

A Dash of Nutrition 2024



Dash Corpe is Registered Dietitian and nutritional coach, who volunteers as a menu advisor and nutrition educator at Hawai'i Meals on Wheels. In addition to helping certify our new kitchen partners, Dash contributes to our monthly client newsletter, writing articles and sharing tips about nutrition for our kūpuna clients. We are incredibly grateful for our partnership with Dash. Her expertise and knowledge of nutrition are invaluable to the kūpuna we serve.

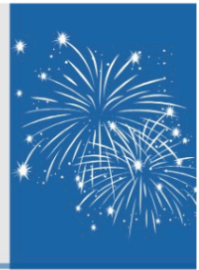
To learn more about Dash, visit adashofnutrition.com, or follow her on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).





HEALTHIEST DIETARY PATTERN: HAWAIIAN STYLE MEDITERRANEAN DIET

Nutrition | January 2024



The Mediterranean diet is a dietary pattern inspired by the eating habits of countries bordering the Mediterranean sea, such as Greece, Italy, and Spain. This pattern has been consistently voted to be one of the best diets in the world mainly because it is high in plant foods, low in processed foods and contains high fiber foods as well as many anti-inflammatory foods. Thankfully you do not need to live Greece to reap the rewards! You make it “Hawaiian Style” by simply picking out more healthy complex carbohydrates and vegetables and pair them with fish or lean proteins.

What are some of the benefits?

- 1. Reduced Chronic Diseases:** rich in heart-healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and olive oil. It emphasizes lean proteins like fish and poultry over red meat, and limits the consumption of processed and sugary foods. These dietary choices have been linked to a reduced risk of heart disease, lower levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol, and improved overall cardiovascular health. It has also been associated with a lower risk of type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancer (such as breast and colorectal cancer), and neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.
- 2. Improved Cognitive Function:** Research suggests that the Mediterranean diet may help preserve cognitive function and reduce the risk of cognitive decline and dementia. The combination of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats, and moderate amounts of fish and poultry provides essential nutrients that support brain health and reduce oxidative stress.
- 3. Longevity:** Studies have indicated that adhering to a Mediterranean diet is associated with increased longevity and a reduced risk of premature death. The diet's emphasis on plant-based foods, healthy fats, and moderate alcohol consumption (usually in the form of red wine) contributes to its positive impact on overall health and longevity.



Healthy Swaps



Helpful Tips When Ordering Food or Eating Out

Swap These

beef or poultry
vegetable oil
salt
mayo
granola bars
white rice
regular shoyu
ice cream
potato chips
soda

With These

fish, tofu, beans, or legumes
olive or avocado oil
herbs and spices
avocado
nuts and seeds
brown rice or quinoa
low sodium shoyu
low sugar greek yogurt
veggie or kale chips
fruity sparkling water

- Pick restaurants that serve a good amount of vegetables such as hot pot or Korean.
- Order water instead of a sugary drink
- Choose whole grains instead of refined grains
- Ask for a vinaigrette dressing instead of ranch or a high-fat dressing
- Order grilled foods instead of fried foods
- Pick lean protein like chicken/ fish or tofu
- Skip the complimentary bread or chips
- Make your plate colorful with a variety or vegetables

SOLUBLE FIBER FOR HEART HEALTH

Nutrition | February 2024



There are two different types of fiber found in plants: insoluble and soluble. Did you know they help our bodies in very different ways? Today, I will be focusing on soluble fiber and how it is beneficial for heart health. Soluble fiber forms a gel-like substance in your digestive system and binds to cholesterol preventing absorption into your bloodstream. It will actually trap cholesterol and remove it from your body thereby lowering LDL cholesterol. This reduces the plaques in your arteries and reduces risk for heart disease.

