History of the Pepperoni Roll? It’s A West Virginia Classic!

August 8, 2012

Why am I blogging about pepperoni rolls, you might ask? I'm a dietitian, aren't pepperoni rolls supposed to be "bad" for you? Well, yeah maybe. But I learned a little tid bit today about pepperoni rolls that I found intriguing. Did you know that some people in this world have never even heard of a pepperoni roll, let alone ever tried one?! WHAT?!! This is a travesty, I say. Those little rolls of heaven are absolutely delicious.

Being born and raised in the Appalachian region, this "pepperoni roll phenomenon" was complete news to me. However, today I learned in a presentation by Roanna Martin that the pepperoni roll actually originated right here in West Virginia!

What Is A Pepperoni Roll?

Let me break down the components of a pepperoni roll for those who have never tried one before. Number one...THE DOUGH. Typically plain old white yeast bread dough broken into small squares. Number two...THE PEPPERONI. This can be in the form of a single stick, several folded slices, or shredded or ground. It's strategically placed on top of a laid out piece of dough. Number three...THE CHEESE. Who doesn't love cheese? Usually parmesan or mozzarella cheese is sprinkled on top of the pepperoni and is thus "rolled up" into the shape of a roll. Number four...BAKE IT. This is the key step. Cooking the pepperoni roll allows all of
the yummy juices of the pepperoni to seep into the dough. Then the cheese melts and oozes out of the edges of the roll, creating a mushy gushy roll of doughy, cheesy, pepperoni-y, scrumdiddlyumptiousness.

I may have made up some of those words, but hey, you get the idea...I love pepperoni rolls.

History of the Pepperoni Roll

The pepperoni roll is ubiquitous to West Virginia because it was created by Giuseppe “Joseph” Argiro at the Country Club Bakery in Fairmont, West Virginia, in 1927 (Fairmont is only about 20 minutes from Morgantown). It was created as a quick and practical snack for coal miners because it did not require refrigeration and could be easily packed for lunch.

Nowadays pepperoni rolls are sold everywhere you go in West Virginia. I've seen them in gas stations, convenience stores, farmer's markets, cafeterias, grocery stores, and just about everywhere else.

Healthier Version of the Pepperoni Roll!

I couldn't blog about my love for this WV staple without giving some healthier options and alternatives to the classic pepperoni roll. This recipe incorporates whole wheat pizza dough, turkey pepperoni instead of regular pepperoni, and if you are trying to save on extra calories you can always nix the cheese.

Whole Wheat Pepperoni Roll Recipe

Ingredients

- Homemade whole wheat pizza dough (I used 1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour, 1 teaspoon yeast, sea salt, 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1 tablespoon honey, 1/2 cup warm water and let rise for 2-3 hours.)
- 4 slices mozzarella cheese
- 4 slices provolone cheese
- 1 package turkey pepperoni
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1-2 tablespoons garlic powder
- Preheat over to 375.

Directions

1. After dough rises, roll it out so it is very thin. Depending on how many rolls you want (and which size you want them) cut the dough accordingly. I cut my dough into four pieces.

2. Brush each piece of dough with olive oil and sprinkle with a pinch of garlic powder. Add a layer of pepperoni, then a layer of cheese. I used cheese slices, but tore them in pieces to fit. Make sure you use a combo of mozzarella and provolone in each roll.

3. Starting at one end, fold the roll to the end (like a jellyroll) and pinch the sides close. Lay on a baking sheet sprayed with non-stick spray.

4. Bake at 375 for 25-30 minutes, turning the rolls halfway through.

Sources

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pepperoni_roll
Consumption of sufficient dietary protein along with a resistance exercise program has been shown to increase muscle mass. The average person requires about 0.8 g protein/kg body weight. However, many athletes have a much higher requirement for protein from 1.2-1.7 g protein/kg body weight. I always believe that consuming nutrients through food is much more beneficial than relying on supplements. However, many athletes find it difficult to consume this high amount of protein that their body requires strictly through food sources. Thus, many athletes resort to protein supplements and powders as an extra addition of protein. Specifically, whey protein is extremely popular amongst athletes and active individuals. In fact, a 2001 study reported that 50% of college freshmen football players believed that protein supplementation was necessary to increase muscle growth (12).

