

Maximize Nutrition while Limiting Sodium

When monitoring the amount of sodium in a nutritious diet it's important to understand the recommended limits. The dietary guidelines suggest no more than 2300 mg of sodium per day. Some may want to follow a lower recommendation of 1500 mg/day suggested by the American Heart Association. Here are a few tips to limit sodium intake:

- Try using fresh/frozen produce over canned goods which tend to be loaded with sodium
- Read food labels. These will show you the amount of sodium *and* the daily value %
- Use caution when selecting often high-sodium items like cured meats or frozen/processed meals
- Explore and experiment with a wide variety of spices other than salt
- Preparing your own meals can be a fun way to avoid high-sodium foods typically found when eating out

In addition to being mindful of sodium content when selecting what to eat, it's also important to strive for a balanced diet that is full of nutritious foods. This includes plenty of colorful fruits and veggies, protein options, healthy fats, and dairy products.

Lemon Pepper Chicken with Sautéed Vegetables

2 servings

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1½ lemons
- 1 medium zucchini
- 1 medium yellow squash
*frozen veggies can be substituted
- 1-2 chicken breasts (depending on size)
- 1 Tbsp Italian seasoning
- ½ tsp black pepper



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F
2. Cut the ends off the zucchini and squash and quarter them lengthwise. Then cut each quarter into ½ inch cubes

3. Coat a sheet pan with ½ Tbsp olive oil and place the chicken on it. Squeeze lemon juice over the chicken and season with pepper.
4. Bake until the internal temperature of the chicken is 165°F (approximately 20 minutes)
5. While chicken cooks, put the remaining oil in a medium skillet on medium heat. When hot toss in the veggies and cook covered for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Zucchini and squash should be fork tender when done.
6. Serve hot and refrigerate leftovers

Recipe created by: Tom Paine

*Any preferred vegetables are easily substituted into this recipe.

**To bulk the meal up a bit consider serving with a side of brown rice or quinoa.

Nutrient-Dense, Low-Sodium Eating Patterns

The DASH diet is a nutrient-dense eating pattern that limits sodium. This is one of the most healthful diets because it focuses on a healthy balance from all the food groups. Making one's meals nutrient-dense, while reducing sodium intake. It is advised to consume fruits and vegetables which are naturally low in sodium or sodium free, as well as whole grains, lean protein, low-fat dairy, nuts, seeds, and healthy oils.

Limiting sodium to less than 2300 mg per day (1 tsp) is advised. This decreases one's risk of developing high blood pressure. Therefore, a low-sodium diet contributes to fewer cases of heart disease and stroke – both of which are significant risks when consuming an unbalanced diet that contains too much sodium.

Vegetable and Black Bean Pasta:

Serves 2



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Ingredients:

- 3 oz uncooked whole wheat fettuccine noodles
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 2/3 cup baby portobello mushrooms, sliced
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 5 oz low sodium black beans, rinsed and drained (1/3 standard can)
- 5 oz diced tomatoes, undrained (*use "no salt added" style or fresh tomatoes*)
- ½ tsp dried rosemary
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- 2/3 cup fresh baby spinach

Directions

1. Cook fettuccine according to package directions.
2. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms; cook and stir 4-6 mins. Add garlic; cook 1 more min.
3. Stir in black beans, tomatoes, rosemary and oregano; heat through. Stir in spinach until wilted.
4. Drain fettuccine; add to vegetable and bean mixture. Toss to combine and serve immediately.

Recipe adapted by Nicole Tellock from Ashlynn Azar

Nutrient Dense and Low Sodium Foods

Nutrient dense foods are foods that are high in nutrients, but relatively low in calories. They contain vitamins, minerals, complex carbohydrates, lean protein, and healthy fats. Nutrient dense foods include:

- Kale, broccoli, and spinach
- Wheat, corn, quinoa, and barley in the form of breads and cereals
- Blueberries, strawberries, and pomegranates
- Salmon and sardines
- Yogurt and milk
- Lean meats
- Mushrooms, sweet potatoes, and bell peppers

Frozen Fruit Smoothies: Serves 2



Photo Courtesy of Pixabay.com

Ingredients:

- 1 frozen banana, peeled & sliced
- 2 cups frozen strawberries, raspberries, or cherries
- 1 cup milk
- ½ cup plain or vanilla yogurt
- ½ cup freshly squeezed orange juice
- 2 to 3 tablespoons honey or to taste

Directions

1. Put all the ingredients in a blender and process until smooth. Pour into glasses and serve.

Tip: For non-dairy smoothies, substitute 1 cup rice milk for the milk and yogurt or use soy yogurt or milk instead of dairy.

This smoothie allows for many different flavors while still getting nutrients and being low in sodium. This recipe includes bananas, strawberries, raspberries, cherries, and dairy products making it nutrient dense, tasty, and great for the body.

Recipe from: Foodnetwork.com

What Does “Nutrient Dense” Mean?

“Nutrient dense” foods are high in vitamins, minerals, compared to their calories. Eating foods that are nutrient dense provides the body with more energy and all the “good stuff.”

As people age, it is especially important to eat more nutrient dense foods than those that do not have a lot of nutritional value.

Aging affects the body in many ways especially sensory characteristics. Because many foods may no longer taste the same, fueling the body with nutrient dense foods is important to a healthy and happy body.

TOMATO STACKS: Serves 4



Photo Courtesy of Pixabay.com

Ingredients:

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 2 small, assorted color bell peppers
- 1 large, minced garlic clove
- 5 teaspoons reduced-fat sour cream
- 1 large egg white
- ¾ cup panko breadcrumbs (or make your own)
- 4 medium heirloom tomatoes
- ¼ cup baby arugula
- 1 teaspoon horseradish sauce
- 1 teaspoon pepper

Directions

1. Chop the bell peppers.
2. Heat the oil in a small nonstick skillet over medium-high heat.
3. Cook the peppers and garlic, stirring until soft (about 4 minutes). Transfer to a bowl.
4. Combine sour cream and horseradish sauce and chill until ready to use.
5. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray. Place egg white and panko into separate small bowls. Dip tomatoes into egg white and coat in panko. Place them on the baking sheet. Bake for 3-5 minutes or until the panko is golden. (turn every minute)
6. Let tomatoes cool.
7. Alternate breaded and unbreaded tomatoes with 1 teaspoon pepper, ½ teaspoon horseradish sauce, and a few arugula leaves to create 4 stacks.

Recipe Adapted from: Lori Powell