● TYPES OF SOLUBLE FIBER

1. Oats: are a great source of soluble fiber. They can be enjoyed as oatmeal or added to baked goods and smoothies.
2. Beans and legumes: Foods like lentils, chickpeas, and black beans are high in soluble fiber and can be incorporated into soups, chili, salads, and main dishes. Having a 3 bean side salad is an easy way to incorporate these with meals.
3. Flaxseeds/ Chia: are not only rich in soluble fiber but also provide healthy fats. Sprinkle ground flaxseeds on yogurt, oatmeal, or smoothies for an added fiber boost.
4. Brussels sprouts are a cruciferous vegetable that contains soluble fiber. Try roasting or sautéing them as a delicious side dish.
5. Apples: Apples are a convenient and tasty source of soluble fiber. Enjoy them as a snack or add them to salads and baked goods.
6. Pears: Pears are a juicy fruit that contains soluble fiber. Enjoy them as a snack or add them to salads and desserts.
7. Avocados: Avocados are a creamy fruit that is high in soluble fiber and healthy fats. Enjoy them sliced on toast, in salads, or as a base for dips and spreads.

● DID YOU KNOW?

Psyllium husk found in supplements such as Metamucil is a natural fiber supplement that is high in soluble fiber. It can be added to baked goods or mixed with water.



● SURPRISING BENEFITS

Soluble fiber isn't just great for heart health, it can do so much more!

- Improved gut health: Soluble fiber acts as a prebiotic, which improves the gut microbiome helping digestion.
- Blood sugar control: helps regulate blood sugar levels by slowing down the absorption of glucose into the bloodstream helping to reduce blood sugar spikes.
- Weight management: can contribute to feelings of fullness and satiety, which may help with weight management in larger doses
- Lowered risk of certain cancers: Some studies suggest that a high intake of soluble fiber may be associated with a reduced risk of colorectal cancer and other types of cancer, including breast and ovarian cancer.

FLAX SEEDS



QUESTIONS? CONTACT DASH CORPE, RD
DASH@ADASHOFNUTRITION.COM



NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

Nutrition | March 2024



National nutrition month is an annual event held in March to highlight the importance of making informed food choices and developing healthful eating habits. This year, the theme is **"Beyond the Table"** to address the farm to fork aspect of nutrition. It is important to think about where our food comes from and how we can minimize food waste so everyone has access to quality nutrition. We are lucky in Hawaii to be able to grow produce year round. More government programs are incentivizing schools, institutions and farmer's markets to make it easier for everyone to access our home grown products.

● A FEW TIPS TO HELP YOU REACH BEYOND THE TABLE:

Focus on a healthy eating routine:

If you are going to be out of the house running errands or attending appointments, it can be hard to eat regular meals or pick foods to support your health when at a restaurant.

Plan ahead to find restaurants that provide healthy foods you need. You can also bring your own food with you such as a snack or sandwich.

Seek the help of a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN). They are trained to help you explore ways to meet your nutrition goals while honoring your unique preferences. This can extend beyond the table into other areas of your life that may affect the food choices we make.

Learn what's involved in growing your food. Some easy ways to learn more include visiting a local farm or farmer's market and talk with the people who are growing and harvesting your food. Some farms have tours providing even more education. You can also try growing your own fruits or vegetables at home or even herbs which are even easier to grow.

● WHAT'S IN SEASON?

You'll find more of these in the farmer's markets and grocery stores:

- Mango
- Bittermelon
- Corn
- Eggplant
- Sweet Potato
- Taro



● HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS BETWEEN MEALS

- Peanut butter + whole wheat crackers
- Trail mix: whole grain cereal, unsalted nuts and some dried fruits.
- Greek yogurt or cottage cheese mixed with ranch powder for a veggie dip
- Apple with 1 tbsp peanut or almond butter
- Pita wedges with hummus
- Hardboiled egg with seasoning
- Tuna salad with whole wheat crackers
- Edamame
- Tomatoes with fresh mozzarella

QUESTIONS? CONTACT DASH CORPE, RD
DASH@ADASHOFNUTRITION.COM

HOW TO MAKE ANY MEAL NUTRIENT DENSE

Nutrition | April 2024



Nutrient-dense foods are a key part of a balanced diet. They are packed with vitamins, minerals, complex carbohydrates, lean protein, and healthy fats. They are known to provide more nutrients within relatively lower calories which makes them nutrient dense. This is in contrast to something like candy or soda that provides a lot more calories, but very little vitamins or minerals. Here are some strategies to help you include more nutrient-dense foods to your meals.

