Nutrition Matters

An anthology of articles by students in Writing in Nutrition

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Table of Contents:

Cultivating Independence, Toni Ambrogio ........................................... 3
This I Believe, Sarah Campisi .............................................................. 6
Smart Food Smarts, Mary DiGioia ....................................................... 8
What are the best sources of carbohydrates for someone with gluten intolerance?, Jenna Esoo ................................. 11
Is honey a good substitute for sugar? Which one is healthier?, Kaitlyn Fishman ........................................... 13
I believe in peanut butter!, Rebecca Hastings ....................................... 14
Too much veg in one basket? How to spread your veggies and make your farm share work, Eliza Hobert ................. 16
Produce and Veggies and Fruits, OH MY! How to eat more produce in your first apartment, Emily Kirby ............... 20
Shaping Hard to Please Kids into Easy to Please Eaters, Taryn Krietzman ........................................... 23
Make your diet as colorful as your new apartment, Samantha Mossman ........................................... 27
This I Believe…, Victoria Owens ........................................................... 31
Ask a Nutrition Specialist, Alexa Torres .............................................. 33
As the moving van pulls away and you are left in your new apartment to unpack and get settled, you are left wondering how you are going to pay for the groceries needed to fill the fridge. If you or someone you know has recently moved out of a college dorm and into an apartment, then you know that the budget can be tight and your wallet shallow. The thought of buying food is daunting because until now, either the dining halls have prepared your meals and the cost is included in your tuition, or your parents have had dinner ready each night. When faced with the choices of what to eat and prepare, are you considering frozen meals or fresh and healthy homemade dishes?

Either Way You Win

As a college student there are many reasons to eat healthy and stay fit. The stress of exams, a demanding schedule, and your new place can weigh heavily on your eating habits and routines. Whether you have roommates or are living alone, eating the proper amount of fruits and vegetables is key. The health benefits of eating an adequate amount of fruits and vegetables include heart health, vision health, stomach and intestinal health, and preventative measures against cancer. Are you getting the recommended amount of vegetables for your gender and age group category? A male age 19-30 years should be getting 2 cups/day of fruit and 3 cups/day of vegetables. A female age 19-30 years should be getting 2 cups/day of fruit and 2.5 cups/day of vegetables. Now that you are armed with the knowledge of how much to eat, let’s explore how to get that amount.

Look at the layout of your new place. Is it on the fifth floor or are you renting a house? Where are the windows located? Do you have access to a porch or balcony? You might be thinking what do these questions have to do with increasing your fruit and vegetable consumption, but let’s think further into the possibilities. A windowsill is a great place to grow vegetables. They are usually in the sun for many hours of the day and if it rains, you don’t need to water all of the time. They are also accessible and easy to take care of because of the size and location. Right at arm level, reaching outside of
your window to grab a fresh tomato for a breakfast omelet is like a scene out of a movie. Porches and balconies have additional possibilities. Flower pots filled with fresh fruits and vegetables can provide you with a summer full of fresh food. Don’t forget about herbs that can be grown on a windowsill on the interior of your apartment. If you have a close knit tenant community, growing together and sharing the produce is another option. Splitting up the harvest is a wonderful way to bring together the people you live with to promote healthy eating. Some easy to grow vegetables include tomatoes, cucumbers, and squash. As for fruit, strawberries and sugar baby watermelon are perfect for apartment farmers. Get outside and get planting!

If you feel that gardening doesn’t fit into your schedule or you are tight on space, becoming a part of community supported agriculture group (CSA) might be for you. A CSA accepts money at the beginning of a growing season and a fifteen pound or so assortment of fruits and vegetables are either delivered to your door or are ready for pick up once a week. Fresh and ready to eat, the dishes you can whip up are endless. This hassle free way of obtaining fruits and vegetables is perfect for the first time renter, especially a college student on a tight budget. The UMass Amherst CSA is $325 for a 10-week share. Other local CSA’s are $400-$500 for a 22-week share. That breaks down to only $30 a week, or $4 a day, on fresh fruits and vegetables. Find a CSA near you at localharvest.org. Saving money on gas and traveling to the grocery store keeps your wallet full and you are not only supporting local agriculture, but are also becoming a part of a community that believes in a healthier you.

Don’t Feed the Flies

Food shopping independently can be an adventure. The grocery store can be daunting for someone when they are suddenly in charge of making a meal for themselves and possibly others. A few tips can keep the money in your wallet and your carriage full of fruits and vegetables. When planning a trip to the store, plan a menu for that week. Know what you are going to buy and what meals you are going to cook. Plan to have snacks of fruits and vegetables. When you arrive home, portion the ‘snacks’ out so that they last throughout the week. When buying fruit that you are going to eat as is, buy depending on ripeness. For example, buy ripe bananas and slightly green ones.
This way you are able to eat the ripe ones over the next few days while the others ripen for later consumption. Pears and apples may require the same kind of planning. Applying for a grocery store rewards card can also save money in the produce department. Don’t buy food and let it rot - don’t feed the flies!

