

## The Lunchbox Nutritionist

Kathleen Searles MS, RD, LDN



Hello! I grew up in a family of teachers, so September always signaled a new beginning for us. Labor Day was like New Year's Day! What better time to dust off those New Year's resolutions and finish the year progressing toward your goals? To help you on your way, this month's newsletter reviews the dietitian's take on kitchen essentials - things to have on hand to help you put together healthy meals and snacks. - Kathleen Searles

- Kathleen Searles

P.S. Let me know if you don't see YOUR favorite kitchen essential! I'll share the list in a future edition!

## Ingredients for Success: Stock the Kitchen

### Fridge Essentials:

You may not want to or need to purchase ALL of the below ingredients, but here you will find a comprehensive list of foods to keep on hand for a healthy and more vibrant life. Mix it up. Some of the ingredients - especially the produce, may vary from week to week depending on your work, travel, and social schedule as well as your family's preferences.

**Fresh Produce.** An essential to healthier living is to eat more fruits and vegetables. A few staples include: lettuce, onions, red and green bell peppers, cucumbers, celery, tomatoes, carrots, spinach, mushrooms, lemons, apples, oranges, and berries.

**Quick produce alternatives.** If you never seem to get around to washing, cutting, and eating the fresh produce you purchase, then start filling your basket with healthy "fast food." Pre-cut and pre-washed fruits and vegetables and cut varieties are now available. A few of those convenience produce items include: cherry tomatoes, pre-sliced carrots, baby carrots, pre-rinsed lettuce, pre-sliced mushrooms, steam in the bag vegetables such as broccoli, snow peas, sugar snap peas, and California Blend...just to name a few.

### Additional foods to stock the fridge with:

Eggs

Liquid egg whites

Nonfat Greek yogurt. Greek yogurt can be an excellent, high protein, low calorie alternative to sour cream.

1% or skim milk (if you are sensitive to milk or dairy, then use almond, rice, or soy milk)

Reduced fat cheese

1% or non-fat cottage cheese

Wholly Guacamole 100 calorie packs

Laughing Cow light cheese spread



Organic butter (unsalted)  
 Light whipped butter such as Brummel and Brown Yogurt Butter Spread.  
 Turkey or center cut bacon. For a healthier alternative buy nitrate free.  
 Tofu Shiritaki Noodles  
 Salad dressings such as: Walden Farms Balsamic Vinaigrette (or other salad dressings of choice), Annie's Gingerly Vinaigrette, Buttermilk Ranch Dressing and Annie's Low Fat Raspberry Vinaigrette  
 100% Natural Fruit Spread  
 Sabra Hummus and single pack hummus  
 Rotisserie Chicken

**Freezer Essentials:**

A well-stocked freezer with vegetables, fruits, and lean meats will ensure you always have the foods on hand to whip up a healthy meal! Here are just a few recommended items to keep on hand.

Frozen vegetables such as green peas, edamame, broccoli, spinach, onions, stir fry blend, California Bend, Italian blend,  
 Unsweetened fruit such as blueberries, strawberries, blackberries (or a mix of all three), mango, peaches  
 Boneless skinless lean chicken breast  
 Ground turkey breast  
 Lean ground beef (90% or higher)  
 Lean stew meat (i.e. Laura's Lean)  
 Shrimp  
 Fish such as tilapia, catfish, and salmon  
 Garden Burger veggie patties  
 Applegate Farms chicken sausage

**Kitchen Cooking Essential Equipment:**



A well-stocked kitchen means not only having the right ingredients on hand, but also the right kitchen tools and utensils. Here is a list of some kitchen cookware essentials that will ensure (with the right ingredients) you are ready to prepare any meal!