● NUTRIENT-DENSE FOODS:

1. Include more vegetables and fruits with your meals or snacks. Fruits and veggies offer more vitamins, minerals and plant compounds known to improve health. They are rich with fiber and hydration too which can help with digestion and managing weight.

- Add some fresh fruit to plain yogurt
- Add spinach, tomatoes, avocado or sprouts to a sandwich
- Include a salad with carrots, cucumber, tomato or other veggies with a meal
- Puree some vegetables and add to a soup for extra creaminess and nutrients
- Top your food with broccoli or veggie sprouts (found at most local stores now)



2. Choose whole grains such as brown rice, oatmeal, quinoa and whole-grain bread. These are packed with fiber, B vitamins, antioxidants and trace amounts of minerals.



- Use brown rice (or at least hapa rice) for added fiber and B vitamins which helps with metabolizing your food so you have more energy.
- Eat rolled or steel cut oats for a fiber boost that helps you lower cholesterol levels.
- Have whole grain bread- high in fiber and a lesser known nutrient, manganese that helps with metabolism, blood sugar regulation & calcium absorption.

3. Add healthy fats such as avocados, nuts, seeds, olive oil and fatty fish. These are all beneficial for heart health because they contain higher amounts of anti-inflammatory omega-3 fats.

- Add a small handful of nuts or seeds to salads
- Spread avocado on toast or a sandwich
- Make a chia seed pudding with fruit for a healthier dessert
- Choose salmon poke or sushi for more omega-3 fats
- Make a simple dressing with olive oil based salad dressing

Healthy Homemade Dressing

Mix the following in a jar and shake well. Store in the refrigerator 1 week:

- ½ cup olive oil
- 3 tbsp vinegar (like balsamic, red wine or white wine)
- 1 tbsp dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp honey or maple syrup
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ tsp salt
- black pepper



QUESTIONS? CONTACT DASH CORPE, RD
DASH@ADASHOFNUTRITION.COM



NUTRITION TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA



Nutrition | May 2024

People living with dementia are at higher risk of malnutrition for many reasons. Reduced appetite, increased activity, forgetfulness when it comes to eating and behavioral disturbances during meal time can all play a role. In fact, weight loss often precedes the onset of dementia diagnosis and then weight loss often continues during disease progression. For some forms of dementia, the regulation of appetite and metabolism in the brain may be affected which can contribute to malnutrition. So what can we do to support our loved ones when they start to lose weight?

● NUTRITION RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Start with a nutrition supplement (like Ensure) to prevent further weight loss (or to reduce rapid weight loss). Even if someone is overweight, they may still need a supplement to prevent rapid weight loss to help preserve lean muscle mass. There are many supplement choices on the market today but for someone who needs additional calories, look for a "meal replacement" option. This will include protein, fat and carbohydrates. If someone is overweight, you can try a protein shake instead which is lower in calories, but contains more protein to preserve lean muscle mass.



2. Optimize the meal environment. Older adults and people with dementia tend to eat better when they eat with others. It is built into our culture and makes it easier for them to enjoy meal times while unconsciously eating more than they would if they were alone. Make the environment as pleasant as possible with white plates, good utensils and a clean table. Try some finger foods if it's easier for them to eat vs using utensils. Try colorful foods to make it more visually appealing. Leave higher calorie snacks visible so they are more likely to eat between meals.

3. Include more high calorie foods. In today's environment, many of us are trying to find ways to eat healthier with less calories. This can be difficult on people with dementia because eating this way may cause them to lose weight. Let them eat more of their comfort foods to help them gain weight. Try adding more high calorie foods such as peanut butter, cheese, seeds, dried fruit, pesto or cream sauces, egg salad or tuna salad with mayo, ice cream or milkshakes. You can also simply fortify any food with some butter or olive oil to increase the calorie density of the foods they want to eat. Be creative!

