



Nutrition News

Feeding the world with knowledge

Celebrating
National
Fresh Fruit
and
Vegetables
Month!



June 2017

Food is Medicine

How Food Can Manage or Prevent Chronic Illness



Do you have a food budget? Does it include your medications? We have heard healthy eating is too expensive, but when you take into consideration how nutrition could prevent you from needing medications or going to endless chronic illness doctors, all of a sudden it isn't so costly.

The nutritional makeup of fruits and vegetables, in particular potassium, has been significantly linked to lowering blood pressure, which affects one billion people worldwide. Potassium and sodium are electrolytes that simultaneously work to promote proper fluid balance. Potassium's claim to fame is contracting the heart. Sodium helps control muscle contractions. Yet, the Western diet is plagued with excess sodium and that by reducing the amount of sodium in our diet, we can reduce our risk for hypertension—or so we thought.

A recent article from the *American Journal of Physiology-Endocrinology* found that increasing the dietary potassium is just as important, if not more so, than simply reducing the sodium in our diet. The Framingham Offspring Study would also agree. The 2,600 participants in this study followed a less than 2,500 milligrams of sodium per day diet, yet did not see long term positive effect on blood pressure. Interestingly enough, those that had a higher intake of potassium of approximately 3,211 milligrams and 3,717 milligrams of sodium combined, had lower blood pressure over time.

Scratching your head over what are the current nutritional recommendations for these nutrients? One teaspoon, or 2,300 milligrams per day is recommended for sodium while dietary potassium is 4,700 milligrams or more commonly seen as 4.7 grams. So, what does that look like? You do not need to go looking for sodium-laden foods, as the majority of all food products that we eat already contain sodium, whether naturally or added. As for potassium, this can easily be achieved by enjoying a 3 cup spinach salad with 3 ounces of salmon, ½ cup dried apricots,

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Featured Recipe



- [Berry Sorbet](#)

1 cup of both diced avocado and mushrooms with a banana on the side.

June is National Fruit and Vegetable Month. By now, farmer's markets are thriving and an abundance of produce options inundate grocery stores as if you needed another reason to eat more color. Whether or not you reach your ten servings per day, think of increasing the amount of produce you eat the next time you want to cut back on your food budget as food can truly be medicine.

Kids Aren't the Only Picky Eaters

Using Herbs and Spices to Increase Vegetable Consumption



Have you tried tricking someone into eating something or hiding vegetables in different recipes? Whether it be avocado in brownies or a sweet potato puree in quesadillas, we are still falling short on our consumption of daily fruit and vegetable intake. University of Illinois professors researched which types of consumers were using certain herbs and spices, but wanted to further investigate whether using herbs and spices increased vegetable intake.

Adding herbs and spices is a personal preference. While women were more confident using herbs and spices, those with a lower annual income showed less confidence. Older participants were more likely to stick to mild flavors, while cultural differences lead certain populations to gravitate towards certain spices and herbs. Whether you gravitate towards curry, ginger, or oregano, the process of trial and error may be your best friend in determining your taste preferences when it comes to flavoring vegetables.

Regardless of herb or spice, Americans are still under consuming vegetables at 1.5 cups out of an upper level of 3.5 cups per day. With the nutrition information available at our fingertips, we need to go back to the basics of learning where our vegetables come from, how to cook them, and then transition to exploring the use of herbs and spices. But where to start?

"Matching herbs and spices to vegetables helps you enhance the best features of the vegetable's flavor, in addition to providing a nice complement to any dish that you might make in your own kitchen.

Examples would be artichokes with parsley, bay leaves, coriander seeds or paprika. Asparagus goes well with the addition of dill, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, chives or tarragon. While matching broccoli with herbs and spices like sage, chives, oregano, thyme, rosemary, garlic or marjoram, truly heightens its natural flavor.

The best thing to do is experiment and make it fun! And see what you and your family like to add to your veggies." – Chef Mark Allison, Dole Director of Culinary Nutrition

Try a different take on rice by making [Cauliflower Rice](#) or for those more adventurous, [Grilled Celery with a Spicy Peanut Sauce](#) may be right up your alley!

Instagram Can Make You Eat Healthier

Taking and Sharing Pictures Can Hold You Accountable for Healthier Eating



A picture is worth a thousand words. Instagram, a photo sharing platform, is used by many as a way to communicate. University of Washington researchers explored how Instagram can be used to hold you accountable for healthy eating. Social media is a tool that has consumed much of our daily lives and pairing that with healthier eating is a simple, yet positive way to stay on track.

If you've ever tried losing weight, a food journal or tracking app may have been a tool you used. Writing descriptions and trying to remember the details of everything you ate may have proven challenging. However, taking pictures is another avenue that can capture those little details.

Instagram allows users to have different identities within their account. This allows for someone to have a healthy eating account and daily life account, without overwhelming their friends. Instagram keeps a log of all of the photos you have taken, as well as allows you to describe the photo in a caption. You can use hashtags, such as #foodjournal or #fooddiary, to follow different users or friends using that hashtag. This provides instant motivations or resource sharing, as well as that support from a large community worldwide. What researchers found useful was that when a user scrolls through your postings, they will see everything consumed over time. This will allow for diet trends to be discovered, as well as a visual representation of portion sizes and balanced plates.

A huge piece of weight loss is reaching your goal. But, the maintenance stage is just as important and using a tool such as Instagram allows that individual to be held accountable based on their following, without burning out as the socially acceptable photo sharing site allows.

Follow us on Instagram [@dolepics](#) for your daily dose of health and join in on the conversation!

