Nutritious Bites
It’s National Nutrition Month – “Savor the Flavor of Eating Right”
By Whitney Bignell, PhD, RDN, LD

Just in case you hadn’t heard the news – March is National Nutrition Month! And I couldn’t be happier with the theme this year – “Savor the flavor of eating right.”

Some years ago (I’m not dating myself!), “healthy eating” or “dieting” meant eating rice cakes, cottage cheese, and grapefruit. It also meant no flavor! (These foods can be part of a healthy diet if you enjoy them). It also meant eating different from your friends and family.

Today, we have a much better understanding of which foods should be included in a healthy diet (hint: most foods fit in a healthy eating plan). We also are focusing more on enjoying our food – not labeling foods “good” or “bad.” We’re also exploring new herbs and spices to add flavor to foods that may have been considered “bland” or “boring.”

So, how can you savor the flavor of eating right? Here are some tips to help you enjoy your foods while feeling good about what you’re eating.

• Add fresh berries to your morning oatmeal for a dose of antioxidant power and extra fiber (Did you know that you should get 3 whole grain servings a day?)
• Experiment with adding spices to baked chicken or fish (to try: turmeric, coriander, and ginger for an exotic Asian flavor)
• Add fresh herbs, such as basil or oregano, to olive oil and red wine vinegar for a customized salad dressing
• Add 1 tbsp. dark chocolate chips to 1 cup Greek yogurt for a sweet treat and 1 dairy serving (of the 3 you should get each day)
• Invite friends or family over for a “healthy” party
Recipe of the Month

Strawberry asparagus spring salad
Serves 2

Most Americans struggle to get the recommended 7 or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day. This delicious spring salad provides more than 3 servings of vegetables and fruit so that you’re on your way to your goal!

Ingredients
- 2 cups Spring greens*
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced
- 1 cup asparagus spears, chopped and roasted (see below)
- ½ cup garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
- 3 tsp. olive oil (1 tsp. for roasting asparagus)
- 2 tsp. red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard

*Be sure to rinse greens thoroughly before eating.

Directions

Preheat oven to 425°F. Cut off the woody ends of asparagus, then cut remainder into 1-inch pieces. Place in single layer on cookie sheet and drizzle 1 tsp. olive oil over pieces. Toss to coat. Bake for 15-20 minutes until golden brown. Let cool.

Combine Spring greens, strawberries, asparagus, and garbanzo beans in bowl. Whisk together remaining olive oil, vinegar, and Dijon mustard. Toss with salad.

Keep on Moving
Why You Need an “Exercise Prescription”

What if you could take one pill that increases energy, decreases stress, and may lower blood pressure and blood sugars? Sounds like a great new medication, right? This “one-pill-wonder” does exist, and it’s called “physical activity.”

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans 2008 recommends the following for older adults:

- Aim for 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity each week. HOWEVER, you should be as active as you are able to be (some activity is better than no activity)
- Do strength-training exercises on 2 or more days each week that works all major muscle groups
- Do exercises that maintain or improve balance if you’re at risk for falling

For more information, visit: http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/guidelines/

Monthly Chair Exercise

Seated Shin Strengthenener

You don’t think about your shins until they hurt when you’ve walked too far. This exercise will strengthen your shins so that you’ll be less likely to get shin splints when you increase your activity. Be sure to start exercises by warming up with 5 minutes of marching in place or light walking and a few stretches.

Sitting on the edge of a chair, extend your legs out in front of you, keeping knees slightly bent and placing your heels on the floor, toes pointed up.

Point the toes downward, then flex them upward.

Do 10 to 15 sets of point and flex. Rest. Do another set of 10 to 15 repetitions.
Taking a Deep Breath

You feel your muscles start to tighten, heart rate quickening, and mind going in a million directions. Maybe you’ve just had an upsetting conversation with a family member. Maybe you just started feeling that pain in your hip that you know will have you on the couch for the weekend (or week)! Take a deep breath. Exhale slowly.

Stress. No matter what the cause, stress makes us feel bad. It saps our energy, and pain gets worse and worse. And it’s easy to go down the “stress road” – with your thoughts propelling you forward. What to do?

Relax.

It’s easier said than done. What’s important to know, though, is that relaxation means different things to different people. In short, relaxation means “using thinking techniques to reduce or eliminate tension from both the body and the mind” (Lorig et al 2012).

There are many activities you can do when you feel stressed to take your mind off your troubles. It’s best to have a list of 5-10 activities that are your go-to distractions that help you feel calm and/or keep you from thinking about what’s stressing you (bonus tip: keep this list on your refrigerator or bathroom mirror).

Some possible activities include:
- Read a book
- Take a nap or warm bath
- Do your favorite craft
- Go for a walk
- Listen to your favorite music
- Prayer or meditation

To do: Make a list of 5-10 activities that you can do easily when you feel stressed (i.e., you probably can’t fly out on the next plane to Hawaii).

Source: Lorig, Kate et al. Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions (2012).

Medication Manager

Know What You’re Taking

How many times have you forgotten to take your medications with you to the doctor? Maybe you don’t want to take the whole medicine cabinet with you! An up-to-date list that you can easily change may be the solution you’re looking for. Be sure to include the following information for ALL prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, multivitamins, and other supplements (i.e., single vitamin and herbal supplements).

- Name of medication or supplement
- How many pills you take at a time
- Dose you take (i.e., 500 mg, 1000 IU)
- How often you take it
- When do you take it
- Who prescribed it (if applicable)
- When was it prescribed or when did you start taking it

Upcoming Events

Living Better Workshops

Check back next month for scheduled workshops.

Matter of Balance Workshops

Walton County Senior Center
Dates to be determined

Have an event you’d like to include?

E-mail web1975@uga.edu
Test Yourself
Examining Your Habits

How am I doing?

1. I currently eat ________ servings of fruits most days of the week (circle one)
   a. Less than 1 serving   b. 1-2 servings   c. 3 or more servings

2. I currently eat ________ servings of vegetables most days of the week (circle one)
   a. Less than 1 serving   b. 1-2 servings   c. 3 or more servings

3. I currently eat _____ servings of whole grain products most days of the week (circle one)
   a. Less than 1 serving   b. 1-2 servings   c. 3 or more servings

4. I currently have _____ servings of milk or other dairy products most days of the week (circle one)
   a. Less than 1 serving   b. 1-2 servings   c. 3 or more servings

5. I currently am physically active most days of the week (circle one)  
   Yes          No

6. I tend to eat too much sodium or salt (circle one)  
   Yes          No

7. I tend to eat too much sugar or sweet foods (circle one)  
   Yes          No

8. I keep a list of my medications and supplements with me at all times (circle one)  
   Yes          No

9. I have at least 3 or 4 activities I do to relax me (circle one)  
   Yes          No

What do I want to change?

This month, I want to do the following to improve my health and well-being:

On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = low confidence, 10 = high confidence), how confident am I that I can make the change I wrote above? (circle one)

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

Questions or Comments? Contact us!

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Support for this newsletter is also provided by:

The University of Georgia
• College of Family and Consumer Sciences  
  ○ Dept. of Foods and Nutrition
• College of Public Health  
  ○ Dept. of Health Policy and Management  
  ○ Institute of Gerontology

Seniors Taking Charge in Northeast Georgia  March 2016