

Commodities Newsletter

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For questions regarding the commodities, please call 269-445-0231.

This project has been partially funded with Federal funds from the USDA, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by way of the MI Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Family Nutrition Program (FNP) at Michigan State University. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income; it can help to buy nutritious foods for a better diet. FNP provides nutrition education to SNAP participants. To find out more, contact your local DHS office, check online at <http://www.mfia.state.mi.us/mars/index.asp>. In Michigan, you can also call the Center for Civil Justice Food Stamp Hotline (1-800-481-4989).

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Nutrition Facts for Better Meals

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You make choices every day about the foods you eat. Some of these choices may seem trivial, others important. But as insignificant as a single choice may seem, made over and over, it can have a major impact on your health and your life.

Nutrition is the science of how the body uses food to nourish itself. Nutrients are chemical substances the body needs for building, maintaining, and repairing body tissues and for efficient body functioning. Specifically, nutrients provide:

- Materials necessary for growth, maintenance, and repair of body tissues. Protein, minerals, vitamins, and water are necessary for the body to build and repair bones and tissues throughout life.
- Regulators for all body processes. Vitamins, minerals, water, and proteins do this job.
- Fuel for energy for work and play. Carbohydrates, fats, and proteins are fuel nutrients.

Nutrients fall into six general classes: carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals, and water. Carbohydrates, fats, and proteins furnish fuel to provide energy for the body. Both carbohydrates and proteins provide 4 calories per gram, while fat provides 9 calories per gram. Vitamins and minerals are necessary for regulating body processes. Water accounts for about 50% of a woman's body weight and

about 60% of a man's body weight. Water is part of all body fluids and is necessary for regulating temperature, digesting food, transporting nutrients to the cells, and eliminating body wastes.

Although everyone needs the same nutrients, they need different amounts. For example, children need more protein per unit of body weight to build tissues as they grow. Men and women also have varying requirements for different nutrients. For example, women need more iron than men. Active people require more nutrients than inactive people. People recovering from an accident or illness need more of certain nutrients than healthy people. Also, people who have an immune deficiency from disease, such as cancer or AIDS, require more nutrients.

The body needs more than 40 different nutrients. Although nutrients are found in all foods, some foods are better sources of nutrients than others. The body needs the following key nutrients in proper amounts.

Protein

Protein is critical for building and repairing body tissue. Protein breaks down into simpler compounds called amino acids. The body needs 22 amino acids, and all but eight can be manufactured by

an adult body, while a child's body can manufacture all but nine. These amino acids that cannot be manufactured by the body are called essential amino acids and must be obtained from food. Foods containing all eight (or nine) essential amino acids in adequate amounts include meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk, cheese, and soybeans. Dried beans and peas, nuts, peanuts, and peanut butter also contain large amounts of essential amino acids. An adult can get adequate amounts of all essential amino acids by consuming animal products or a variety of plant products. Because children have higher protein needs, a person should consult with a dietitian before eliminating all animal protein sources from a child's diet.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are used by the body as a source of readily available energy, to help the body use fat efficiently, and to spare protein from use as an energy source. They can be classified as simple carbohydrates, complex carbohydrates, and fiber. Fiber does not count as a source of energy because it cannot be broken down by human digestive enzymes. Carbohydrates are widely distributed in plant foods, while milk is the primary animal source. Sugars, including honey, molasses, and other sweets, also provide carbohydrates.

Fats (Lipids)

Fats and oils are a concentrated source of energy. They are a precursor for cholesterol and sex hormone synthesis, components of cell membranes, and carry fat-soluble vitamins. The fat content of many foods, including the amount of total fat, trans fat, and cholesterol in a serving, can be found on the Nutrition Facts panel on food packages. Fats are found in most foods but are found in higher amounts in oils, butter, margarine, and salad dressing.

Calcium

Calcium plays major structural and functional roles in the body, including building the structure of bones and teeth, aiding in muscle and nerve activity and blood clotting. Most calcium in the body is stored in the bones and is made available to the fluids and soft tissues that regulate vital body processes. The best sources of calcium are milk and milk products. Other good sources are dark green leafy vegetables, canned fish with bones, dry beans, and corn tortillas. The body needs phosphorus and vitamin

D for calcium to be used properly; phosphorus is found in foods that contain protein and calcium. A good supply of these foods will ensure enough phosphorus.

