

The Lunchbox Nutritionist ***Kathleen Searles MS, RD, LDN***



Happy National Nutrition Month! I hope that you will enjoy this month's lead article about some foods you can use to expand the variety and nutrition of YOUR plate!

I'll see you soon!

- **Kathleen Searles**

Shape Up Your Plate with These 7 Foods!



March is National Nutrition Month and the theme this year is "Get Your Plate in Shape". Below you will find 7 foods to take you out of your food comfort zone and into shaping up your plate!

1. Kale - Kale is a nutrition powerhouse when it comes to getting your plate in shape and reducing your risk of bladder, breast, colon, ovarian, and prostate cancer! Researchers identified over 45 different flavonoids in kale that act as antioxidants and provide anti-inflammatory benefits. A few easy suggestions on adding kale to your diet: try adding a cup to your next smoothie, mixing in with your traditional salad greens, or sautéing with your favorite vegetables. Need to lower your cholesterol? Try steaming kale and serving with lemon juice.

2. Bison (aka Buffalo)- Bison is the new red meat alternative. Low in calories, cholesterol, and fat, high in protein and iron - and taste great! What more could you ask for! The American Diabetes Association, the American Heart Association, and The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics all endorse buffalo meat as a part of a healthy, low fat, low cholesterol diet. Next time you are looking to add a little protein power to your plate, try some buffalo!

3. Quinoa - This tiny seed makes a complete protein and is an excellent vegetarian alternative to animal protein, for it is high in the amino acid lysine, which is essential for tissue growth and repair. Besides being high in protein, complex carbohydrates, and fiber, quinoa also provides an excellent source of phosphorus, manganese, magnesium, folate, and iron. Quinoa is easy to prepare and can serve as a great substitute to white rice, couscous, or pasta.

4. Pomegranates - A real "Super Food"! Pomegranates are high in vitamin C and potassium as well as three different types of polyphenols, a very potent antioxidant. The three polyphenols are: tannins, anthocyanins, and ellagic acid - all play a powerful role in preventing cancer and heart disease. 1/2 cup of pomegranate seeds will provide about 70 calories and 3.5 grams of fiber.

5. Figs - Figs could also be called nature's portable power bar. Approximately 4 medium figs will pack in 38 grams of energy producing carbohydrates with 6 grams of fiber, 345 mg of potassium, as well as magnesium, calcium, and antioxidants. All essential nutrients for a healthy body. Next time you are looking for a pre-workout snack, try grabbing a few fresh figs for an instant energy boost.

6. Bok Choy - Bok Choy can be a weight loss plans' best friend. With only 2 calories per cup, this vegetable can add bulk to your plate and help fill you up, helping you control portion size. Not only is Bok Choy low in calories but it is high in many essential phyto-nutrients, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Some of the nutrition components found in Bok Choy help protect against breast, colon, and prostate cancers as well as help decrease "bad cholesterol".

7. Chili Peppers - Red chili peppers help to "spice" up your body's chemistry and have been shown to reduce cholesterol, triglyceride levels, and platelet aggregation. Red chili peppers are also linked with a slight increase in metabolic rate to digest the food, meaning that spicy pepper can help you burn more calories! Go ahead and spice up your next meal by adding in some fresh red chili peppers.

My Tips for Using the 7 Foods

- Kale - Chop cooked kale finely and add to pasta sauces, soups, risottos, or casseroles
- Bison - Use in place of ground beef in casseroles or meat sauces
- Quinoa - Add dried fruit and chopped nuts for a tasty side dish
- Pomegranates - Pull apart sections and separate arils to eat as a snack or sprinkle arils on salads
- Figs - Use whole grain fig bars as a post-workout recovery food
- Bok Choy - See recipe that follows
- Chili Peppers - Keep crushed red pepper flakes on hand to add to egg or tuna salad, hummus, or veggie stir fries

Quick Bok-Choy Sauté

- 1 head of bok choy (or 2-3 heads of baby bok choy)
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- Olive oil

Thinly slice the bok choy across the leaves (horizontally).
In a large skillet, sauté chopped onion in olive oil until it is translucent.
Add sliced bok choy. (The pan may be very full, but the bok choy will cook down quickly.)
Stir frequently and lower the heat if needed. Cook to desired tenderness.

