



# Nutrition News

*Feeding the world with knowledge*

Go Further with Food



March 2018

## Go Further with Food

*How food plays a role in lowering colon cancer risk*



In honor of both National Nutrition Month as well as Colorectal Cancer Month, we're focusing on how to go further with food when it comes to colon cancer risk. According to the American Cancer Society, colorectal cancer starts in the colon or the rectum and is the second leading cause of cancer-related death in the U.S.

A study published in the *Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry* suggests that a diet rich in powerful vitamins and antioxidants like carotenoids and flavonoids may be effective in preventing colon cancer and other chronic conditions. In this study, researchers focused on nutrients found in whole foods, specifically the purple flesh potato due to its anthocyanin content. They found that supplementing a high calorie diet, known to cause inflammation, with 10% purple potato suppressed a pro inflammatory marker found in the gut (called IL6) which is correlated with growth of cancer cells. Ultimately suggesting staple crops rich in anthocyanins should be considered as part of treatment for inflammation and related cancers. Many foods that contain these powerful components also made the recently published BBC list of the world's most nutritious whole foods.

That said, low intake of these foods coupled with sedentary lifestyle can increase risk of conditions like obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease and some cancers including colon. Here are some strategies to lower your risk:

1. **Fill up on fiber rich foods.** Aim for 25-35g/day from fruits like bananas and pineapples, vegetables and whole grains. This naturally helps you avoid a high calorie diet, because these foods are less energy dense than processed alternatives.
2. **Go Mediterranean.** This diet centered on fruits, vegetables, legumes and whole grains has been linked to lower risk of colorectal cancer. It'll also ensure that you're getting a variety of the micronutrients discussed above.

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## Featured Recipe



- **Asian Fried Rice with Quinoa**

3. **Make lifestyle changes!** Quit smoking, stay away from secondhand smoke, get plenty of physical activity and eat healthy!
4. **The best way to prevent colorectal cancer** is to get screened regularly starting at age 50. There are often no signs or symptoms of colorectal cancer – that's why it's so important to get screened.

## Insects for Everyone?

### *The quest for alternative protein sources*



According to the United Nations, 2 billion people consume insects as part of a traditional diet. Insects are touted as being healthy and nutritious alternatives to mainstream protein staples such as chicken, pork or beef. They are also said to be a good source of healthy fats as well as high in calcium, iron and zinc. Is it only a matter of time before a bowl of sautéed caterpillars lands on a table near you?

The growing trend for protein has evolved over the years, and now the focus is on plants, which provide lean, affordable sources of protein, that also require fewer natural resources to produce. Our quest for alternative proteins in the west has made way for even more adventurous ingredients. For example, recipes made with cricket flour or even dishes sold in restaurants such as wax moth larvae tacos. Think your stomach isn't made to handle it? A study recently published in *Molecular Biology and Evolution* suggests otherwise. In fact, their research shows that insects were an extremely important food source for our primate ancestors including monkeys, apes, and humans. Several copies of the CHIA gene necessary to break down exoskeletons were found when evaluating 34 primates. Today, most living primates have one copy of the gene. In other words, we are still built to consume insects - if we wanted to!

While it is potentially nutritious to dine on alternative protein sources, fruits and vegetables are much more appetizing and no less healthy. A combination of spinach and collards sautéed in olive oil topped with lentils can provide the protein, healthy fats, calcium, iron and zinc delivered from insects. If we've piqued your interest in protein alternatives, but you are not quite ready to dine on beetles and crickets, try our [Indonesian Peanut Salad](#), it features tofu which can easily be found at your local grocery store.

## Simplicity is Key

*Processed foods linked to addictive eating behaviors*



Eating healthy is a hot topic. Some of us post images of our meals on social media, while others turn to nutrition label claims on packaged foods for reinforcement for our good food choices. However, food claims are usually limited to processed and packaged foods found in the center aisles of the grocery store. Think about it, when is the last time you saw a package claim on a banana?

A study published in *PLOS ONE* finds that highly processed foods appear to be associated with “food addiction”. For the purposes of this study, highly processed foods are defined as having the addition of fats and/or refined carbohydrates (like white flour and sugar) not found in nature. These can include items like chocolate, pizza and fast food French fries as well as other foods such as peanut butter and yogurt.

Researchers at the University of Michigan conducted a two-part study that first assessed participant perception of foods relative to addictive eating. They were asked to rank 35 foods that ranged from highly to minimally processed. All 10 highly processed foods on the list were categorized as problematic or addictive. The second part analyzed food attributes such as fat and sugar to further explore the association with addiction. Here it was found that both glycemic load and fat were predictors of addictive behavior. Researchers hypothesize that the increased rate in which these macronutrients are absorbed mimics that of other addictive substances. Unprocessed foods, without added sugar and fat such as brown rice, whole fruits, vegetables and chicken were not associated with addictive eating behaviors.

Eating a diet filled with nutritious fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins is something we whole heartedly believe in at Dole. The benefits to your health, longevity and mood are endless, and there’s the added benefit of short ingredients lists and knowing exactly what’s in your food! Need a simple, Dole version of fast food? Try our [Lemon-Ginger Spring Vegetable Stir Fry](#) or our [Asian “Fried Rice” with Quinoa](#).

