

The Daily Union

Saturday, November 9, 2019

Title: Eat Smart Series Part 1: New Habits for the Holidays

The Healthy for Good program sponsored by the American Heart Association has tagged November as Eat Smart Month. Why? There is never a better time than the holidays to reevaluate eating habits to make a positive impact on your health! Through awareness and effort, the alarming trends in chronic diseases can be slowed and, ideally, squelched completely. Programs like Healthy for Good are striving to help you make lasting changes to your health and your life.

The time is now and here's why. The rate of chronic disease and obesity in the United States is alarming. Six in ten American adults have a chronic disease and four in ten adults have two or more. These diseases are broadly defined as conditions that last more than 1 year and require ongoing medical monitoring or limit your daily living activities or both. According to the Centers for Disease and Prevention, chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes are the leading causes of death and disability in the United States.

Chronic diseases are closely tied to premature death and increased health care costs. "*Poor diet and lack of physical activity are major risk factors for chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and certain types of cancer.*" (USDA, National Institute of Food and Agriculture Division of Nutrition).

As part of the Eat Smart Month initiative, the Healthy for Good program is asking community organizations and education agencies, like Geary County K-State Research and Extension, to help spread the word. The following information is the first in a 4-part series I will be offering this month from the American Heart Association's Healthy for Good program.

As you continue to read on, consider how you can make your heart happy with your diet one small step at a time, beginning with Eat Smart efforts.

Nourish yourself, your family and your community by learning how to shop, cook and eat smart! Making more of your meals at home is one of the best ways to eat healthier and save money, too. Try these tips to get started.

- ✓ Add more color to your meals with fruits and vegetables. Fresh, frozen, canned and dried can all be healthy choices, but watch out for salty sauces and sugary syrups.
- ✓ Compare nutrition label information at the grocery store. Choose products with the lowest amounts of sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.
- ✓ Learn some new cooking methods and techniques. Instead of frying foods – which can add a lot of extra calories and unhealthy fats – use healthier cooking methods that add little or no fat, like roasting, grilling, baking or steaming.
- ✓ Give your pantry a makeover. If your cabinets, fridge and freezer are well-stocked with the right staple ingredients, it will be easier to make healthy meals.
- ✓ Make it fun for kids to try new foods. Let them pick out a new fruit or vegetable in the grocery store each week. Figure out together how to cook or prepare it in a healthy way.
- ✓ Make healthy substitutions, like whole grain instead of refined white flour. Take small steps over time to replace less-healthy ingredients in your family favorites.
- ✓ Cut down on the salt and learn new ways to give food great flavor, including herbs, spices, vinegars, citrus, garlic and other seasonings.
- ✓ Upgrade your fats. Use liquid vegetable oils such as canola, corn, olive, safflower, sesame and sunflower in place of butter and solid fats.

- ✓ Include some meatless meals. Choose plant-based proteins like beans, vegetables, legumes and tofu.
- ✓ Relax! Have fun in the kitchen and get the family involved in planning and preparing meals. Explore new recipes together.

Need a nudge to help you whet your appetite? Check out this recipe for a fall-flavored and fresh Pumpkin Smoothie.

Pumpkin Smoothie

Ingredients

½ cup canned pumpkin (not pie filling)
1/3 cup fat-free, plain yogurt
1/3 cup skim milk
2 Tbsp. rolled oats
2 tsp. honey
½ tsp. pumpkin pie spice
3 to 4 ice cubes

Directions

Into a blender, add pumpkin, yogurt, milk, oats, honey, pumpkin pie spice, and ice cubes. Blend until smooth and frothy, about 1 minute. Pour into a glass and serve. See Nutrition Facts information provided.

Pumpkins are a popular food item this time of year. If you are looking for more healthy pumpkin and other recipes, visit Geary County K-State Research and Extension's website at: <https://www.geary.k-state.edu/health-home-family/>. Unit next time, keep living resourcefully!

Nutrition Facts

Calories	199
Total Fat	1.5 g
Saturated Fat	0.3 g
Trans Fat	0.0 g
Polyunsaturated Fat	0.2 g
Monounsaturated Fat	0.3 g
Cholesterol	3.3 mg
Sodium	106 mg
Total Carbohydrate	38 g
Dietary Fiber	6 g
Sugars	26 g
Protein	11 g

Dietary Exchanges

1 fat-free milk, 1 vegetable, 1 other carbohydrate