- Serving Suggestions:
- Good as side dish with grilled fish, poultry, or meat.
 - Good as a side dish with casseroles, especially cheesy casseroles.
 - Add some feta cheese (either while still hot or to

News and Events:

Is your plate getting out of shape?

Call today to schedule a "spring re-shape" to get back on track with your nutrition goals!

What the Pros Eat:

Nutrition and health professionals from around the country were asked what they like to eat to stay healthy and fit - here are just a few of their favorite meals, snacks, and foods!

"The easiest, quickest and least messy breakfast I have found, is a vanilla Greek yogurt smoothie. 1 cup Greek yogurt and a small handful of fruit (what ever is handy...kiwi, pineapple, mango, strawberry). Blend, drink and be completely satisfied till for 3-4 hours."

- Sarah Gleason RD LD
Nutrition Therapist
Off-line, MO

"Raspberries, especially ones I pick myself. One food with it all! Good looks, anti-oxidants, fiber, intense and remarkable flavor, and all natural."

- Kathleen Searles, MS, RD, LDN
Nutrition Consultant
Boston, MA

"My favorite food is falafel. I love going

chilled leftovers) and serve in a whole wheat pita pocket

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Recipe of the Month: Homemade Spicy Kale Chips



1 bunch kale
1 Tbsp olive oil
1 tsp sea salt
1 tsp cayenne pepper
Cracked black pepper to taste
Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Line an insulated cookie sheet with parchment paper.
2. Using a kitchen shears, remove the leaves from the stems and break into bite size pieces. Wash and thoroughly dry kale.
3. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt, cayenne pepper, and black pepper.
4. Bake for about 10 - 15 minutes or until the edges are brown.

Baked Kale Chips: Servings: 6
Amount Per Serving: 58 Calories, 2.8 g Fat, 7.6 g Carbohydrates, 1.5 g Fiber, 2.5 g Protein

Quote of the Month

"The best six doctors anywhere
And no one can deny it
Are sunshine, water, rest, and air
Exercise and diet.
These six will gladly you attend
If only you are willing
Your mind they'll ease
Your will they'll mend
And charge you not a shilling."

-Nursery rhyme quoted by Wayne Fields, What the River Knows, 1990

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to as many different restaurants as possible and comparing the various ways that they prepare and present falafel!

- Rebecca Bitzer MS, RD, LD
Rebecca Bitzer & Associates
Annapolis, Greenbelt and Columbia MD

"Boiled Lobster or anything with lobster in it even lobster pizza!

Shrimp- I saute fresh shrimp in olive oil and add curry and cumin to it to go with rice and cooked spinach. White fish- from basa, tilapia to sole and cod- I love the light flaky texture of white fish and quick cooking time- so versatile with any fresh spices, veggies and grains. The easiest way is to bake fish in their own foil packets at 350F for 20 minutes- can't get easier than that!"

- Emma Fogt, MBA, MS, RD, LDN
Nutrition Consultant
Galdwyne, PA 19035

"My motto: "Eat like a king at breakfast, like a prince at lunch and like a pauper for dinner!" My favorite meal of the day is breakfast, The healthy grain, fiber, anti-oxidant part of my breakfast comes from Kashi Go Lean, about 3/4 cup, with 1 TBSP of ground flax seed, plus 1/2 cup blueberries and about 3/4 cup almond milk. The good quality protein comes from an egg plus about 1/2 cup of egg whites, over easy, in a non-stick pan with cooking spray."

- Nora Clemens
Registered / Licensed Dietitian
Osprey, FL

"High fiber chicken wrap..
Heat 2 tbsp of onion, tomato and green pepper with 2-3 oz. grilled chicken strips. Place in a heated high fiber tortilla shell, sprinkle with 2% cheese, cumin and garlic and top with some salsa and fat free sour cream!"
Kelly Devine Rickert, MS, RD, CSSD, LDN
Registered Dietitian and ACE Certified Personal Trainer

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About Kathleen Searles, MS, RD, LDN

I am a Registered Dietitian and am licensed to practice in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. The exciting field of nutrition has been my passion ever since I took a foods class with my friends in high school. Through my work in different states and different settings I have developed my philosophy of helping people improve their diets by finding foods that fit into their particular routines, budgets, and preferences. I look forward to helping you solve your nutrition challenges with tasty and satisfying foods.