

JFS@CHAI HOUSE STAYING CONNECTED



Special Nutrition and Health Edition

Hello Chai House residents. We're happy to be able to print a special edition of our newsletter focusing on nutrition and health. We offer tips for buying and eating healthy foods, managing diabetes, and share a couple of healthy snack recipes. Hope you enjoy! A huge thank you to our Serve the Moment volunteer, Sarah, for putting this together. See info about her at the end.

10 TIPS TO LOWER BLOOD SUGAR

If you have diabetes, lowering your blood sugar is the crucial to prevent or reverse diabetes complications, including heart, kidney, eye and nerve diseases. Here are some tips to reduce your blood sugar levels, no prescription required:

1. Watch Your Carb Intake. Choose whole, unprocessed carbohydrates over refined and simple sugars.
2. Avoid Eating LARGE Meals. Fuel your body with small meals at regular intervals throughout the day.
3. Fiber Is Your Friend. Fiber helps keep you full longer and can be found in fruits and vegetables, legumes, nuts and grains.
4. Sleep. Have a goal to get 7-9 hours of uninterrupted sleep per night.
5. Lose Some Weight. Improve insulin resistance (the hormone that regulates blood sugar levels); Improve hemoglobin A1C levels; Decrease risk of cardio-metabolic complications.
6. Drink More Water. Hydration is critical to maintain healthy fluid balance and can be used to curb questionable hunger cues. Try adding fruit to your water for natural flavor.

7. Yoga & Meditation. Reduces stress hormones; Improve emotional well-being; Practice mindfulness; Boost strength and balance.

8. Eat Breakfast. A healthy, balanced breakfast includes healthy complex carbs, lean protein, and vegetables; such as, egg scramble with whole-grain toast, or plain Greek yogurt with berries and nuts.

9. Build Muscle. Weights and resistance training Increase bone density; Reduce insulin resistance; Increase resting metabolic rate; Induce weight loss.

10. MOVE. Exercise and movement improves blood glucose by increasing insulin sensitivity and the body's ability to use glucose as energy. Exercise boosts happiness, aids in weight management, promotes better sleep and improves emotional well-being.



CLEAN EATING 101

What is “clean eating?” Clean eating focuses on minimally processed, whole, nutrient-dense foods. Proponents of clean eating tout the overwhelming benefits including weight loss, increased energy, improved sleep, healthier skin and hair and an overall better emotional well-being.

1. Choose whole foods.
2. Limit processed foods.
3. Cut out added sugar.
4. Limit alcohol consumption.
5. Don't drink your calories.
 - Sweetened soft drinks, juices, bottled sweet tea/coffee, sports/energy drinks are loaded with sugar and calories.
6. Read nutrition labels and ingredients list.
7. Follow a plant-based diet.
8. Make water your primary beverage.
9. Eat the **R A I N B O W**.
10. Make healthy versions of your favorite treats.
11. Substitute vegetables in recipes.
 - For example, cauliflower can be minced to mimic rice, mashed like potatoes or used in pizza crust.
12. Shop the **PERIMETER** at the grocery stores where fresh produce and healthy protein sources (like eggs, Greek yogurt, fish and poultry) are located.
13. Practice intuitive eating.
 - Take time to slow down at meal time and listen to your hunger/satiety cues.
14. Plan/Prep. Set time aside to plan and prep meals for the week. This will limit your temptation to order take out by having healthy food “ready to eat”.
15. Be realistic. Clean eating is not about deprivation, it is about **BALANCE**.



MYTH: All Carbohydrates Are Created Equal.

There are two types of carbohydrates:

- a. Complex carbs
- b. Simple carbs



Complex carbs take longer for the body to break down and digest,

so they keep you full for a longer duration of time.

Examples include:

- Grains (quinoa, buckwheat, whole wheat pasta)
- Fiber-Rich Fruit (apples, berries, bananas)
- Oatmeal
- Fiber-Rich Veggies (broccoli, carrots, leafy greens)
- Beans

Simple carbs are *refined carbs* and often found in processed foods and drinks. They are easy to break down and can lead to blood sugar spikes= BAD.

Example to **AVOID**:

- Fruit Juice concentrate
- Processed foods -potato chips, granola bars, crackers, cookies
- Baked goods
- Soda and other sweetened beverages (tea, coffee, etc)

MYTH: Carbs Make You Gain Weight.

The type and quantity of carbs that you eat cause weight gain. Not all carbohydrate-containing foods have the same caloric density. This myth persists because a large number of calories come from simple and refined carbohydrate consumption.

MYTH: Only White Foods Contain Carbs.

There is oftentimes confusion with foods containing carbohydrates. People often think only rice, bread, pasta, potatoes, sweets, and sugary drinks contain carbs. However, if you think beyond the classic “white carbohydrates food” items, there are other high-carb foods which include sweet potatoes, corn, peas, grains, yogurt & milk and fruit (also known as complex carbs).

READING FOOD LABELS

Reading food labels is tricky. Food manufacturers use misleading deceptive tricks to persuade people to buy highly processed, unhealthy products. Here is a guide to help you navigate the enigmatic nutrition panel.

FIRST. Serving Size

Look here for both the serving size and the number of servings in the package.

- For example: If a package has 2.5 servings and you eat the entire content, then you have to multiply all the nutritional information --including calories, protein, carbs, fats, sugars --by 2.5.