Iron

Iron is essential for the formation of red blood cells and for helping red blood cells carry oxygen to the cells of the body. Good sources of iron are red meat, poultry, fish, dark green vegetables, peas and beans, dried fruits, dark molasses, and whole grains or enriched breads and cereals.

Magnesium

Magnesium plays a regulatory role in the body. It is required for energy metabolism, is a cofactor of enzymes, and is needed for nerve and muscle function. Magnesium is found in seafood, legumes, nuts, chocolate, and unprocessed grains.

Zinc

Zinc is important for cell maturation and immune function, and is a vital component of proteins. Zinc is found in shellfish, fortified cereals, meat, legumes, and chocolate, and its absorption is influenced by many factors.

Vitamin A

Vitamin A is important for growth, normal vision, and keeping the skin, eyes, and linings of the body healthy. Although vitamin A is found only in meat and other animal foods, a precursor or provitamin called beta-carotene is converted by the body into vitamin A and is found in deep yellow and dark green leafy vegetables. Vitamin A and beta-carotene are found in liver, butter, margarine, egg yolks, fortified milk, and cheese. Broccoli, carrots, spinach, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, cantaloupe, and red chili contain only beta-carotene.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D, in combination with calcium and phosphorus, is necessary for forming strong bones and teeth. In recent years, scientists have discovered many new roles for vitamin D. Vitamin D comes from egg yolks, butter, liver, sardines, salmon, shrimp, and vitamin D-fortified milk. It can also be produced by the body when the skin is exposed to sunlight.

Vitamin C

Vitamin C, also called ascorbic acid, acts as an antioxidant and helps keep blood vessels and connective tissue strong. It is also necessary for forming teeth and bones and healing wounds. The best sources of vitamin C are citrus fruits,

green peppers, green chili, and strawberries. Other good sources are tomatoes, cabbage, melons, broccoli, and potatoes.

B Vitamins

Of all the B vitamins, thiamin, riboflavin, and niacin are the best known. The B vitamins are important for a good appetite and healthy digestion, healthy skin, and proper nerve functioning. Meats, whole grains, and enriched breads and cereals are good sources. Milk is an excellent source of riboflavin and pork is a good source of niacin.

Folate

Folate, a B vitamin, is also called folic acid or folacin. Folate is necessary for proper red blood cell formation and cell growth. It is also important prior to becoming pregnant to ensure prevention of spina bifida. Some health care professionals recommend that all women of child-bearing age consume 600 micrograms (mcg or µg) of folate per day because adequate folate is most critical in the very beginning of pregnancy, before most women realize they are pregnant. Good sources of folate include dried beans and peas, green leafy vegetables, liver, oranges and orange juice, peanuts and sunflower seeds. Fortified breakfast cereals, pasta, and breads are also good sources.

It isn't necessary to shop with a nutrient guide to select healthy foods. In general, vegetables and fruits with darker color have a higher amount of beta-carotene and folate. Choose dark green vegetables and deep yellow or orange vegetables and fruits often. Consume a variety of nutrient-dense foods and beverages. Choose foods that limit the intake of saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars, salt, and alcohol.

Variety is the key to getting the array of nutrients offered by each food group. Variety starts with including foods from every food group and continues with consuming a variety of different foods from within each group. The nutritional adequacy of diets planned using MyPyramid depends greatly on the selection of a variety of foods.

RECIPES

Stir-Fry Chicken & Vegetables

3 Tbl soy sauce
1 Tbl cornstarch
2 Tbl brown sugar
1 tsp garlic powder or 1 clove garlic, minced
3/4 tsp ground ginger
1 1/2 c chicken broth or water
2 (12.5 oz) cans chicken
6 c frozen mixed vegetables
Pasta or rice

1. Wash hands and clean food preparation area.
2. In a small mixing bowl, combine soy sauce and cornstarch to form a thin paste.
3. In a large skillet on medium heat, mix paste, brown sugar, garlic, ginger, and broth or water.
4. Stir constantly and bring to a boil for 1 minute to thicken.
5. Add chicken and vegetables.
6. Mix until well coated.
7. Cook, stirring occasionally until thoroughly heated.
8. Serve over whole grain rice or pasta.