High Calorie Balanced Milkshake

- 8oz milk of choice (whole, soy or Ripple are better choices)
- 1 scoop chocolate protein powder
- 1 small banana
- ½ cup fresh spinach
- 2 tbsp peanut butter
- ½ cup ice
- Drizzle with chocolate syrup



There are a lot of other ways to improve the nutritional status of a loved one with dementia. If they are struggling to gain weight and you need assistance, feel to reach out to me if you have questions.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT DASH CORPE, RD
DASH@ADASHOFNUTRITION.COM



LOWERING CHOLESTEROL WITH NUTRITION

Nutrition | June 2024

Cholesterol is necessary for making vitamins, building cells and making hormones, however excess cholesterol can create problems. Your liver makes cholesterol and is the biggest driver in your cholesterol levels. Fortunately, recent research has shown that dietary cholesterol found in eggs and shellfish don't actually impact our total cholesterol as much as we once thought. LDL cholesterol made in the liver is largely driven by saturated fat consumption and excess carbohydrate intake. This type of cholesterol can lead to big problems such as chest pain, stroke, heart attack and painful peripheral vascular disease. LDL tends to increase as we age, especially if you gain weight, have higher blood sugar, low thyroid hormone or kidney disease. I'll share some of the best dietary and lifestyle habits you can start incorporating now to help reduce your cholesterol (or help keep it in the normal range!).

● NUTRITION

Foods to include more of have high soluble fiber. This type of fiber soaks up cholesterol like a sponge! Include more of these:

- Beans (any type) - ½ cup
- Sprinkle flax or chia seeds into foods
- Oatmeal (especially steel cut)
- Soba noodles
- Brussels sprouts
- Sweet Potatoes
- Avocado
- Pear
- Apple
- Walnuts

● SLEEP

Research shows that people who get less than 6 hours sleep per night usually have higher LDL cholesterol levels. This is likely due to an increase in ghrelin (a hormone that makes us hungrier and crave heartier foods) which might have an impact on our weight and cholesterol levels.

It's also important to reduce certain foods that raise cholesterol levels such as fatty meats like chicken wings, chicken skin, short ribs, ribeye, fried foods, canned meats and high fat dairy foods. Basically you want to limit saturated fat because that will normally increase LDL further.

5 MINUTE OATMEAL

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 2 cups plain unsweetened almond milk (or similar)
- 1 medium banana
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon

Combine all ingredients in saucepan and heat over medium heat. Stir until desired thickness (about 3-5 minutes). Top with berries and chia seeds for extra fiber boost!



● EXERCISE

Exercise increases your HDL cholesterol which helps remove LDL from the bloodstream. At least 30 minutes 5 days per week of moderate intensity exercise can help keep your cardiovascular system healthy. This type of exercise means you have an elevated heart rate (like when you're walking up some stairs). Yet not so high that you are out of breath and can't talk.



● SUPPLEMENTS

Supplements that may help include **plant sterol/ stanols** that are similar in structure to cholesterol. These compete for absorption in your body and can contribute to reducing LDL by another 10-15%. There are some naturally found in plants, however it is difficult to eat enough of them to make a significant difference, so a supplement such as Cholest-off providing 2g per day can be helpful. If you don't eat enough foods that contain soluble fiber, try including a psyllium fiber supplement like Metamucil daily.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT DASH CORPE, RD
DASH@ADASHOFNUTRITION.COM



ARE FROZEN VEGETABLES HEALTHY?



Nutrition | July 2024

This month, I thought I'd share a question I get often; are frozen vegetables not as healthy as fresh ones? Most people I talk to feel that they are not eating healthy enough when they have frozen vegetables, but the truth is that in many cases, they contain even MORE nutrients than their fresh counterparts! There are some exceptions, however, and it mostly has to do with how far away our vegetables are grown. I'll highlight some key considerations when you are at the store picking up your next batch of produce.