SECOND. Check the Calories!

You want to LIMIT saturated fat, trans fat and sodium intake.

Daily Value %:

5% or less is LOW

20% or more is HIGH

THIRD. Focus on NET Carbs.

Net carbs= Carbohydrates - Dietary Fiber

The net carbs are a type of complex carbohydrate that your body cannot break down and absorb, also known as FIBER. Fiber slows post-meal blood sugar rise, suppresses appetite, reduces cholesterol levels, and promotes weight loss.

- For example: Rolled oats have 30g of carbs, BUT 5g of fiber, the net carb for this product is 25g. This is due to the fact that we don't absorb fiber (also known as resistance starch).

FOURTH. Focus on Protein.

Protein is one of the major three macromolecules needed to Build, maintain and repair tissues and organs; Make hormones; Support a healthy immune system. Protein helps you feel full, which, in turn, can help you eat less and control your blood sugar levels.

FIFTH. Check The Ingredients.

Ingredients are listed by quantity— highest to lowest. Stay away from foods that include lots of preservatives or ingredients you can not pronounce. Foods that have more ingredients are more processed= BAD.



HEALTHY SNACKS

When opting for healthier snacks, it is important to be mindful of calories and portion control if you are trying to watch your weight. The key is to pay attention to the caloric makeup and the ingredients in the snack. Many snacks can be high in saturated fat, sugar and salt and offer little nutritional value.

Fiber-rich foods, such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains are healthy options for snacking. It takes longer for your body to digest and absorb fiber, which makes you feel full for a longer period of time.

Try some of these tips for healthier snacking:

- Keep fruits and vegetables stocked in your fridge
- Check in with your hunger and fullness cues before you grab something in the kitchen
 - Are you Bored? Happy? Sad? Stressed? Or Hungry?
- Have a glass of water first (maybe you are thirsty)
- Watch your portion control by placing snacks in a dish, rather than eating out of the bag
- Eliminate temptation by limiting junk food in the house

Some healthy snack ideas:

- Greek yogurt with berries
- Handful of nuts
- Hummus and veggies (carrots, celery, bell pepper)
- Apple slices with peanut butter
- Oatmeal with dried fruit
- Popcorn (hand popped)
- Edamame
- Energy balls ([see below for recipe](#))
- Tuna with whole grain pita crackers
- Roasted chickpeas ([see below for recipe](#))
- Rice cake with peanut butter and banana
- Hard boiled eggs



No Bake Energy Bites

Ingredients

- 1 cup old-fashioned oats
- 2/3 cup toasted shredded coconut (optional)
- 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1/2 cup ground flaxseed
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 Tbsp chia seeds (optional)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract



Instructions

1. **Stir everything together** in a large bowl until combined.
2. **Chill.** Cover the mixing bowl and chill in the fridge for 1-2 hours. (This will help the mixture stick together easier).
3. **Roll into balls.** (About 1" each)
4. **Enjoy!** Refrigerate in a sealed container for up to a week or freeze for up to 3 months!

Roasted Chickpeas

Ingredients

- 1 15oz can chickpeas
- 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp onion powder
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1/4 tsp fresh ground pepper
- 1/2 - 1 Tbsp olive oil



Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 400F.
2. Spray a baking sheet with non-stick spray. Set aside.
3. Rinse and dry the chickpeas.
4. In a small bowl, mix together cumin, paprika, garlic powder, sea salt and pepper. Set aside.
5. Bake chickpeas in preheated oven on prepared baking sheet for **15 minutes** (do not add ingredients yet).
6. Remove the chickpeas from the oven and drizzle 1/2- 1 tablespoon olive oil, stirring, until evenly coated. If necessary, slowly add more olive oil until all coated.
7. Add spices to chickpeas and stir until evenly coated.
8. Bake at 400F for 10 more minutes, then stir.
9. Return stirred chickpeas to oven and bake for an additional 5-10 minutes until desired crispiness (total of 35-40 minutes).
10. Remove from the oven. Enjoy!

About Sarah

My name is Sarah Levitt and I am volunteering with Serve the Moment, a program launched by Repair the World, designed to mobilize Jewish individuals to engage in social justice work and advocacy. The COVID-19 pandemic has re-heightened my awareness of social inequities and systemic injustices that individuals in my community face. My Jewish values of tikkun olam (repair the world), tzedakah (pursue righteousness and justice) and g'milut hasadim (spread acts of love and kindness) guides my involvement in the community.



I graduated from Long Beach State University with a Bachelor's in Kinesiology Exercise Science. I am pursuing a Physician Assistant Studies graduate degree at Drexel University in the Fall. My passion for health, nutrition and fitness guides my involvement in community organizations that address food insecurity, food deserts, and nutrition education. As a future physician assistant, I plan to institute a food pharmacy program that gives medically underserved individuals access to healthy food to manage and/or prevent chronic diseases.



Jewish Family Services
of silicon valley

CONTACT US: Our Office is open!

Mon-Thurs 11am-5pm

Fri 11am-3:30pm

Appointment Recommended

Office Number: 408-947-7256

Caroline: 408-634-3740

carolineg@jfssv.org

Sumi: 408-785-0311

sumik@jfssv.org

Fern: 408-357-7450 / 408-905-7758

ferna@jfssv.org

Barney: 408-357-7451

barneyb@jfssv.org