Makes six (1-cup) servings.

Tip: Use chicken broth instead of water for added flavor in this recipe. If homemade broth is not available, use low-sodium bouillon cubes or low-sodium chicken broth. Bouillon cubes are available in the spice area at the grocery store. Add one cube for each cup of water.

Calories 150, Calories from fat 15, total fat 1.5g, saturated fat 0g, cholesterol 15mg, sodium 510 mg, carbohydrate 24g, dietary fiber 3g, sugars 10g, protein 10g University of Tennessee Extension

Bar-B-Que Cups

1/2 (24 oz) can, pork or beef
1/2 c finely diced onion
1/2 c barbecue sauce
2 Tbl brown sugar
1 can refrigerated biscuit dough
3/4 c shredded cheddar cheese

1. Wash hands & clean food preparation area.
2. Preheat oven to 400°.
3. Spray muffin pan with nonstick cooking spray
4. Put canned beef or pork in small saucepan to heat.
5. Drain liquid and fat from beef or pork and discard.
6. Finely chop pork or beef.

7. In medium size mixing bowl, mix meat, onion, barbecue sauce and brown sugar.
8. Press biscuits into muffin pan to form cups.
9. Spoon meat mixture into biscuit cups and top with cheese.
10. Bake for about 20 minutes or until crust turns golden brown.

Makes 10 (1-cup) servings.

Tip: Small (10 biscuits to can) canned biscuits work best for this recipe. One small biscuit should be enough dough for each muffin cup. Or, if you buy a can of large biscuits, just use half a biscuit in each muffin cup. Use reduced fat cheese to lower the saturated fat content.

Calories 280 (from fat 180), total fat 19g, saturated fat 8g, cholesterol 75mg, sodium 240 mg, carbohydrate 7g, sugars 3g, protein 18g. University of Tennessee Extension

Beans with Rice & Meat

- 4 c cooked beans (pinto, great northern, or kidney)
- 4 c water
- 1 (24 oz) can beef or pork
- 2 c rice (uncooked)
- Salt and pepper to taste

1. Wash hands & clean food preparation area.
2. In small sauce pan, heat canned meat until fat melts, then drain.
3. In large sauce pan, mix beans, water, canned meat & rice.
4. Over medium heat, bring to a boil.
5. Stir occasionally.
6. Reduce heat to low.
7. Cover and simmer for 25 minutes or until rice is tender.
8. Add salt and pepper to taste

Makes 12 (1-cup) servings.

Tip: Have leftover meat? Plan to use your leftover meat in recipes like this one. Instead of using canned meat, just cut up the leftover meat (beef, pork or chicken) and substitute it for the canned meat. Add about 1 1/2 cups of leftover meat and save your canned meat for a rainy day.

Calories 240 (from fat 30), total fat 3.5g, saturated fat 0.5g, cholesterol 30mg, sodium 630mg, carbohydrate 37g, dietary fiber 5g, sugars 1g, protein 16g. University of Tennessee Extension

Beef Stroganoff

- 1 (24 oz) can, beef
- 1 medium onion, chopped finely
- 2 stalks celery, chopped finely
- 1 medium bell pepper, chopped finely
- 1/2 tsp garlic salt
- 1 (10 3/4 oz) can, cream of mushroom soup
- 1/2 c water
- 1/2 c instant nonfat dry milk powder
- 1-2 Tbl Worcestershire sauce
- 1 c fat-free plain yogurt

1. Wash hands & clean food preparation area.
2. In large skillet over medium heat, cook canned beef until warm; drain liquid and fat, then discard.
3. In the same skillet, combine drained beef, onion, celery, bell pepper and garlic salt.
4. Cook until vegetables are tender.
5. Add mushroom soup, water, dry milk powder and Worcestershire sauce.
6. Bring to boil for 5 minutes, stirring constantly.
7. Turn heat to low.
8. Add yogurt.
9. Simmer for 15 minutes.
10. Serve over cooked rice, potatoes or noodles.

Makes eight (1-cup) servings.