Frozen vegetables can be just as healthy as fresh vegetables and last quite some time. There is no need to worry about them going bad if you have the freezer space. Vegetables such as frozen peas or a mixed bag of vegetables can be a surprisingly refreshing snack. Aim to have a salad at each dinner. The great part about salads is the many different ways to make them. Look at prices at the store and see what kind of green leaves are cheapest. Aim for dark green veggies such as spinach and spring mix, but iceberg can be mixed in periodically. Be creative and shred carrots on top or add sprouts from your CSA delivery. Top your salad with whatever you like, even fruit. Surprise a guest with an Asian inspired salad with teriyaki chicken and mandarin orange slices.

**Future Farmers**

Don’t be afraid to eat healthy and get your hands dirty while planting your own produce. Community involvement can be in the form of a backyard garden with your neighbors or buying into a CSA. However you chose to eat more fruits and vegetables, don’t let a limited budget or space be a problem for you.
All it took was a bowl of Lucky Charms to realize I had lost my glow. I was no longer the quiet, but cheery, girl who smiled at others as I walked down the halls of my high school. Instead of coming home only to change into my leotard before rushing off to the dance studio, I came home to change into my sweats, grab my secret stash of Oreos, and isolate myself in my room. Tiny, red craters covered my dull, gray face, replacing the smooth, vibrant, and olive-tone it used to be. That is when I stopped believing in Lucky the Leprechaun and started believing in monsters.

Green monsters, that is. For the non-health foodie, a green monster gets its name from the addition of raw leafy green vegetables, such as baby spinach, kale, or arugula, to a fruit smoothie. Dietitians everywhere praise the benefits of leafy green vegetables, encouraging everyone to incorporate them into their diet. The nutritional profile of dark leafy greens speaks for itself. Often considered superfoods, these vegetables are chock-full of nutrients, including vitamins A, C, E, K, and some of the B vitamins; minerals such as iron, calcium, potassium, and magnesium; phytonutrients of beta-carotene, lutein, and zeaxantin; and even contain small amounts of Omega-3 fatty acids. A Green Monster, then, is just a glass of pure health.

And I was anything but healthy, having lost my physiological, mental, and spiritual strength. I used to stare at my Lucky Charms cereal, hoping for some actual lucky charms to come my way. But making the switch from the red cereal box to the green smoothie was like being stopped at an intersection and getting the green arrow signaling that it’s safe to take the left turn, off the beaten path.

This path seemed scary, especially the thought of actually drinking greens, but what I gained went far beyond nutrients. The raw greens in the smoothie offer additional benefits, including an incredible energy boost, weight loss, better digestion and regularity, mental clarity, and clear, glowing skin. This is an easy way to add more vegetables to my diet- and not to mention they taste delicious. The addition of a banana and cocoa powder (along with other fruits) masks the bitterness of the greens, so my sweet tooth is satisfied and my body still gets the nutrients it needs. Starting each day
with a Green Monster sets the tone for the day ahead, giving me strength to tackle the challenges that lie ahead.

I believe in Green Monsters. I believe in their power to aid in transformation, their power to heal, both inside and out, and their power to empower. From being the girl who once had to catch her breath after climbing the stairs, I have become the girl who channels her morning Monster, turning on “Beast Mode” upon entering the gym. I believe that healthy can also be delicious and that monsters aren’t so scary after all.
Maybe you missed lunch or maybe you're at work and haven't eaten dinner yet, but those late-afternoon hunger pains have you eying the vending machine. It's difficult to make a healthy choice when you’re starving and only have fifteen minutes on your break or in between classes. When you cannot see the back of the packaging and want to make a healthy decision, it can be tough to know where to start. Here are a few tips to help you avoid a diet disaster:

**Protein Packed Foods** – Go for items loaded with protein like peanuts or granola bars to help yourself stay full until your next meal. Options like trail mix, nuts, granola bars, and peanut butter crackers are all safe and healthy choices. In addition to being full of protein, peanuts, almonds, sunflower seeds, and other nuts also contain benefits such as healthy fats. Granola bars have numerous health benefits as well; high in protein, fiber, low in cholesterol and potentially whole grains. The daily-recommended intake for whole grains is 3-5 servings per day. (USDA) Eating a granola bar, like nature's valley, can technically provide you with 14g of carbs and 10g of protein. Another high protein option is peanut M&Ms, they contain a lot of protein but also are covered in chocolate so don’t go “nuts.”

**Steer Clear of Sweets** – As far as vending machine snacking goes, it is best to stay away from snacks covered with sugar like Little Debby’s, candy bars, or pastries. They’re covered in sugar and full of saturated fats and unnatural additives. To satisfy that sweet craving try to stick to Fig Newtons, dried fruit like raisins, or possibly a granola bar with chocolate chunks in it. It is also important to watch our for misleading health claims. Certain, seemingly healthy, snacks with the word "fruit" in them can be loaded with added sugars. For example, some fruit snacks are not made from real fruit and they are loaded with added sugars. They contain no fiber, healthy fats, protein, or antioxidants. They are low in
calories, about 100 calories per package, but contain 21g of carbohydrates in one serving. Fruit snacks won't keep hunger away for long, they're just empty calories.