● FRESHNESS ●

When manufacturers and growers make vegetables to be frozen, they can allow them to become fully ripened since they will be preserved right away. Once the vegetable is picked, it is then blanched which allows them to maintain flavor, texture and color. This also removes dirt and germs that might be on the produce. It is then packaged and doesn't require preservatives to maintain freshness. Freezing them soon after harvest preserves their nutritional content longer. In contrast, when fresh vegetables are grown far away, they need to be picked before they are fully ripened to survive the travel to Hawaii. Not only are there potentially less nutrients when they are picked early, but some of the nutrients may degrade during long travel while exposed to light and oxygen.

● SHELF LIFE

Frozen vegetables have a much longer shelf life allowing you to have them stored at home for those rushed weeknight meals. They are incredibly convenient and cost effective! It allows us to eat vegetables in and out of their typical growing season as well.

● COOKING

Frozen vegetables have a softer texture when cooked. This makes them ideal for soups, stews and casserole type dishes. If you would like to have them as a side dish, the best way to cook them is to do so quickly from frozen. Do not allow them to thaw first, since this will likely make them more mushy in texture. Try tossing them lightly in some olive oil and roast them in a 450 degree oven directly on a sheet pan to help remove moisture and allow some browning. Space them out well on the pan so they can release their moisture without making them soggy. This method works well for many frozen vegetables to help maintain their texture.

● TOP PICKS WHEN SHOPPING

Peas are so much more convenient frozen and taste great added to dishes like soups, pasta, curry and stews. Peas are also a high fiber vegetable making them a healthy choice. Frozen edamame is a quick snack - heat them up in the microwave and toss lightly with salt or sodium free seasoning. Fire roasted bell peppers and onions can be such a time saver to have on hand and allow you to throw together stir fries, burrito bowls, pasta dishes and more without having to bring out the cutting board. Butternut squash, taro and ulu are also all available in frozen forms which allows us to steam and eat them conveniently year round without the prep. I also love the Pura Vida brand of fire roasted mixed vegetables at Costco for a quick oven roasted side dish.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT DASH CORPE, RD
DASH@ADASHOFNUTRITION.COM



ANTI-INFLAMMATORY DIET FOR ARTHRITIS

Nutrition | August 2024



Arthritis involves inflammation which can lead to pain, swelling and stiffness of the joints. Chronic inflammation contributes to worsening of the joint damage over time. If you or anyone you know experiences this, then you may want to learn about some natural strategies to help reduce pain and improve quality of life as we age. An anti-inflammatory diet can help by reducing the inflammatory process caused by metabolism, immune responses and helps reduce oxidative stress caused by free radicals. The following are some helpful tips to get started!

ANTI-INFLAMMATORY FOODS TO INCREASE:

Fatty fish like salmon, tuna, sardines and mackerel. These are rich in omega-3 fatty acids (EPA/DHA) that reduce the inflammatory process in the body.

Nuts and seeds like walnuts, pistachios, almonds, pine nuts, chia seeds and flax seeds. These contain more monounsaturated fats that help to reduce inflammation.

Olive and avocado oil are both good choices since they are high in monounsaturated fats. Although you will want to be careful about the ones you buy. Light, oxygen and how long the bottle sits after opening can cause the oil to become rancid over time and reduce its health benefits. It's best to buy oil in an opaque container and in a size you will be able to finish before the expiration date. Always store in a cool, dark cabinet between uses.

Antioxidant-rich foods like fruits and vegetables reduce free radicals in our body. Free radicals are by-products of normal biological processes in our body. When free radicals form, they can damage cells in our body and create inflammation. Without enough antioxidants from fruits and vegetables, it can be difficult to keep inflammation low. Most people should eat at least 5 cups of fruits and vegetables per day, however if you are struggling with inflammation, then you may need more to help reduce it. Focus on high antioxidant plant foods like berries, pomegranate, cherries and dark leafy greens. All plant foods do contain antioxidants, so be sure to include a variety of the ones you enjoy as well!

