable broth for additional flavor.
- Add pre-cooked beans or veggies just before serving to increase nutrient density.

What Are Trans Fats Anyway?

Our body needs sources of fat from our diet... fat supplies the body with energy, is a key part in cell membranes and helps keep many of our systems functioning properly. Fat also helps our body absorb the fat soluble vitamins (A, D, E and K). It is important to understand which fats are more healthful and how much we should have in a day. The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans suggests that a total daily fat intake of 20-35% of calories with most fats coming from sources of mono and polyunsaturated fats, like nuts, vegetable oils and fish. Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats play an important role in our health. They have been linked to promoting heart health by helping to lower cholesterol and reducing the risk of heart disease. **Trans** fats and saturated fats, on the other hand, have been shown to increase blood LDL cholesterol levels (the "bad" cholesterol) thereby increasing the risk of heart disease. Trans fats are produced when a liquid fat (like vegetable oil) is turned into a solid by adding hydrogen to it... this is what "partially hydrogenated vegetable oil" is! Trans fats are found in many processed foods (crackers, cookies, margarine, cakes, and other snack foods.) By selecting foods carefully, you can minimize your intake of trans and saturated fats thereby improving your health! Read food labels and select foods that are "trans-fat free" for better health.

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Keep Moving... Cold Weather Fun! Staying Active During The "Winter"

Staying active is important throughout the year... it is especially difficult when it gets a little chillier and when the holidays arrive. Schedules change, and so keeping up with our normal routines become more difficult. Keeping your body and mind healthy should be a priority! When it is a bit more brisk here in sunny southern California, it is actually the perfect time to do physical activity... go outside for a nice afternoon walk, strap on your rollerblades or take your bike for a spin. The goal is to be active for 60 minutes per day. When the rainy season hits, it gets a bit more difficult... luckily we only have a few rainy days each year! Try to have a plan for indoor activities, such as exercise tapes (there are fun ones out there: try yoga, pilates or kids kick boxing) or dancing, jump rope, treadmill, whatever you enjoy and are motivated to keep doing. Keep sedentary activities (TV, video games, computer) to a minimum- 2 hours per day, which is the American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendation. If kids are spending too much time doing sedentary activities, there is not enough time to get moving! It usually helps to make physical activity a family affair and find something that you can all do together. Physical activity is important for all of us at every stage in the life cycle and being a good role model is extremely important. If your children see that you value physical activity and that it is a part of your daily routine, then it will most likely become something that they also value and adopt as part of their daily routine.

Gearing Up for National Nutrition Month 2007

March is National Nutrition Month! I will be doing many exciting events in the community and dedicating a big portion of my next newsletter to the 2007 theme: 100% Fad Free! I will be doing a food drive in some of the various pediatricians' offices, so look out for the donation boxes and be prepared to donate what you are able to spare! It's going to be an exciting month...

Websites Worth the Surf...

- www.lafamilynetwork.com A group of leading family experts for LA families
- www.hotmomsclub.com Check out my monthly article in the Health and Fitness section!
- www.strollerstrides.com Fitness for mom and fun for baby. (There are new locations in the valley!)

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