**The Lowdown on Drinks** – Fun fact! Chocolate milk a healthy alternative when not drinking water. It is lower in sugar and full of protein and carbohydrates that will help the body fight off hunger. It’s also a good way to win in the fight against your sweet tooth. It is important to avoid extremely sugary juices or sodas, like ginger ale or Gatorade. They have no nutritional value and will only cause you to crash a few hours later. The best option to quench your thirst is water, but if you really don’t like to drink water then you have other options. Some juices are 100% and contain numerous vitamins and minerals good for the body and mind. Other soda alternatives include seltzer, vegetable juices, or a natural unsweetened iced tea. The jury is still out as far as diet sodas, but as far as studies show, they alternative sweeteners found in diet sodas and juices are linked to headaches, nausea, and potentially cancer.

**Satisfying that Savory Tooth** – Let's face it, chips are addictive. You can never have just one. So, in the case that you really want to satisfy your salt craving, go for sun chips which are made with whole grains and loaded with fiber, or pretzels which are fat free. Some vending machines are starting to carry baked chips, which are another good option. When it comes to choices like Cheetos, Cheezits, or Doritos, these snacks are “nacho” best choice.

**Other things to remember:**

- Other ways you can satisfy that junk-food craving and stay healthy are by sharing a snack. If you are dying for a pop-tart, that is okay, but make it a rare choice and split it with a coworker or a friend.
- Make sure you check the expiration date.
- Check to see if the packaging has been opened, sometimes snacks can be ripped open in the truck or while in the vending machine allowing germs, parasites, and possibly even insects into the food.
• Try to avoid “diet” snacks. Counting on a 100-calorie pack of wheat thins to get you through until your next meal is a waste of money.

All in all, eating healthy at a vending machine is possible. When you can, try to pack a lunch or make sure to keep a granola bar in your backpack or purse, but if you can’t then there are nutritious options in the vending machine. Most people can detect a healthy option from an unhealthy one, so when deciding on a snack, it is always best to trust your gut.
What are the best sources of carbohydrates for someone with gluten intolerance?

By Jenna Esoo

With the rise of gluten intolerance and Celiac disease in our society today, those with the dilemma may be unsure of which carbohydrate sources are suitable for their diet. Learning about gluten-free carbohydrate alternatives will make living gluten-free an ease.

For someone with gluten intolerance, it is fundamental to know what gluten is and where it is found. Gluten refers to specific proteins that are found in wheat, barley, and rye. When gluten proteins are ingested, it can trigger an autoimmune reaction, which causes your body to mistakenly attacks its own cells rather than harmful cells. This eventually leads to damage of an essential area in the small intestine where nutrient absorption occurs. To prevent this autoimmune response from happening, gluten must be completely avoided.

Gluten-free carbohydrate sources are widely available in supermarkets. Beans and legumes, fruits and vegetables (potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, butternut squash, and beets, etc.) are all great carbohydrate sources. Grains, such as rice, corn, buckwheat, amaranth, quinoa, sorghum, tapioca, teff, and certified gluten-free oats are also great alternatives. Additionally, rice and buckwheat pasta, corn tortillas, gluten-free breads (rice or mixed grain), hot cereals (cream of rice or buckwheat), and dry cereals (rice, corn, or gluten-free mixed grains) are good carbohydrate sources.

Here are some ways to incorporate gluten-free carbohydrates into your diet:

• Use buckwheat noodles to make spaghetti and meatballs
• Use sorghum flour in your banana bread recipe instead of white flour
• Have a fiesta and make fajitas using corn tortillas instead of flour tortillas
• Have puffed rice cereal instead of wheat cereal for breakfast
• Make a peanut butter sandwich with the gluten-free bread of your choice

Experimenting with different types of carbohydrate sources will ensure that you find the types most suitable to your diet and taste buds.
Reference:
Is honey a good substitute for sugar?
Which is healthier?

By Kaitlyn Fishman

Although honey and sugar both contain the same sugar molecules (glucose and fructose) honey actually has more beneficial aspects than table sugar. Honey, which is less processed than table sugar is made from bees and naturally occurs in the environment. With a lower GI index than table sugar, it is a good substitute for those who have diabetes or are trying to lower their blood glucose levels. Honey also contains amino acids and antioxidants which sugar does not. Other nutrients that honey possesses are folate, a nutrient that is essential for pre-pregnant and pregnant women. Significant traces of calcium, vitamin C, and choline are also present in honey.

Unlike table sugar, honey also has a high water content and is much more dense. Possibly because of its water content, many have the misconception that honey goes bad. Honey never goes bad, but it can crystallize which changes its appearance and texture but not taste. When using the substitute for baking, honey will create a moist golden product when used in cakes and other baked goods just like sugar.

