

Employee Newsletter & Resources

March Is National Nutrition Month

The latest dietary guidelines for Americans emphasize balance; it's not all or nothing. As such, eating right doesn't need to be complicated. Healthy eating starts with nutritional food choices, which include plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein and dairy. A balanced diet also leaves room for personal preferences.

March is National Nutrition Month. This is a good time to assess your eating habits while educating yourself about the best ways to fuel your body. It comes down to making informed food choices and developing healthy eating and physical activity habits that are sustainable.



March 2023
**Live Well,
Work Well**

Increasing Your Nutrient Absorption With Food Pairings

March is recognized as National Nutrition Month, making it a great time to evaluate the food and beverages you're putting into your body.

Did you know that some nutrients aren't optimally absorbed if you eat them on their own? Instead, they need to be paired with other nutrients for your body to get the most value out of them. Fortunately, that's as simple as eating certain food combinations together.

When paired with citrus, such as orange or lemon, your body can better absorb EGCG. Drinking tea alone and between meals is also recommended to maximize the amount of catechins you absorb.

- **Fish and broccoli**—Vitamin D and calcium are good for your bones, but they're even stronger together. Consider plating calcium-rich broccoli with fish high in vitamin D, such as salmon or tuna.

Since your ability to absorb nutrients can decrease as you age, it's important to talk to your doctor or a nutritionist about any personal questions or concerns.

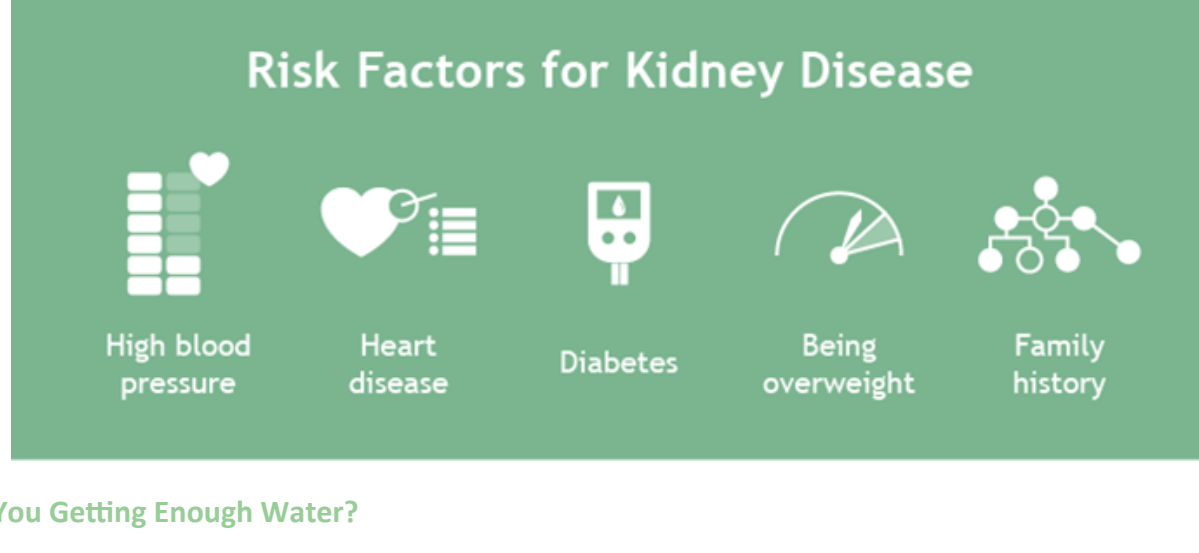
Understanding Kidney Health

One in 3 U.S. adults is at risk for kidney disease, but most don't even know it. Since March is National Kidney Month, it's the perfect time to take charge of your health to lower your chances of developing kidney disease. Your kidneys filter your blood to remove waste and extra water to create urine. They also make vital hormones that produce red blood cells, promote bone health and regulate blood pressure.

The kidneys play a vital role in your body. Since they work hard for you, taking good care of them is essential. Consider the following tips:

- Get screened regularly for kidney damage or disease.
- Reduce over-the-counter drug usage, specifically ibuprofen.
- Exercise regularly to lower blood pressure and boost heart health.
- Eat a healthy diet and monitor your weight.
- Drink plenty of fluids to flush sodium and toxins from your kidneys.

Since most won't have symptoms unless their kidneys fail, it's crucial to know the risk factors. Check out the infographic below to learn about risk factors, and contact your doctor for more information about kidney health.



Are You Getting Enough Water?

To prevent dehydration, you need to consume adequate amounts of fluid. Dehydration can increase your risk of illnesses and cause health problems, such as fatigue and muscle weakness. Men should get about 3.7 liters (15 ½ cups) of fluids each day, and women need about 2.7 liters (11 ½ cups). Remember that the water content of the foods you eat counts as well.

You need to get enough water for your body to operate at its best. Make water your beverage of choice, and consider these simple tips to help achieve your daily water intake:

- Drink a glass of water with each meal and between each meal.
- Hydrate before, during and after exercise.
- Carry a reusable water bottle with you for easy access during the day.
- Choose sparkling water instead of alcoholic drinks or soft drinks.