Tip: Which color bell pepper is best for this recipe? Any color pepper will taste great, so let price help you choose. Produce is often discounted for quick sale, so look for the "specials" area in your produce aisle. Make sure you use the pepper within a couple of days for the best results.

Calories 260 (from fat 110), total fat 12g, saturated fat 4g, cholesterol 55mg, sodium 450mg, total carbohydrate 16g, dietary fiber 1g, sugars 11g, protein 22g. University of Tennessee Extension

Corn Bread Burger Bake

- 1 (24 oz) can beef
- 1 c cornmeal
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1/4 c chopped green pepper
- 1/4 c instant nonfat dry milk powder
- 1 (15.5 oz) can cream style corn
- 2 c grated fat-free or low-fat cheddar cheese
- 1/2 c chopped onion
- 2 eggs
- 1 c water

1. Wash hands & clean food preparation area.
2. Preheat oven to 375°.
3. Spray large casserole dish (9x13") with nonstick cooking spray.
4. In large skillet, warm canned beef & drain fat.
5. In same skillet, add onion, green pepper and chili powder.
6. Cook until onion and green pepper are softened.
7. Remove from heat and set aside.
8. In medium mixing bowl, combine cornmeal, eggs, baking soda, instant nonfat dry milk powder, water and cream style corn.
9. Spread half the cornmeal mixture evenly into casserole dish.
10. Spoon ground beef mixture over cornmeal layer.
11. Sprinkle cheese over beef layer.
12. Pour the remaining cornmeal mixture over the top.
13. Bake for 35 minutes or until topping is golden brown.

Makes eight (1-cup) servings.

Tip: Place the canned beef in the refrigerator the morning before you plan to use it. When you open the can, the fat will be solid and should be easy to remove before you start cooking.

Calories 240 (from fat 160), total fat 19g, saturated fat 7g, cholesterol 50mg, sodium 680mg, total carbohydrate 25g, dietary fiber 3g, sugars 4g, protein 21g. University of Tennessee Extension

Crunchy Tuna Salad Wraps

- 4 8-inch flour tortillas
- 4 lettuce leaves
- 1 (12 oz) can tuna, drained
- 1 c chopped celery
- 4 Tbl fat-free salad dressing

1. Wash hands & clean food preparation area.
2. In a small mixing bowl combine tuna, celery, and salad dressing.
3. Top each tortilla with a leaf of lettuce.
4. Spoon tuna salad onto each tortilla.
5. Roll tightly and serve.

Makes 4 (8-inch) wraps.

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Enchilada Rice

- 2 c cooked rice
- 1/2 c diced onion
- 1 (24.4 oz) can beef
- 1 pack taco seasoning mix
- 1/4 c instant nonfat dry milk powder
- 1 c water
- 1/2 c low-fat shredded cheddar cheese

1. Wash hands and clean food preparation area.
2. Cook rice according to package directions or use leftovers.
3. In skillet, cook meat on medium heat until browned, then add onions.
4. Drain fat and discard.
5. Add taco seasoning, instant nonfat dry milk powder, water and rice.
6. Simmer for 10 minutes.
7. Add shredded cheese to the top and serve.

Makes 6 (1/2-cup) servings.

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South of the Border Wraps

- 1 small chopped onion
- 1 Tbl canola oil
- 1 (24 oz) can pork
- 1/4 c taco seasoning
- 1 (15.5 oz) can diced tomatoes
- 2 c cooked rice
- 1/2 c water
- 1 (15.5 oz) can whole kernel corn
- 1 1/2 c low-fat cheddar cheese, shredded
- 10 8-inch flour tortillas
- Salsa (optional)
- Fat-free sour cream (optional)

1. Wash hands and clean food preparation area.
2. In a large skillet, sauté onion in canola oil over medium heat.
3. Stir in pork and taco seasoning.
4. Add whole kernel corn, tomatoes, rice & water.
5. Mix well.
6. Cover and cook for 5-10 minutes or until no liquid remains.
7. Spoon pork mixture onto each tortilla.
8. Sprinkle with shredded cheese.
9. Top with salsa and/or fat-free sour cream if desired.
10. Roll up tortilla and serve.

Makes 10 (one-wrap) servings University of Tennessee Ext.