Another benefit of honey is not only nutritional but also economic. Most table sugar is imported from islands where sugar cane grows. Honey on the other hand is made right in the US by local bee farmers to harvest the honey and package it for distribution. Local honey is also organic and is treated with less processing than table sugar. With all the benefits honey has to offer both nutritionally and even economically, it makes more sense to use honey as sweetener than regular table sugar.
I believe in peanut butter!

By Rebecca Hastings

Apples
Pears
Bananas
Whole grain pancakes
With jelly
Without jelly
Carrots
Celery
In an Asian peanut sauce
In oatmeal
On whole grain toast…

On a SPOON!

The irresistibility factor of peanut butter alone makes it worthy of an unmatched love. Unmatched in the sense that it brings more joy and smiles to peoples faces than any other food product. It has gotten to the point where other foods can only dream about having that kind of power over someone’s taste buds. Its creamy, sticky, gooey consistency makes it unattainable by all other foodstuffs on the market today. No other food products can reach its level of popularity, no matter how hard they may try. By satisfying empty bellies all across the country, peanut butter has gotten quite a reputation as being a powerhouse food.

With 8 grams of protein per its 2-tablespoon serving size, it is enough to satisfy hunger cravings and keep you full until your next meal. Its heavy dose of protein makes it a suitable post gym snack to refuel your body and build muscle. Peanut butter is also rich in vitamin E, some B vitamins and some minerals. Although it is on the high side when it comes to fat, with about 16 grams of fat per serving, the fats are mostly unsaturated, making peanut butter a healthy source of fat that is essential to bodily functions. However, it is crucially important to buy a peanut butter in which the only ingredients are peanuts, in order to avoid the artery-clogging partially hydrogenated oils that are found in many commercially produced peanut butter products.
Known for being a well renowned “kid-friendly” food, it no longer has to stay just within the realm of kids. Peanut butter now ventures out to be more “grown-up appropriate” as it makes appearances in spicy Thai and Asian peanut sauces, stirred into yogurt or oatmeal or on a grilled peanut butter and banana sandwich. Its great versatility makes it a healthy and satisfying snack or meal for people of all ages and lifestyle choices. With so many great options out there of how to use peanut butter, people really have no excuse to not include a hearty helping of peanut butter in their everyday life (aside from any life threatening peanut allergies, of course).

*Warning: Do not leave yourself alone in a room with a jar of peanut butter. Dangerous things have been known to happen 😊
Too Much Veg in One Basket? How to Spread Your Veggies and Make Your Farm Share Work.

by Eliza Hobert

Have you ever felt completely overwhelmed by the abundance of vegetables that come with your share? You are not alone. I have been a CSA (community supported agriculture) member since 2003. Other members have been talking to me at the farms for years. The most common topic of conversation is that there is just too much food to consume. It is not very surprising; fruit and vegetable consumption of Americans is considerably lower than what is recommended in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (1). A University of Massachusetts Farm Share offers a wonderful opportunity to get your five fruits and vegetables per day. Each week’s pick up depends on the harvest times of the various vegetables. There are steps that can make utilizing the share a simple task.

Veggies included in your University of Massachusetts Farm Share:

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<th>Beets</th>
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<td>Carrots</td>
<td>Braising mix</td>
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<td>Sweet potato</td>
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Does daily food preparation ever feel like a burden that leaves you less than enthused about your share? There is no need to let preparation deter you. Some initial work can ensure easy meals during the week. The first step is to organize. You can do this by planning your meals ahead. Choose foods that perish quickly to eat first. Keep an inventory of which vegetables that you have left and cross them off the list as you use them, which helps with any last minute planning. Preparing your fruits and veggies
in advance makes your share manageable. When you get home, wash all of your produce. You may want to allow vegetables such as a lettuce mix to strain in a colander. This should prevent premature rotting. Cut off unwanted parts, such as tops and discard or compost them. You can precut vegetables and place them in reusable storage bags or plastic zipper bags. Mesh and cloth storage bags tend to keep vegetables fresh for longer durations. You could even group vegetables for a planned meal together to save additional time for later cooking. One of my favorite time saving measures is to spend a day or two cooking and freezing individual meals for future days. Chili, soups, stews and even pasta dishes are good freezing choices. These steps might seem like a lot of work, but they will make your week easy. They can also help you to decide what to eat with your vegetables so that you can make shopping lists ahead of time.

Another way to utilize the share is to freeze or can some of your produce. Canning is an excellent way to preserve your produce for those upcoming winter months. It is extremely important to practice safety when canning to prevent botulism, which is a nerve toxin that can cause paralysis and death (2). Low acid content foods are more risky. Some of the foods that are of concern for botulism include asparagus, green beans, beets and corn. According to the CDC some foods that have a higher acid content can be risky too. Some examples are chili peppers, tomatoes, and carrot juice (2). It is essential to use a pressure canner that is specifically made for canning. The canner must be in good working order and canning materials such as rubber gaskets should be in good shape. The boiling method is not effective enough at killing the bacteria that produce the nerve toxin (3). The USDA offers this guide that includes all instructions for safe canning and success: The Complete USDA Guide to Home Canning. Freezing fruits and vegetables is an easy and quick way to keep them for up to 10 months. Oregon State University has this guide that provides information on freezing methods for various fruits and vegetables:
http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pdf/pnw/pnw214.pdf. This guide includes instructions for blanching, packing, freezer preparation and refreezing foods. Blanching involves placing the vegetables in boiling water for 3 to five minutes depending on the vegetable. Vegetables such as beets are cooked for about thirty minutes before
freezing. If these suggestions do not solve any issues that you may have, there are a couple more options.

