

It's sure is turning out to be a **HOT** summer! It's important to stay well hydrated. Insufficient fluid intake can result in fatigue, headaches and loss of concentration or mental acuity. In addition, well-hydrated individuals suffer less from colon, urinary tract and breast cancers and have less kidney stones and constipation. Your fluid needs (in ounces) can be estimated by dividing your weight in pounds in half. (Multiply by 2/3 if you exercise as your fluid needs increase). The best indication of adequate hydration is frequent urination with urine that is pale in color. A plan to ensure adequate fluid intake might be to drink a cup each hour of your work day or perhaps drink 2 glasses along with each meal, one glass before the meal and one glass after the meal (you may find you don't want to eat as much!)

However, you do need to think about the nutrients and calories in your drink choices. Water quenches thirst the best and it is, of course, calorie free! (And we have really good tasting tap water in Ames!!) To make it even more refreshing and appealing, try adding a slice of lemon or lime to your ice cold water.

According to studies, calories from liquids don't seem to register as food. In other words, people do not reduce their food intake to accommodate for the extra calories in beverages. Liquids do not provide the same degree of fullness that solid food does. And liquid calories can add up very quickly! You need to be aware of how many calorie-containing beverages you are consuming each day. Some of these may be offering important nutrients to your body such as milk which provides calcium, riboflavin, vitamins D and B12 and protein. Fruit juices can provide vitamins and other nutrients but eating fruit will provide these along with fiber, usually for far less calories. Our beverage choices often provide "empty calories" (mainly sugar or simple carbohydrates and very little nutrients). A super-sized soda can have up to 500 calories. A Starbucks Venti (largest size) caramel macchiato with whole milk offers some nutrients from the milk but also has 310 calories and 12 grams of fat! A SoBe bottled beverage offers only sugar and flavoring and no nutrition yet provides 350 calories. Sweetened ice tea with lemon made from powder will provide a little vitamin C but at a calorie cost of 135 calories for a 12 ounce glass. Try unsweetened brewed tea with a squeeze of real lemon for the same nutrition and virtually no calories (plus the benefits of antioxidants from the tea leaves!) Another popular summer drink is lemonade. Some brands do offer vitamin C, but be aware of the high sugar content (lemonade has 195 calories for a 12 ounce glass).

The goal isn't to cut fluid intake! Just try switching to lower calorie beverages such as refreshing water or brewed iced tea with lemon to maintain your hydration. Be aware of the nutrition and calories offered in your beverages as part of your healthy eating plan.

Many people don't want to turn on their oven and heat up their kitchen and house even more on these hot summer days. Grilling is always a good option, but there are other options to consider as well. Here are a couple of main dish salads offered by the Washington Post Lean Plate Club:

Shrimp, Green Bean and Feta Pasta Salad

4 to 6 main-course servings

4 ounces green beans, trimmed, each bean cut into 1- to 1 ½ -inch-long pieces

8 ounces dried rotini or any similar size pasta

1 pound medium cooked shrimp, peeled and deveined

2 to 4 tablespoons chopped dill

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

1 tablespoon lemon juice

2 tablespoons olive oil

4 ounces crumbled feta cheese

Salt

Freshly ground black pepper

Have ready a large bowl of ice water.

In a pot of boiling salted water, cook the green beans until they turn bright green and start to soften. Transfer the beans to the ice water to cool immediately. When the beans are cool, drain them and pat them dry with a clean towel.

Meanwhile, prepare the pasta. In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook the pasta until it is al dente—done but still a little firm to the bite. Drain the pasta in a colander, rinse with cold water until the pasta is completely cool and drain again until it is free of excess water. Set aside.

In a large bowl, combine the cooked green beans, pasta, shrimp, and dill to taste, vinegar, lemon juice, olive oil, feta cheese, salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately, or cover tightly and refrigerate for up to 2 days.

Per serving (based on 6): 313 calories, 24 g protein, 31 g carbohydrates, 10 g fat, 164 mg cholesterol, 4 g saturated fat, 428 mg sodium, 2 g dietary fiber

Tuna, Chickpea and Pasta Salad

4 to 6 main-course servings

For this dish, use tuna packed in oil, as it has much more flavor than tuna packed in water. The lemon brings all the flavors together.

8 ounces dried medium or large shell-shaped pasta

One 6-ounce can light tuna packed in oil

One 15.5-ounce can chickpeas, drained

1 cup chopped sweet onion, such as Vidalia

2 tablespoons chopped parsley

3 tablespoons lemon juice (from 1 lemon)

Zest of one large lemon

2 tablespoons olive oil

Salt

Freshly ground black pepper

In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook the pasta until it is al dente—done but still a little firm to the bite. Drain the pasta in a colander, rinse with cold water until the pasta is completely cool and drain again until it is free of excess water.

In a large bowl, combine the pasta, tuna, chickpeas, onion, parsley, lemon juice and zest, olive oil, salt and pepper to taste. Stir to combine. Serve immediately, or cover tightly and refrigerate up to 2 days.

Per serving (based on 6): 336 calories, 17 g protein, 48 g carbohydrates, 8 g fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 1 g saturated fat, 370 mg sodium, 5 g dietary fiber

Here's a super easy microwave dish that will boost your intake of heart healthy omega-3 fatty acids and keep your kitchen cool at the same time! Add your favorite veggies for more color, flavor and nutrition!

Alaska Salmon Romanoff

6 ounces noodles

1 cup nonfat or low fat sour cream

½ package dry ranch style dressing mix

1 can (7.5 ounces) salmon, drained and flaked

1 can (4 ounces) sliced mushrooms, drained

3 Tbsp. chopped green onion

¼ tsp. dill weed

4-6 ounces drained, cooked vegetables of your choice

Cook noodles according to package directions and drain. Combine all other ingredients. Mix well. Spoon mixture into sprayed 1.5 quart microwave-safe dish. Cook on medium-high power (70%) for 5 to 6 minutes or until heated through. Stir before serving over noodles. Makes 4 servings.

We don't always think about using our slow cookers (crock pots) in the summer but that is yet another way to maintain a cool kitchen! This recipe is from the "Healthy Crockery Cookery" cookbook.

Taco-Seasoned Turkey Pitas or Wraps

¾ pound lean ground turkey

3 green onions, including tops, sliced

1 (1 ounce) package dry taco spices and seasonings (or less to reduce sodium)

1 large bunch spinach, washed, stemmed and cut into slices

2 carrots, shredded

8 pita rounds or 8 flour tortillas

Combine turkey, green onions, taco mix, spinach and carrots in a 3.5 quart slow cooker. Stir to mix well. Cover and cook on LOW setting for 4 hours or until onions are tender. Stir turkey mixture and let stand while warming pitas or tortillas. This can be done in the microwave on LOW to MEDIUM setting or in conventional oven at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Fill pitas or tortillas with turkey mixture and serve.

Per tortilla/pita= 179 calories, 11 g protein, 4 g fat, 1 g sat fat, 34 mg cholesterol, 318 mg sodium

To reduce sodium and to save money, make your own taco seasoning mix! See the recipe for this on Nutrition Clinic website at <http://www.fshn.hs.iastate.edu/nutritionclinic/> (click on recipes/handouts).

Try to stay well hydrated and cool in this heat—just think in 6 months we might be shoveling the white stuff!

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