- Crock-pot
- Rice Cooker
- Storage containers with the appropriate matching lids
- Aluminum Foil
- Blender
- Cutting Boards. Consider investing in a few different color coded cutting boards. It is nice to have a cutting board only for raw meat, one for fish, one for fruits and vegetables, and then one for foods with a strong flavor such as garlic and onions.
- Food processors (a mini one is great for quickly chopping and dicing onions, bell peppers etc. All you really need though is a standard 4 - 7 cup food processor to do just about anything)

**News and Events:**

*Kathleen Searles is now a Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics! CSSDs apply sports nutrition science to fueling fitness, sport, and athletic performance.*

The "back to school" season is right around the corner! I would love to help you find personalized ideas to keep your family healthy with high quality lunches. Give me a call today (978-697-2834) or send an e-mail ([ksearles@lunchbox-nutritionist.com](mailto:ksearles@lunchbox-nutritionist.com)) for more information!

**Pantry Essentials:**

- Truvia or Stevia (these are no-calorie substitutes for sugar and a much healthier alternative to artificial sweeteners)
- Whole wheat flour
- Quinoa
- Whole wheat pasta
- Couscous
- Brown rice and instant brown rice
- Quick cooking barley
- Bran flakes
- Whole wheat bread, pita bread and wraps
- Old-fashioned oats and steel cut oats



The right knives...all you really need are a few good paring knives, 1 - 2 chef knives, and a serrated knife.

Oil Mister. An oil mister is a healthier alternative to traditional non-stick cooking sprays.

Measuring cups and spoons

Food Scale

Mixing bowls

Pots and Pans

## Recipe of the Month: Nutrient Packed Greek Yogurt

This summer I spent hours browsing through the delightful cookbook Greek Revival, by Patricia Moore-Pastides. One simple recipe was especially inspiring, and I have been creating variations on this healthy breakfast all summer!

Here is my take on her recipe:

1 cup chopped fruit

6 oz. plain fat-free Greek yogurt

½ tsp. honey

1 ½ tsp. wheat germ

1 tbsp. toasted chopped or sliced nuts

You can vary the fruit and nuts to have a different breakfast! The original recipe used green grapes and walnuts. My favorite so far is Bing cherries and almonds. More recently I have been using peaches and almonds..I'm thinking that peaches and pecans would make a good combo too.

Approximate Nutrition Info: 285 Calories, 49 g carbohydrate, 20 g protein, and 4 g fat

## Quote of the Month:

"All who have accomplished great things have had a great aim, have fixed their gaze on a goal which was high, one which sometimes seemed impossible."

- Orison Swett Marden

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Fiber One cereal (Original)

Canned Beans (black beans, black eyed peas, Lima beans, pinto beans, kidney beans, navy beans..when possible purchase low sodium alternatives

Crushed tomatoes (low sodium)

Rotel tomatoes (or other spiced tomato variety)

Diced tomatoes (low sodium)

Tomato sauce

Salsa

Artichoke hearts

Roasted bell peppers

Pure Pumpkin

Pineapple chunks in own juice

No sugar added applesauce

Water packed tuna and salmon

Sun dried tomatoes (dry)

Reduced sodium chicken, beef and vegetable broth

Pickles

## Condiments, Seasonings, Herbs and Spices:

Cinnamon

Nutmeg

Bay leaves

Black pepper

Lemon pepper

Cayenne pepper

Garlic powder

Dried herbs (basil, oregano, rosemary, thyme, tarragon)

Low sodium Cajun seasoning

Italian herb blend

Onion powder

Pure vanilla extract

Caper

Dijon mustard

Vinegars: red wine, apple cider, and

balsamic

Hot sauce

Worcestershire sauce

Unsweetened cocoa powder

Sea Salt

Agave Nectar

Fresh Garlic

Honey

Pure maple syrup

Reduced sodium soy sauce

Fish sauce

Chile-garlic sauce

## Nuts, Seeds, Fats and Oils:

Almonds

Walnuts

Nut butter (such as peanut butter, almond butter, or soy butter)

Sunflower seeds

Pine nuts

Extra-virgin Olive oil

Canola oil

Coconut Oil

Canola or olive oil mayonnaise

Avocados



### **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.