FOODS TO REDUCE:

Ultra-processed foods with refined sugars and saturated or trans fats promote inflammation. These include:

Pastries or desserts that are packaged & shelf stable for longer periods of time.

Chips, fried foods, microwave popcorn and processed or canned meats.

Sugar-sweetened beverages and condiments with sugar and added salt.

Avoid larger amounts of these oils: corn, safflower, vegetable, peanut and hydrogenated oils



SPICES TO ADD:



Tumeric contains curcumin which is a powerful anti-inflammatory. You can make into a golden milk with a little black pepper or purchase a reputable supplement.

Ginger reduces inflammation and pain.

Garlic contains allicin which is anti-inflammatory. After you slice garlic, let it sit before using in cooking and more allicin will be made with exposure to oxygen.

ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH IRON?



Nutrition | September 2024



Iron deficiency anemia affects approximately 20% of seniors in the United States. The dietary preferences in Hawaii for softer foods such as fish, rice and noodles over red meat may increase the risk for iron deficiency. Individuals frequently turn to iron supplements to elevate their iron levels; however, this can lead to constipation. A viable alternative could be incorporating iron-rich foods into their diets to circumvent this concern entirely.

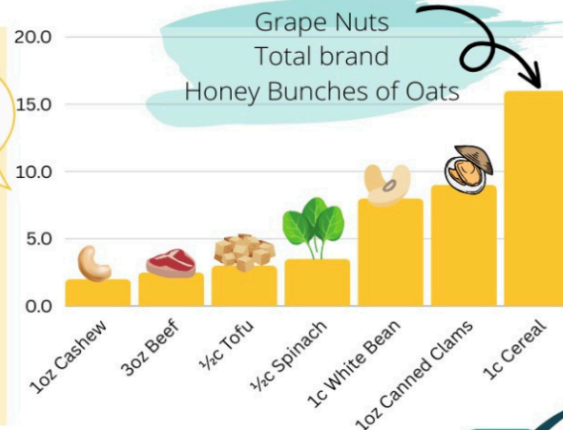
Here are some tips to help you maintain optimal iron levels even if you are not a meat eater.

Side Effects of Iron Deficiency:

↑
Dizziness
Fatigue
Increased number of falls
Risk of developing dementia

↓
Cognitive performance
Physical abilities
Ability to transport oxygen in the body

Older adults
need
8mg/day



Tips for Boosting Iron Levels...

- Have an iron-fortified cereal for breakfast --check the nutrition label before you buy.
- Eat lean red meat 1-2x per week - this contains heme iron which is much easier for your body to digest and absorb.
- Pick out canned clams for a pasta, soup or add to stir fries. Check the label since not all canned clams contain high amounts. Chicken of the Sea brand is a great source.
- Add steamed spinach to meals: mix into soups, stews, spaghetti, stir fries and even blend it into a smoothie!
- Pair high iron foods with vitamin C foods like citrus, tomatoes or strawberries to increase absorption of iron in your digestive tract. This can also be done with iron supplements if you need to take them.

A Note about Antacids:

People who take antacids to relieve heart burn are also at risk for developing iron deficiency. Calcium carbonate and sodium bicarb (such as Tums, Rolaids and Alka Seltzer) decrease the absorption of iron from foods. Once a day heart burn medications such as omeprazole do not decrease absorption of iron.

If you need to take antacids, try to limit them if possible when you eat iron-rich foods to boost iron levels.

If you need an iron supplement:

Try Iron (or ferrous) Bisglycinate. This absorbs better and reduces risk for constipation. Another common name is "Easy Iron".

QUESTIONS? CONTACT DASH CORPE, RD
DASH@ADASHOFNUTRITION.COM



ARE SUGAR SUBSTITUTES SAFE? & LOW SUGAR TREAT ALTERNATIVES

Nutrition | October 2024



October signals the beginning of the holidays and often that comes with a lot of treats. As we get older, it can become more difficult to manage blood sugar, so I thought I'd share some information about sugar substitutes and some healthier treats!



