

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



Dear Readers,

The first cool days of fall will soon be with us. The last summer days in New England are precious, but fall is when we really shine! Crisp new apples, plump pumpkins, golden squashes, parsnips, and turnips enliven our menus and senses. In this issue you will learn more about healthy carbohydrates and get some tips for fun football entertaining. I hope you will enjoy keeping healthy this month!

Enjoy!

- Kathleen

Article of the Month: Weight Loss and the Glycemic Index

Research has found that when you eat a balanced meal of complex carbs, lean protein, and heart healthy fat your blood sugar levels will be better stabilized which will help manage hunger and ultimately effect overall calorie intake.

Regarding the topic of carbohydrates, this month I am going to use the Glycemic Index as a guide on how to select the right carbohydrates to fuel your body for energy and weight loss. All carbohydrates are not created equal and therefore the TYPE of carbohydrates you eat are very important.

Glycemic Index 101:

- * The Glycemic Index (GI) tells us how much our blood sugar rises when we eat a carbohydrate food source
- * Carbohydrate sources with a high GI result in a rapid increase in blood sugar, leading to increase in insulin levels. Diets filled with high Glycemic Index foods are linked to increased risks for diabetes and heart disease
- * For weight control and optimal health, foods with a low GI should be emphasized.
- * Protein and fat have little or no impact on blood sugar, therefore adding a little protein and fat to your carbohydrate will slow down the digestion process without giving a big insulin surge.

More Tips:

- 1. Brown is almost always better.** Whenever possible, replace highly processed grains, sugars, and cereals with minimally processed whole grain products. Brown foods usually indicate that the least amount of processing has been used and the grain is still whole. Brown foods are usually high in fiber. Whole grains are more filling and are usually less calorie dense than refined white products.
- 2. Eat more carbohydrates in natural, minimally processed form.** We need carbohydrates; therefore we do not want to completely eliminate them from our diet. Focus on eating carbohydrates from their natural state instead of processed forms.
- 3. Always include a little bit of protein and fat at every meal.** By pairing your carbohydrate with a little protein and fat then you will ultimately be better able to manage hunger levels...resulting in more will power (it is so much easier to say no thank you when you are not hungry), and ultimately you will lose weight. Protein and fat will help slow down the rate of digestion and absorption of carbohydrates. Often, your protein source will also include fat so this is no excuse to add extra mayo, butter, or salad dressing to



every meal. For example, cheese has protein and fat, therefore if you were DYING for some cheese on your sandwich, then skip the other high fat toppings. BALANCE is key.

4. Portion size matters. The glycemic index is based on how a serving of carbohydrates affect your blood sugar levels. If you eat more than a standard serving size, then you are in effect consuming more carbohydrates which will result in a greater rise in blood sugar levels. However, if you are in the habit of choosing high fiber carbohydrate sources, then you are less likely to over eat these foods because they are more filling than the more refined carbohydrates. Remember, the standard serving size for carbohydrate serving is 1/2 cup.

Football Foods and Tailgating Tips!

Football season can be so much fun! This is such an enjoyable time of year but many people struggle with balancing a good time without ending up as their team's newest Linebacker. No matter where you watch the games the issue that everyone is faced with is game foods and drinks. Here are some easy tips to help you stay healthy through football season:

Tailgating Tips:

1. Maintain your gym routine. You may need to wake up earlier or add in extra intensity, but the extra calorie burn will help keep you fit all season long!
2. Eat a small snack or mini meal prior to the game. This little tip can really help increase your willpower and help keep your hands out of the chip basket.
3. Limit alcohol intake. If you do drink, find a way to monitor your calorie consumption. You can easily substitute a regular beer (about 150 calories) for a Beck's Light (64 calories). This can save 86 calories per beverage, which can really add up over the course of the game.
4. Bring your own food. Whether you are watching the game in the stadium or at someone's house, tempting food is almost guaranteed to be around. Instead of giving in, bring your own food to help keep you in line. A vegetable or fruit tray is the perfect appetizer. Try serving with some homemade hummus or low-fat dip to add some variety. Watching the game in the stadium? Keep some nuts and fresh fruit in your bag to keep you from ordering from the pizza stand.



Factors that influence how a food is categorized in Glycemic Index:

1. Fiber content - Fiber is not digested by the body; therefore it provides no additional calories. Fiber also slows down the rate at which other carbohydrate sources (sugars) are digested by the body, resulting in less of a rise in blood sugar levels.

News and Events:

This month I will be meeting with high school freshmen to talk about eating well as they are having more meals away from home. Today's teens are juggling busy schedules, sports commitments, and time with friends. One good tip for teens is to PLAN their snacks.

A good snack should include some healthy carbohydrate plus some protein and fiber.

Some simple ideas are:

- * triscuits and a part-skim mozzarella cheese stick
- * apple slices with peanut butter
- * raisins or dried cranberries and nuts

Could your teen use some guidance about balancing their schedule with a healthy diet? Or, maybe you need a new game plan yourself for the new season! Call or e-mail today to set up a visit!

Recipe of the Month: Black Bean Skillet Chili

Reproduced with permission of Food and Health (www.foodandhealth.com)

- 1 small chopped onion
- 1 minced garlic clove
- 1/2 diced small bell pepper
- 1/4 cup crushed tomatoes
- 1 x 15 oz. can black beans (including liquid)
- 1/2 4 oz. can diced chili peppers
- 1/2 tsp. cumin

Heat 1/4 cup of water in a large skillet or pot. Add the onion, garlic and bell pepper, and cook over high heat, stirring often, until the onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Stir in the remaining ingredients, and simmer stirring occasionally for 15 minutes.

Servings:

Makes 3 servings. Serving size: 1 cup

Diabetic Exchanges:

Bread Starch:1.5

Very Lean Meat:1.0

Vegetable:1.0

Total Preparation & Cooking Time:
30 Min (10 For Prep,20 For Cook)

Per Serving:

2. Ripeness - The more ripe a fruit or vegetable is, the greater sugar content it has, therefore it has a higher Glycemic Index. For example, a green banana will have a lower Glycemic Index than a brown banana.

3. Type of starch - The type of starch in a product will influence the rate of digestion and absorption of the carbohydrate. For example, amylopectin, the starch found in white potatoes is digested and absorbed more quickly than amylose, the starch found in sweet potatoes.

4. Fat content - Fat slows down the rate of digestion and absorption of carbohydrates into the bloodstream. Therefore, the higher the fat content, the lower the Glycemic Index. For this reason, it is always recommended that all meals contain a small amount of fat.

5. Physical form - Foods that have been more processed will have a higher Glycemic Index than foods with minimal processing.

Quote of the Month

"Develop the winning edge; small differences in your performance can lead to large differences in your results." - Brian Tracy

Calories:160, Total Fat:1g, Saturated Fat:0g, Trans Fat:0g, Cholesterol:0mg, Sodium:450mg, Carbohydrates: 30g, Dietary Fiber:9g, Sugars:3.3g, Protein:8g, Vitamin A:233.2iu (4%), Vitamin C:32.4mg (53%), Calcium: 73mg (7%), Iron:2.4mg (13%)

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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.