Exercise to Boost Vitamin D

Vitamin D Reduces Heart Attack and Stroke Risk



Summer is just around the corner, which means more outdoor activities and sunshine. We've heard of vitamin D being referred to as the sunshine vitamin, and now, we have even more reason to get active outside to soak it in: reducing heart attacks and stroke risks.

Johns Hopkins researchers confirmed the relationship between vitamin D and exercise, showing that exercise boosts vitamin D stores, and the two together seemed to be more beneficial for protecting your cardiovascular system.

Interestingly enough, there was a common finding that not meeting the recommended physical activity level and being vitamin D deficient were also associated. Researchers drew upon 20 years of 10,000 health records to analyze heart attacks and stroke prevalence. Participants with the highest vitamin D levels had the lowest risk of developing cardiovascular disease. In particular, there was a 23% less chance of having a

cardiovascular event when the physical activity levels were met and vitamin D blood serum levels were adequate.

We've heard that too much of a good thing can turn into a bad thing, and the saying is true with vitamin D. If you are getting your daily recommendation of between 600 to 800 international units (IU) per day, you have reached an adequate amount of 20 nanograms per milliliter in your blood. This can easily be achieved by eating a balanced diet with foods fortified with D and staying active. Just 15 minutes of safe sun exposure produces 3,000 IU of vitamin D depending on your location. Or, you could drink 30 glasses of milk to achieve the same IU absorption (for comparison, not recommended). Recent studies regarding supplements have not been proven to have the same benefits for heart health.

The American Heart Association recommends getting more than 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week. While that may sound overwhelming to start, break it into 5 days of 30 minutes of walking, which could even be split into two 15-minute segments to accommodate busy schedules. While the sun is shining this summer, take advantage of this win-win opportunity, but don't forget to pay attention to your skin!

Don't Be Fooled By Diets

Diet Products Increase Fat Mass



Fatty foods often get a bad name but in this case, it could mean the difference between losing extra fat mass or keeping it on. Think of the last trip you've taken down an aisle in the grocery store. Did you pay attention to all of the marketing claims? Sugar free, calorie free, fat free. The definition of free, in these cases, is not necessarily a good thing. Beware of the low-fat craze that is over consuming our lifestyle; foods may be low in fat, but high in sugar.

High sugar leads to many unnecessary health problems including liver damage and brain inflammation. Reading food labels is imperative. Knowing how to read ingredients and understand that there may be better choices available is the first

line of defense. Unfortunately, there are not too many manufactured food products out there that people actually enjoy that are fat free, sugar free, and calorie free. So, in order to make it appealing, something has to be added. When the fat goes away, the sugar increases and vice versa. Enter the obesity epidemic.

We have seen before that low-fat diets are not the most effective approach to losing weight, and cholesterol levels actually have a better chance of decreasing with healthy fats, so being cautious of low-fat foods rings true. In a research lab from the University of Georgia, significant increases of liver fat accumulation, similar to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, has been seen in consumption of high-sugar, low-fat products, as well as chronic inflammation.

So, what should you eat instead? Stick to a balanced eating regime, not a product. A meal plan focused on healthy fats, antioxidants, lean proteins and complex carbohydrates will go much further than any fad. Choose nuts and seeds, fish, and avocados for healthy fat intake and pay special attention to portion sizes in this category. High fiber whole grains will keep your blood sugar levels steady, giving your brain the necessary energy it needs to fight inflammation and continue to move forward.

Do You Have the Sweet Tooth Hormone?

Liver Hormone Secretion Connected with Sweet Cravings



FGF21 may be to blame for those that cannot resist a chocolate bar or piece of candy. This hormone, secreted by the liver, has been researched by Novo Nordisk in *Cell Metabolism* to understand how the regulatory system from this perspective functions. Have you ever eaten dessert after being completely full but couldn't say no? There may be more to this pathway about achieving satiety that makes us gravitate towards having more sweets versus putting them away.

Identified in 2015 in primates by the University of Iowa, researchers were unsure the reaction in humans. Low and behold, after collecting self-reported food intake and measured cholesterol and glucose levels, 20% of those with variations of the FGF21 hormone were found to be those sweet-toothed individuals. This was determined from 51 extreme sweet lovers and haters, whose blood sugar levels were measured after a fasting period and after drinking sugary water. With any metabolic study, there are many, many factors that may affect this result which is why more research is waiting to be done on a larger population for more complex analysis.

Many of us are quick to blame our sweet tooth for weight gain or view sweets as a bad food. However, as soon as we say something is 'bad' for you, you tend to want more of it. What FGF21 allows us to do next is better understand the role of the liver in controlling what we eat, and potentially how we can adjust our intake accordingly.

But in the meantime, sweets can be enjoyed, and by all means, should be enjoyed for the sake of mental health! Retraining our taste buds to appreciate the sweetness of fruit instead of a processed candy bar for dessert is the logical next step. Until we know more, we hope that you can find the balance in some of our favorite summer desserts such as the [Berry Sorbet](#) and [Caribbean Cream Pops!](#)

FEATURED RECIPE

Berry Sorbet

Ingredients:

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup warm water
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons blackberry or raspberry preserves
- 4 cups fresh DOLE® Blackberries or Raspberries
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Directions:

- COMBINE** sugar, preserves and water in medium mixing bowl, stirring until sugar dissolves.
- PUREE** blackberries or raspberries with lemon juice in blender or food processor. To remove seeds, force through a fine strainer into bowl. Add sugar mixture and stir well to combine. Chill until cold.
- FREEZE** according to ice cream machine manufacturer's directions.
- MIXTURE** may also be poured into shallow metal cake pan and put in freezer until solid; about 6 hours. Break into chunks and process in a food processor until smooth.



Makes: 8 Servings

Total Time: 1 Hour

EDITORIAL TEAM

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