Do you still feel like there is just too much produce for you? You can always split a share with a friend, housemates, or family member. If there are certain foods that you do not like, perhaps your share partner will trade. You can enjoy a fun trip to the farm together every week or you may alternate weeks. You could even enjoy the preparation process of the produce with your share partner. This is a great option for people who are single or students who share residency. Housemates can make and share dishes together or alternate cooking days. The University of Massachusetts Student Farm share has fed a family of five or a single person. The eating habits of the individual make a huge difference when determining how many people a share will feed.

Is there a vegetable or two that you have tried to enjoy, but you just do not like? You may be able to still enjoy that vegetable! Chili and pasta sauce are just two dishes that can help you disguise flavors that you might not like. Kale, spinach, carrots, broccoli or just about any vegetable can be added to make delicious chili. Vegetables can be pureed into tomato sauces. With a little bit of internet research you can find ways to hide those veggies that you cannot get over. You may even acquire a taste for them. People who do not like eggplant in soups, might like it fried or as a dip. If you have not tried a food since childhood, you might want to give it another try. My mother served canned beets to me when I was growing up. I did not know that I like them until I tried fresh ones as an adult. If these tips do not help, you could always give that unfavorable vegetable away.

Fruits and vegetables have different vitamins, minerals and antioxidants depending on the vegetable. It is important to eat a variety of them. Eating fruits and vegetables can help prevent obesity, cancer, eye diseases, dementia (mental confusion), osteoporosis (weak bones), and type 2 diabetes \(^{(4,5)}\). Edamame is an excellent source of protein, which is needed for repairing and keeping our bodies healthy \(^{(6)}\). Kale, broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, and onions are all excellent cancer fighters. Carrots, sweet potatoes, and winter squash are good sources of vitamin A, which is important for eye health. Spinach, broccoli, and kale are great sources of calcium, which is essential for preventing osteoporosis; a disease that makes
bones brittle and easy to break. Peppers, broccoli, and tomatoes contain vitamin C, a cancer preventative (7). Being a farm shareholder is an excellent way to get all of those health benefits and to become creative in the kitchen. Visiting the farm is a wonderful way to have a better understanding of where your food comes from and what kind of work is involved. Visits to the farm can be relaxing and pleasant. Please enjoy your farm share.

References:


Produce and Veggies and Fruits, OH MY!
How to eat more produce in your first apartment

by Emily Kirby

Many people wonder how they can get fresh fruits and vegetables for a good price when they live in an apartment. It can be difficult when you don’t have enough room for your own garden and may not have access to a local farm stand. Many people think that if they live in an apartment in the city they don’t have much access to fresh produce, but there are lots of ways to purchase produce that are not just the grocery store. The other problem is the cost of produce. It is usually higher in price than other foods in the store but there are some simple ways to get the produce you want for a reasonable price.

CSA’s the easy way

CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture and most farms have this program. This is where you pay a certain price upfront and in return you get fresh vegetables that either get dropped off right to you or you pick them up from the farm. It is a great program that not only gives you a fresh and diverse produce but the money goes into local farms! Now if it is too expensive for you to do alone, you get a fair share of vegetables that is enough to split with someone (like a roommate!). Then you have someone to try new recipes with. You want to research your possibilities because each one operates a little differently, some allow you to pick from the vegetables they harvest, others build their own baskets for you. Another thing to consider is to ask to help volunteer, sometimes CSA’s will accept volunteer work in exchange for a CSA share. Not only is it a good way to get the produce but your’e also giving back to the community and getting exercise outside; it’s a win-win!

Farming sensation that’s sweeping the nation

Farmers markets are becoming more and more popular all over the country, this is a wonderful way to get the fresh produce you want. You may be thinking “I live in a big city and I’ve never seen anything like a farmers market”. Well there are great web
sites out there that can point you in the right direction of finding one, like GrowNYC.org which started the largest farmers market in an urban area in the country. If you do a little research on your city, they are out there, you just have to look for them. Now the question about money. Well farmers markets can be on the pricey side but there is good news. Some of the farmer markets are starting to accept programs like SNAP (formerly known as food stamps). The farm to city program in Philadelphia has just recently began to accept it.

To Organic or Not To Organic? That is the question.