Which sugar substitute is right for you?



Stevia, derived from the rebaudiana bertonii plant, is a sugar-free sweetener that tastes sweet but does not affect blood sugar levels. It is digested in the small intestine and processed by the liver. Stevia even has some health benefits including lower blood pressure and reduced kidney damage, though some may experience a slight metallic aftertaste making its taste less desirable. This is a good choice for a sugar substitute if it tastes good to you.

Monk Fruit is a new natural alternative on the market and is extracted from Luo Han Guo or "Buddha fruit". It tastes sweet and may even serve as an antioxidant. It has been used in Chinese medicine for centuries for its potential health benefits. It can mildly increase insulin helping to reduce blood sugar levels and has anti-inflammatory properties. Definitely worth trying!

Splenda is not digested in the small intestine and instead most of it passes through our digestive tract. For this reason, there have been some questions about how it impacts our gut microbiome and risk for disease. Some people report increased gas, bloating and digestive issues with regular consumption. For this reason, you may consider adjusting to a different sugar substitute until more information is known about its effects.

Aspartame has received a lot of scrutiny over the past. According to the World Health Organization, there is limited evidence showing negative side effects. Particularly in amounts we normally consume. At very high doses (like 9-12 cans of diet soda per day), the risk for liver cancer can increase. Due to the overwhelming amount of research on aspartame, it is still generally recognized as safe and doesn't raise major red flags at this time when consumed in smaller amounts.

Some healthier lower sugar treats!



Products that can help you satisfy your craving for sweets without causing super high blood sugar spikes.

- UNREAL peanut butter cups
- Yasso greek yogurt ice cream bar
- Clio greek yogurt bar
- Atkins caramel almond clusters and bars
- Quest cookie
- Duncan Hines Keto cakes and cookie mixes
- Halo Top ice cream and brownies
- Smart Sweets gummie candy

Low Carb Peanut Butter Chocolate

Apple Dessert:

Slice an apple like a chip and spread 1 tbsp peanut butter, 1 tbsp sugar-free chocolate (melted slowly in the microwave), 1 tbsp crushed nuts and top with a pinch of flaky salt or coconut flakes. Enjoy right away or refrigerate for a firmer texture.



QUESTIONS? CONTACT DASH CORPE, RD
DASH@ADASHOFNUTRITION.COM



NATIONAL DIABETES MONTH

Nutrition | November 2024



November is National Diabetes Awareness Month, and with World Diabetes Day on November 14th, there's no better time to focus on how to manage diabetes through nutrition. Living with diabetes requires a thoughtful approach to what you eat, how much you eat, and understanding the impact of different foods on your blood sugar levels. For us in Hawaii, that means making mindful choices while still enjoying the flavors and traditions that make local cuisine so unique. This month, we'll dive into how balanced meals, proper portion sizes, and carb counting can help you take control of your diabetes.

The Power of Balanced Meals:



A balanced meal contains a mix of protein, healthy fats, carbohydrates, and fiber. Together, these components help keep blood sugar levels stable, as they are digested at different rates and have varying impacts on your body. Eating carbohydrates without protein or vegetables can cause higher blood sugar spikes. Also, try to eat your carbs last in the meal for better control.

Protein (found in foods like fish, chicken, tofu, and beans) helps keep you full longer and has minimal effect on blood sugar.

Healthy fats (such as avocados, nuts, seeds and olive oil) slow down digestion and provide lasting energy.

Carbohydrates (like bread, rice, fruits, and starchy vegetables) are the body's primary source of energy, but they have the greatest impact on blood sugar. Pick whole grain more often since the fiber slows down how fast they are digested. Sourdough bread can also be a healthier alternative.

Fiber (present in whole grains, vegetables, and beans) helps slow the absorption of sugar, promoting more stable blood sugar levels. Adding more of these foods to meals can help!