## Go Bananas

*Most popular fruit is raising its shelf A-PEEL*



Bananas are America’s #1 fruit; 90% of households purchase them weekly and the average American consumes over 25 pounds of them annually. That’s about a banana and a half each week. Soon that number may grow as you may not have to bother with peeling the skin for much longer. Thank a Japanese company that developed a new banana, one with skin so thin, you can enjoy the entire fruit including the peel! It’s called the Mongee banana and it’s grown and harvested with very precise temperature control that delivers a thin edible peel in a speedy four months, compared to the average annual process.

Our own Dole research has shown that banana skin offers a variety of benefits including higher concentration of antioxidants, more fiber, beta carotene and calcium than the flesh alone. These antioxidant compounds, found in high amounts in the peel, have been associated with reducing the risk of developing chronic diseases such as cardiovascular, diabetes and cancer. Traditionally, the skin has also been used to treat burns, diarrhea, inflammation and snakebites.

While the skin is tough and potentially unpleasant to eat, a study published in the *Journal of Functional Foods* took a closer look at potential uses to provide direction for future research. They found that its benefits range from topical use in traditional medicine to fertilizer for soil replenishment and may have a future role as a functional ingredient in the food industry. Because banana peel is an inexpensive and excellent source of valuable compounds, researchers are investigating further ways to extract nutrients from them. Or perhaps the Mongee banana holds the solution?

While we aren't recommending that you start eating banana peels yet, you can take advantage of banana's nutrients by incorporating them into your diet. They're an obvious choice for breakfast or baking, but we like experimenting with fun ways to include them at lunch or dinner. Try our [Thai Chicken – Banana Salad](#) or [Grilled Banana and Peach Salad](#).

**Note:** Three medium sized bananas weigh about one pound.

## Lost in Translation

*Students with knowledge of healthful eating still hit hurdles*



Is knowledge everything? In many cases knowing what you need to do is half the battle. That does not appear to be the case regarding healthy food choices and college students.

One study published in *Nutrition and Health* surveyed over 300 exercise science (ES) and non-exercise science (NES) students. ES students are required to enroll in an introductory nutrition course that focuses on healthy food selection. Researchers hypothesized that all students would have similar snack consumption regardless of nutrition education. Though ES students did choose fruits more frequently than NES students, the difference was not statistically significant. Overall,

the researchers found that knowledge about healthy food choices did not translate to making healthier food choices. Investigators suggest that food environment, new financial responsibility and meal preparation trumped acquired nutrition knowledge when it came to food choices.

Another study out of Bethel College School of Nursing sought to examine eating habits and knowledge of nutrition requirements for 121 college students. Students self-reported a focus on hydration, choosing foods according to taste preference as well as eating fresh fruits, though they also reported eating processed foods. This inconsistent practice is especially interesting because 89% of participants agreed that it's unhealthy to eat processed foods. Researchers suggest the practice may be a result of limited food options on campus.

The bottom line is that eating healthy on campus can be an uphill battle, even if you have some knowledge of healthy food choices. New college students may benefit from acknowledging this ahead of time and strategizing to best incorporate healthy eating habits into their new routine. Most college campuses have a Registered Dietitian on staff to provide nutrition services, providing orientation to campus dining and meal options. Often they can advise on where the nearest grocery store is located, along with creative ways to make healthy meals in the dorm too. Whether you're a student fending for yourself or a mom feeding a family, nutritious meals take time and planning, but there are plenty of resources to help you no matter where you do your food prep.

## Set the Example

*Weight loss can be catching for couples*



Want to lose weight without the hassle of planning meals and conscious effort? The solution may be to have your partner get on board with a weight loss program. Last month we shared research stating the benefits of marriage and heart health; this month the trend continues to show that both partners benefit from weight loss when only one of the two engages in a weight loss program.

Researchers from the University of Connecticut observed 130 couples over six months. One person from each couple was enrolled in either a formal Weight Watchers style program or provided with an informal, self-guided instruction on how to lose weight. Interestingly, the untreated spouses in either program lost greater than or equal to 3% of their body weight at 6 months. The reason? Weight is known to be extremely interdependent among couples; meaning we usually pair off with others in the same weight range such as obese or normal levels and tend to lose and gain weight in tandem. In this case, scientists credit the ripple effect; a phenomenon where weight loss spreads within couples. The effect is well documented to contribute to 2-3% weight loss in a non-treated spouse as part of clinical weight loss such as bariatric surgery, however less formal and self-directed approaches have not been included until now. More research needs to be done to see if the benefit extends to others living in the household.

As you embark on your weight loss journey, try our [Blackened Tuna with Banana Mango Chutney](#) with [Broiled Asparagus with Sesame Sauce](#). It's filling and makes a lovely dinner for two.

# FEATURED RECIPE

## Asian “Fried Rice” with Quinoa

### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon grapeseed oil
- 1 cup sliced DOLE® Green Onions
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger
- 2 teaspoons chopped garlic
- 3 cups cooked quinoa
- 2 eggs, whisked
- 1 DOLE Chopped Sesame Asian Kit
- ½ cup shelled edamame
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro



**Makes:** 4 Servings

**Total Time:** 15 Minutes

### Directions:

- HEAT** grapeseed oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, ginger, and garlic; sauté until wilted. Stir in quinoa and eggs; stir 2 minutes or until eggs are cooked. Remove from heat.
- ADD** salad, dressing from salad kit, edamame, soy sauce, and sesame oil. Toss to blend. Sprinkle with cilantro. Serve with wontons and almonds from salad kit.

# EDITORIAL TEAM

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