Now if you do not have access to a CSA or a farmers market then you are going to look for produce in a grocery store. Then that brings the big question of organic into the picture. Well there is a simple guideline about which things you should buy organic and which ones you don’t have to buy organic. It’s called the dirty dozen and the clean fifteen. Foods to buy organic would include apples, bell peppers, blueberries, celery, cucumbers, grapes, lettuce, nectarines, peaches, potatoes, spinach, and strawberries (these make up the dirty dozen). For the foods to buy non-organic are asparagus, avocado, cabbage, cantaloupe, corn, eggplant, grapefruit, kiwi, mangoes, mushrooms, onions, pineapple, sweet peas, sweet potatoes, and watermelon (these make up the clean fifteen). For produce not on these lists this rule of thumb is pretty good to go by. If it has an outer peel (think oranges) then it should be okay to buy non organic. If you cannot afford any organic produce don’t knock it out completely, it is better to get the nutrients from the produce than to not eat it because it is not organic.

Big green thumb in a tiny apartment.

If you are interested in planting you own food there are ways to do it in an apartment. Especially with herbs, they are very easy to grow on a windowsill and can be used to add flavor to dishes and replace salt. There also some produce you can grow inside fairly easily, like celery. Did you know you can take the bottom of celery (where all the stalks meet each other and are connected together) after you have cut off the stalks and put it in a dish of water and have it regrow the stalks? Almost the same technique for scallions (green onions) can regrow them inside on a windowsill! Now
after awhile of using the same base the taste and texture may be a little off but you can regrow a couple of times then when you buy another bunch regrow from that one. There are many blogs out there that show how to grow produce in your own home, so give it a Google and see what you can get, or try creating a Pintrest account. That site has lots of tips on gardening. Then head over to the recipe section and see how you can use your new crop! Not only do you get free produce when you do this, the plants also make great decoration on your windowsill.

Now what?

So now that you have learned about different ways to get produce into your apartment, you have to cook them. Stir fries are an easy way to cook lots of veggies at once. Crock-pots are also a great way to cook a meal with little time commitment and effort (good for a busy day). You can incorporate produce in many ways, I suggest going onto an online cook book or cooking blog that has good instructions that are easy to follow. Try new things, get a fruit you have never tried before or cook a vegetable in way you have never heard of, you have your own kitchen in you apartment make sure to use it to your advantage. All you have to do now is figure out what option is best for you to get produce and start your healthy living in your apartment!
Shaping Hard to Please Kids into Easy to Please Eaters

by Taryn Krietzman

There are tons of picky eaters out there. Chances are you know one, a few, or many. Most adults have gotten over their childhood selective eating or learned how to go around it. With kids, it’s a different story though. All foods are being introduced for the first time and are completely foreign. What may seem a commonplace food to us may look strange, or unappetizing to a child. Everyone has their food preferences, but when they get in the way of normal and healthful eating it is problem. This is especially true for children, due to their rapid growth and development. They need to eat enough quality nutritious food to grow. So how can we make our little picky eaters more open to new and healthy foods?

Infants (6 months to 1 year old)

Feeding Skills and Behaviors

At around 6 months old, infants are taking the first step in transitioning from breast milk or formula to solid foods. It is a process that takes patience. Your infant will not have many feeding skills. They can’t use utensils or speak. They can, however, swallow, sit up without support, and show an interest in eating food. All of those are good signs that an infant is ready and able to eat. It is then up to you to decide what to feed them.

Cautions

Choking is a concern for an infant’s small throat. Avoid foods that are hard, sticky, or too big for them to handle.

Important Nutrients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iron</th>
<th>meats, fortified cereals, dried peas, and beans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin D</td>
<td>Sun exposure, eggs, and fatty fish like salmon or trout, consider a supplement (after speaking with your doctor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B12</td>
<td>Animal products like fish, meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy. Consider supplementation after talking to a doctor if your infant does not eat these products.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Tips and Suggestions for Feeding**

- All foods are new. Your infant may not like a food the first time he or she tries it. Don’t let this discourage you. Try the food again at a later time. Try a variety of foods as well.
- Your infant is moving from an all-liquid diet to a more solid one. Make the transition as gentle as possible by starting with a puree texture and moving up to mashed over time.
- Be sure your child isn’t too tired or hungry as crankiness can interfere with successful feeding.
- Pace the feeding. Let your baby dictate the speed they want to be fed.
- Let them pick up, touch, and examine the food you are introducing. Becoming familiar with a food is an important part of accepting it.

**Toddlers (1-3 years old)**

*Feeding skills and Behaviors*

At this age difficulties in feeding can be experienced for many reasons. Toddlers have a short attention span and can be impatient, making sitting down for meal time a struggle.

Another common issue is a preference for familiarity and a fear of trying new foods. Your child may have a limited vocabulary to express which foods they like and dislike. They now have the ability to chew some foods, so different textures can begin to be introduced.

*Cautions*

Supervising your child during mealtimes is still essential to prevent accidental choking. Try to limit distractions during eating such as television or games. Foods may still need to be a little softer (cooked fruit/vegetables).