In Hawaii, balancing meals can include enjoying traditional foods like laulau or poke bowls with brown rice and vegetables, or grilled fish served with a side of poi or Okinawan sweet potatoes and vegetables. The goal is to make mindful choices without missing the foods you love.

Managing Portion Sizes is Key:

Carb counting is an essential skill for managing diabetes. Carbohydrates directly impact blood sugar levels, so understanding how much you're consuming can help you make adjustments to maintain stable levels. You don't have to eliminate all carbohydrates, just try reducing them!

To get started with carb counting:



- **Learn to read nutrition labels** for serving size and total carbohydrates --look at the gram amounts.
- **Aim for consistency** in the amount of carbs you eat at each meal to prevent large spikes or dips in blood sugar.
- **Track carbs** - usually about ½ cup of most cooked starches and fruits are 15-20 grams of carbohydrates. Most people need to limit their carbs to 45 grams per meal or less. Using a measuring cup can be very helpful to control portion sizes.



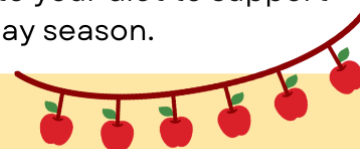
SUPPORT YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM WITH NUTRITION

Nutrition | December 2024



Winter is here, and with it comes holiday travel, cooler temperatures, shorter days, and the inevitable increase in seasonal bugs. One of the best ways to keep your body resilient is by paying attention to what you eat. A balanced, nutrient-rich diet can be a great defense to help you fend off seasonal bugs. Start incorporating these foods into your diet to support your immune system so you can feel your best this holiday season.

Foods & Nutrients to *Eat More of*:



- **Vitamin C:** A well-known nutrient that helps maintain your body's resilience by supporting the immune cell's ability to fight bacteria and reduce oxidative stress. You'll find it in oranges, grapefruits, kiwi, papaya, bell peppers, and cruciferous vegetables like broccoli. Raw forms of these foods contain the highest amount, since heat can degrade vitamin C.
- **Vitamin D:** With less sunlight during winter, getting enough vitamin D can be challenging. Fatty fish like salmon and sardines, fortified dairy or plant-based milks, and egg yolks are good sources.
- **Zinc:** This mineral supports the body's natural defense mechanisms. Foods like lean meats, shellfish (especially oysters!), chickpeas, nuts, and pumpkin seeds are all rich in zinc.
- **Antioxidants:** These help combat oxidative stress and support overall health. Think of colorful berries, nuts, and leafy greens as your go-to antioxidant-rich foods. Broccoli and other sprouts are also very high in antioxidants and can be added to most meals.
- **Healthy Fats:** Omega-3 fatty acids are known to help reduce inflammation, which can support overall health. Include foods like walnuts, chia seeds, flaxseeds, olive oil, and fatty fish in your meals when possible.

Leafy Greens: Superfood for Wellness

Dark, leafy greens are some of the most nutrient-dense foods you can eat. They're high in vitamins A, C, and K, along with antioxidants and fiber—all of which help maintain overall health.

Kale: Use kale in hearty winter salads, soups, or baked as crispy kale chips.

Spinach: versatile—toss it in smoothies, layer it in casseroles, or sauté it with garlic as a quick side dish.

Mustard Greens: These sturdy greens are great in stews, stir-fries, or simply sautéed with a splash of apple cider vinegar for a winter side.

Healthy Meal + Snack Ideas:

- **Fresh Papaya with Greek Yogurt** topped with chopped macadamia nuts or walnuts
- **Winter Kale Salad** with pomegranate, pumpkin seeds and goat cheese
- **Carrot Ginger Soup** with onions, garlic, veggie broth blended with a swirl of coconut milk
- **Dark chocolate covered berries**
- **Honey Nut Clusters** - made with raw nuts, pumpkin seeds, honey and sea salt. Bake together on low heat until toasted.
- **Trail mix** with dried mango