Take Charge of Your Health

Eat a Well-balanced Diet

Consuming a well-balanced diet is essential to leading a healthy life. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (2020-2025), published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, aims to provide advice on what to eat and drink to build a healthy diet that can promote healthy growth and development, help prevent diet-related chronic disease and meet nutrient needs.

Consider the following guidelines:

- **Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables.** While aiming for color and variety, try to fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetable. They can be fresh, frozen, canned or dried.
- **Switch to whole grain.** Grains should take up one-quarter of your plate but ensure half of those grains are whole grains (e.g., brown rice, oatmeal or whole-wheat bread).
- **Vary your protein sources.** This could mean swapping meat or poultry with seafood more often or using beans, peas and lentils in dishes.
- **Opt for fat-free or low-fat dairy products.** Milk, cheese and yogurt can help build and maintain strong bones, but focusing on nutritional substitutes for full-fat dairy products is essential.
- **Limit foods and drinks higher in added sugars, saturated fat and sodium.** A healthy diet doesn't have much room for those components, including alcoholic beverages.

This infographic is intended for informational purposes only and is not intended to be exhaustive, nor should any discussion or opinions be construed as professional advice. Readers should contact a health professional for appropriate advice.

MENTAL HEALTH MINUTE

MARCH 2023

Enhancing Mental Health With Nutrition

Some people who are managing mental health conditions may turn to food to self-soothe or find emotional support—others may avoid or limit food intake. These choices can create discomfort for the brain and exacerbate pre-existing feelings. Fortunately, increased mental strain can be remedied by making different—and healthier—food choices. A healthy mind and body are essential elements in coping with mental health issues or other related conditions.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, only 1 in 10 adults eats the recommended amount of fruits or vegetables, so you may need to strive to eat more of those essential food groups. Regardless of if you're battling a mental health condition, fruits and vegetables are crucial for maintaining good health. In addition, health experts recommend incorporating the following into your diet to help improve mental health:

- **Fermented foods** (e.g., kimchi, miso, kombucha, kefir and yogurt)
- **Omega-3 fatty acids** (e.g., salmon, flaxseeds, chia seeds, walnuts, avocado and olive oil)
- **Spices** (e.g., turmeric, oregano, rosemary, ginger and garlic)
- **Tea** (e.g., green, chamomile and herbal)
- **Vitamin D** (e.g., eggs, fortified milk, mushrooms and salmon)

One of the best ways to sustain a healthy diet is to stock your pantry and refrigerator with easy-to-grab nutritious foods. March is National Nutrition Month, making it a great time to assess your nutrition and ensure you're serving your mind and body well.

Selecting a Mental Health Professional

For the many Americans that seek help from mental health professionals, selecting a provider is an important decision that should be made carefully.

Since mental health professionals all have different roles, it's important to understand what each can offer. Here are some common types of mental health professionals:

- **Counselors, clinicians or therapists** are similar but differ based on skills and job responsibilities. They typically choose a specialization (e.g., marriage and family), but can all evaluate mental health, connect with patients and provide guidance.
- **Psychiatrists** are licensed medical doctors. They can diagnose mental health conditions, provide therapy and prescribe and monitor medications.
- **Psychologists** can make mental health diagnoses based on psychological evaluations. They can provide therapy and additional healthy ways to handle mental health challenges.
- **Social workers** can evaluate mental health and offer therapy services. They can aid in recovery from various behavioral, emotional and mental challenges.

Who's the Best Fit?

Finding the right mental health professional requires a bit of work, so here are some ways to locate a provider:

- Get referrals from your physician, friends or family members.
- Ask your health insurance company for a list of providers.
- Check your employer's employee assistance program for a referral.

Be sure to consider factors that are important to you, such as age, gender, language and cultural background. You'll be establishing a long-term relationship with this person, and you need to feel as comfortable with them as possible. Choosing a mental health provider can be challenging, but you don't need to go through it alone. Remember to ask family, friends or your primary physician for assistance.

Mushroom Beef Sloppy Joes

March 2023 Recipe

Makes: 4 servings

Ingredients

- ½ pound white button mushrooms
- ½ pound cremini mushrooms
- ¼ pound 90% lean ground beef
- 1 ½ Tbsp. canola oil
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic (minced)
- 8 oz no-salt-added tomato sauce
- 1 Tbsp. chili powder
- 3 tsp. brown sugar
- 1 tsp. cider vinegar
- 1/8 tsp. ground black pepper
- 4 whole-wheat buns

Directions

1. Chop the mushrooms to the approximate size and texture of cooked ground beef.
2. Heat a saute pan over medium-high heat.
3. Add the ground beef and mushrooms, and cook.
4. Saute until the ground beef is fully cooked.
5. Remove the mushroom-beef mixture from the pan.
6. Add onions and garlic to the pan; cook until golden.
7. Return mushroom-beef mixture to the pan, along with the remaining ingredients.
8. Simmer for about 10 minutes. Remove from heat.

Nutritional information for 1 serving	
Calories	280
Total fat	11 g
Saturated fat	2 g
Cholesterol	20 mg
Sodium	240 mg
Carbohydrate	37 g
Dietary fiber	6 g
Total sugars	13 g
Added sugars included	9 g
Protein	13 g

Source: MyPlate
© 2023 Zywave, Inc. All rights reserved.