**Important Nutrients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>kale, collard greens, mustard greens, milk, yogurt</td>
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<td>meats, fortified cereals, dried peas, and beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc</td>
<td>meats, nuts &amp; seeds, fortified cereals, shellfish</td>
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**Tips and Suggestions for Feeding**

- Pair a new food with a familiar food to ease them into trying it
- Try introducing foods when your child is slightly hungry. If they are too hungry they may get cranky and intolerant.
- Toddlers do a good job of regulating how much they need to eat. Let them tell you how hungry they are. A good gauge is to serve 1 tablespoon of food for each year of age.
- Allow your child to help with food preparations to interest them more in the food they are eating
- Lead by example. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, legumes, and grains. Toddlers tend to imitate the eating of their family members.
- Let them explore foods in their own way, even if it gets a little messy.

**Preschoolers (3-5 years old)**

*Feeding Skills and Behaviors*

At this point your child is developing speaking and coordination skills that aid in eating. They are able to use utensils and cups. They are also able to speak enough to express what they do and do not want to eat. At this age many preschoolers are developing their eating preferences and habits. Appetites vary among individuals, but preschoolers are also good at figuring how much they need to eat fairly well. This can be difficult if they aren’t hungry for mealtimes. Choking is still a concern for feeding in this age group.

*Important Nutrients*

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*Tips and Suggestions for Feeding*

- Let your child tell you when he or she is hungry
- Serve child-size portions. Over-filling a plate may increase their intake above their needs and promote being overweight
- Control snacking so your preschooler may be more willing to eat at mealtimes. Don’t give snacks close to mealtimes.
- Make foods fun. Cut fruit into cute shapes with cookie cutters. Make silly faces out of vegetables. Let them help prepare these foods as well.
- Your child may still have preferences for familiar foods. Include these foods but also continue gently introducing new ones. Spicy or strongly flavored foods may be unappetizing to children.
Make your Diet as **Colorful** as
Your New Apartment
by Samantha Mossman

Are you living on your own for the first time? Are you concerned about your ability to cook with fruits and vegetables? If your answer is yes to both of these questions, keep reading. Coordinating fruits and vegetables into your meals may be easier than you think. A simple way to eat more from these two food groups is to incorporate them into meals you already make or eat. For example, I always cook macaroni and cheese. One day I decided to sneak some vegetables into my bowl. I have never looked back, and now mac and cheese tastes boring without the added taste of broccoli or red peppers. Add enough fruits and vegetables to make your plate as colorful as the decorations in your new apartment!

**But Why Should I Eat More Fruits and Vegetables?**

Adding fruits and vegetables to your diet may seem difficult and time consuming, so why bother? Eating more fruits and vegetables have been proven to be beneficial for your health. Studies have shown that eating them can reduce your risk of chronic diseases, such as cancers and heart attacks, and can also help with weight management. In fact, fruits and vegetables are so important to health that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has recommended that we fill half of our plates with them. Meeting this recommendation may seem like a challenge, however adding some fruits and vegetables to each meal is simpler than you think. Here are some ideas!

**Bring on the Fruit Breakfasts:**

Breakfast is the perfect meal to add on some fruit. The two simple recipes below will have you eating more fruit in no time!

Two-Step mini Banana bread cookies: If you are a fan of chocolate chip cookies or banana bread, then this is the snack recipe for you! Instead of using cookie batter or
banana bread batter, mash up two bananas. Coat them with a cup of oats and some chocolate chips, scoop the batter out into round blobs and cook them for 15 minutes at 375. Your taste buds won't even believe your not eating real cookies!

Yogurt parfaits: Instead of buying pre-made parfaits at a convenience store, create your own! Buy some plain Greek yogurt and oats or granola. Top these two ingredients with fruits of your choice, such as raspberries, blackberries, peach slices or apples. For a little added sweetness add some honey.

**Load on the Vegetables Lunches**
Don’t just have an ordinary lunch. Make something that will satisfy your taste buds while benefiting your health!

Salads: Although salads may seem boring and tasteless, they can actually be the opposite. Salads can include almost any item from your fridge. Salads can be made with both vegetables and fruit. When I am feeling like I have not ate enough fruits in a day, I make a quick salad. I like to top a base of spinach with strawberries, blueberries, watermelon or apples. Balsamic or raspberry vinaigrette are two dressings that work really well with the flavors of the fruit.

Sandwiches: Who doesn’t have the occasional sandwich for lunch? Some people prefer to eat them every day! Instead of just bread and lunch meat, use some vegetables too! Other than the obvious toppings like lettuce and tomato, try something different. Some other options could include hot peppers, cabbage, kale or avocados.

**Delicious Dinners**
Dinner time may be the easiest time to add on some vegetables. Here are some simple recipe ideas where vegetables are a must.

Stir fry: Stir fries typically includes sautéing noodles or rice with vegetables, Asian flavors and a protein, like chicken or tofu. This usually takes about 15 to 20 minutes and
is Possibly the easiest and most versatile way to integrate vegetables. You can make
stir fry with almost every vegetable. Some of the most commonly used ones are onion,
garlic, peppers, carrots, bok choy, and celery. If you are feeling like you want to try
something new, some less known vegetables that would be a good fit are Swiss chard
and leeks or edamame.

