

As promised last week, here are a few more suggestions on how to work more fruits and vegetables into your eating!

1. Go beyond lettuce and tomato and add extra veggies to your sandwich. Try slices of colored peppers, cucumber, avocado or grated carrot. Pita bread is a great pocket for holding veggies!
2. When grilling meat, add some marinated veggie kabobs to the grill. Skewer mushrooms, cherry tomatoes, peppers and onions marinated in vinegar and oil and seasonings.
3. Toss some berries or banana into your pancake batter for a tasty weekend breakfast!
4. Washing and cutting up fruits and veggies and storing them in sealed containers will increase the likelihood that they are eaten! Take a half hour each week to prep your fruits and veggies for meals and snacks. It's time well spent!
5. Toss a handful of chopped broccoli or fresh or frozen spinach into your pasta sauce as you heat it.

Here's a super easy recipe that offers lean protein and virtuous veggies and doesn't even produce dirty pots and pans! Now that's my kind of cooking!! It would also be great for camping!

Italian Chicken Packets

(4 servings)

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1 yellow pepper seeded and sliced
1 red onion, sliced
2 tomatoes, seeded and chopped
½ cup Italian salad dressing

Prepare and heat grill. Tear off four sheets of heavy duty aluminum foil (12"x18"). Divide chicken and vegetables evenly among sheets. Seal packets with a double fold allowing space for heat expansion. Place packets on grill or over hot coals 4 inches from medium heat. Grill, covered, for 18-23 minutes or until chicken is thoroughly cooked. Turn packets once during cooking.

Per serving= 290 calories, 16 grams of fat (this can be significantly reduced by using reduced fat salad dressing).

This is not your average coleslaw! (Note: There is no cabbage!) It has great zippy flavor depending on how many chipotle chilies you add! The peppers are packed with nutrition and the jicama may be a new to you but many describe its taste like that of an apple and/or pear. This recipe comes from the American Institute for Cancer Research (check out their website for other nutritious recipes at www.aicr.org)

Fiesta Pepper Slaw

(10 servings)

5 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
3 Tbsp. reduced-fat mayonnaise
5 cloves garlic, finely minced
1-2 tsp. minced canned chipotle chilies (or to taste)
1 Tbsp. honey
1 large red bell pepper, cut into thin strips
1 large green bell pepper, cut into thin strips
1 large yellow pepper, cut into thin strips
12 oz. jicama, peeled, cut into thin strips

1/3 cup minced fresh cilantro leaves
Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Puree the first 5 ingredients in a blender or food processor until dressing is smooth. Place the peppers, jicama and cilantro in a large bowl. Toss in the dressing to coat the peppers and jicama. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Cover and refrigerate until vegetables soften a little but are still crunchy, about 4 hours.

Per ½ cup serving= 51 calories, 2 g total fat (less than 1 g saturated fat), 9 g carbohydrates, less than 1 g protein, 3 g dietary fiber

Breakfast is still considered the most important meal of the day! Getting some nutrition into your body early on makes a significant difference in attention span, problem solving and learning ability. Studies also show breakfast eating assists in weight control. The advantage of smaller meals and snacks eaten every 3-5 hours is that it keeps your metabolic rate up and prevents overeating due to extreme hunger (That seems to be when we throw portion control to the wind!)

A smoothie is a great breakfast on the go. It can even be made the night before and refrigerated in a to-go cup. Just stir or shake before consuming. Other easy portable breakfast ideas include whole grain cereal in a zip-lock bag, yogurt, a lean deli meat or peanut butter sandwich on whole grain bread, a hard-cooked egg, a low-fat granola bar or even a serving of leftovers such as a casserole from the previous evening meal.

Banana-Peanut Butter Smoothie

(1 serving)

1 cup nonfat vanilla yogurt
1 medium banana
1 Tbsp. smooth peanut butter
1 cup ice

Put all ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth. (other fruit such as fresh or frozen berries can be added instead of peanut butter for variety!)

Per serving=363 calories, 8 g fat, 14 g protein, 4 g fiber, 0 mg cholesterol, 211 mg sodium

Enjoy your weekend! Consider visiting a farmer's market or produce section of a grocery store and bringing home some tasty and nutritious summer fruits and vegetables!

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