Pasta dishes: Instead of just topping your pasta with sauce, add some vegetables!
Sauté some vegetables with sauce in a pan before placing on top
of cooked pasta. Some vegetables that work well with pasta
include broccoli, spinach and asparagus, tomatoes or summer
squash.

Tacos: Taco are another easy way to include all types of
vegetables! Pile your tacos high with lettuce, tomatoes, avocados, peppers, onions and
black beans. A healthier version that I like to make includes ground beef, plain Greek
yogurt (instead of sour cream), low fat shredded cheese and salsa. Usually cooking the
meat and putting everything together takes me about a half hour.

**Where To Find These Awesome Ingredients**

All of the fruits and vegetables listed in these recipes can be found at super
grocery stores, such as Big Y or Stop and Shop. However, some of the more unusual
vegetables, such as swiss chard, may not always be in stock. To find a wider variety of
fruits and vegetables, try shopping at your local farmer’s market. A great market near
me is the UMass Student Farm Farmer’s Market. They have a great selection of local,
fresh vegetables that taste amazing!

**References:**

State indicator report on fruits and vegetables, 2009. Center for disease control and

Picture references:
http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-6lxINxzvP5g/T0a-q2aWKyl/AAAAAAAAEns/OTJFwpz2Q-c/s1600/100_2491pasta+text2.jpg


http://img4-3.myrecipes.timeinc.net/i/recipes/ck/10/07/greek-yogurt-parfaits-ck-l.jpg
I believe that healthcare professionals should have a stronger background in nutrition.

One of the most horrific experiences happened to me this past year while at work. I had worked for this food company for the past four years and was very comfortable in every associate position. However, I could usually be found on the line serving food to customers. I was one of the only associates to always have my Kevlar glove (cut-glove) on and tried to always be cautious. I always prided myself on never breaking a dish, since it seemed to happen on a daily basis. Needless to say my luck had finally turned on October 31st.

That night the place was dead, so my coworker and I started cleaning up earlier than normal. We split the closing duties and one of mine was to clean the soup well. To start I flipped the soups into the new, clean lined containers. I was almost finished when the container of creamy tomato soup slipped out of my hand and fell all over my arm. I had 170°F, scalding hot soup covering my forearm!

To my surprise I was not screaming or crying, but instead grossed out by the sight of red/orange liquid all over my arm. In such a hurry to get it off I grabbed a dry, clean cloth and dabbed it on. Once I lifted it back up I saw that my skin had started to melt off. That is when I knew I needed serious help.

I was immediately rushed to the emergency room. The nurse checked my vital signs and covered my arm in cool, wet cloths. Even that did not help with the burning sensation though. The more I sat there, the worse the pain got. My whole body was shaking by the time the doctor came in. He looked at it, wrapped it up, gave me medicine for the pain and off I went.
As I journeyed back to my apartment, I began to think about how I was going to take care of this on my own. I would have asked my roommates, but they get lightheaded from looking at a paper cut! I decided to just call health services in the morning and see if they could help me. Fortunately they were very helpful and saw me regularly.

As a nutrition student, I had remembered reading about burns and something with protein. I went back to my textbooks and sure enough, for burns you must increase your protein consumption. From then on I was eating a lot more protein than I normally would. I have never been a huge fan for the taste of meat, but if it meant getting healthier then I was all for it.

I found it shocking that not one of the doctors or nurses I met with had mentioned this. As a prospective Physician’s Assistant, I plan to use my knowledge in nutrition as well as medicine to help patients.
One without the other will have a positive impact on your body and health, but in order to maintain optimal health, both eating healthy and exercising regularly are recommended. If you’re trying to lose weight, using only one method will work for a while until your body adapts and your weight reaches a stand still. The mixture of eating a well balanced diet while building muscle and burning carbohydrates is an ideal form of weight loss and weight maintenance. Exercise not only controls weight, but also helps fight health conditions and disease, improve mood, boost energy, promote better sleep, relieve stress, lift depression, improve learning, build self esteem, improve body image, and can ultimately keep you happier. A healthy diet is one that includes fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, dairy, and lean proteins. Not only does eating a healthy diet reduce the risk of diseases and health problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes, but also affects other areas of your life and body as well. A well balanced diet can help with weight control, improve skin, boost energy, reduce stress, improve sleep, and improve mood. As you may notice, a well balanced diet and a regular exercise routine have many of the same benefits, so you can imagine how much better you could feel if you put them together! Although it may be difficult to get into one or both of these lifestyles at first, slowly making changes can be helpful. Try cutting out refined grains and/or added sugars as a start on your way to a more healthy diet. Take a walk around your neighborhood a few times a week to help build up an exercise habit. Although making improvements on one of these two areas of your lifestyle can be beneficial, doing both will be twice as rewarding in the end.