Although, the specific sources and types of dietary protein that are most beneficial to the body has been a hot topic for debate. Therefore, I chose to delve into some of the research on whey protein and come to a conclusion based on science.
Whey protein in particular has been a preferred source of protein, over other sources such as casein and soy, because it is fast acting, quickly digested, and has a high branched chain amino acid content (BCAA) (1). The BCAA's (leucine, isoleucine, and valine) are used as fuel for muscles during exercise, stimulate protein synthesis, and improve muscle recovery time. In recent years, whey protein has been a popular ergogenic aid in those attempting to increase muscle mass. Contributing to 77% of domestic powdered protein sales in 2004, whey has been a popular source of protein because of its BCAA composition, it's ability to synthesize protein and increase muscle mass, it is easily available on the market, and has a desirable taste. The market price of whey protein varies greatly depending on the manufacturer and the purity of the whey protein and can run anywhere from $10-$30 per pound. Whey is produced during the process of cheese making throughout the separation of the curds and the whey. The curds contain the component casein and the translucent liquid byproduct contains the whey protein. Once consumed, whey protein reaches the small intestine very quickly and rapidly, but once in the small intestine, hydrolysis requires a longer amount of time compared to casein, thus allowing for a greater absorption rate (3).

**Forms of Whey Protein**

1. **Whey protein isolate**: This is the “purest” form of whey protein. It contains the most amount of protein per serving (90%+ protein by weight), has the highest bioavailability compared to other forms of whey, and has very little carbs and lactose. The downside to isolate is it is usually pretty expensive.

![Supplement Facts](image)

An example of a nutrition facts label for whey protein isolate.

2. **Whey protein concentrate**: Concentrate is not as pure as isolate, containing 29%–89% protein by weight. The downside is that concentrate has more calories from fat and has a slightly higher amount of carbs and lactose. However, whey protein concentrate tends to be decently priced.
3. **Whey protein hydrolysate**: This is predigested and partially hydrolyzed to aid in easier digestion and metabolism. The hydrolysate form also produces less of an allergic reaction, which is beneficial to people with lactose intolerances. However, it is usually more costly.

### Does Whey Protein Increase Muscle Mass as a Supplement to Resistance Exercise?

Based on peer-reviewed research, whey protein is considered an excellent source of protein (Grade A = Strong positive scientific evidence). It is also considered to be beneficial in increasing muscle mass and as an aid in weight loss (Grade B = Positive scientific evidence). The grading system reflects the level of available scientific evidence (13).

Protein supplementation from whey has been shown to increase muscle mass more efficiently than other protein sources. In a study by Kerksick et al., 36 males participated in resistance training 4 days/week over a ten week period. The participants were randomly assigned into one of three supplement groups in a double-blind study; a carbohydrate placebo (48 g/d), whey protein (40 g/d) plus casein (8 g/d), or whey protein (40 g/d) plus BCAA’s (3 g/d) and L-glutamine (5 g/d). Results showed that after 10 weeks, the group that received whey protein plus casein had greater significant increases in 1 repetition maximum leg press, bench press, lean mass, and fat free mass than the placebo group (4). In another study by Andersen et al., twenty-two healthy males were given either a protein supplement drink or a carbohydrate drink immediately before and immediately after each resistance training session as well as one
drink on non-training days. The protein drink contained 25 g of protein (16.6 g whey, 2.8 g casein, 2.8 g egg white protein, and 2.8 g of L-glutamine). Resistance training was performed three times per week for fourteen weeks and included 3 to 4 sets of inclined leg press, isolated knee extension, and hamstring curls for 4 to 15 repetitions maximum. The results showed that Type I and Type II muscle fibers in the trained leg muscles had an 18% ± 5% ($P < .01$) and 26% ± 5% ($P < .01$) increase respectively, whereas the carbohydrate group showed no significant increases in muscle fibers (5).

Another study observed the effects of whey protein in short term exercise. Eighteen men were given either a whey (21.4 g), casein (21.9 g), or soy protein (22.2 g) sports drink (all ~100 kcal) after performing four intense unilateral leg exercises. Consumption of the whey protein drink produced greater muscle protein synthesis both at rest and after exercises compared to casein and soy (6). Animal studies have shown the beneficial effects of whey as well. In rats, when whey protein was ingested along with resistance exercise, its effects promoted higher body weight and muscle weight gain than in rats who exercised alone (7). Even in older aged men (over 70 years), whey protein stimulated muscle protein accretion more effectively than casein and casein hydrolysate (8).

The timing of whey protein consumption, either pre or post exercise, can have different effects on muscle mass and body composition. In one study, eight subjects were given either a whey protein or carbohydrate supplement twenty minutes before resistance exercise. Results showed that 24 hours post exercise, participants who consumed whey protein had significantly greater increases in resting energy expenditure than those who consumed a carbohydrate supplement (9). In another study, 23 males consumed a supplement containing 40 g of whey isolate during a ten week resistance exercise program. One group consumed the supplement both immediately before and after resistance exercise and the other group consumed the supplement both before breakfast and before sleep. Results showed that the group who consumed the whey protein immediately before and after exercise had significantly greater increases in lean body mass, greater decreases in body fat, and greater increases in 1 RM strength (10). These results are consistent with another study in which milk protein ingested within five minutes post-exercise showed greater muscle hypertrophy than those consuming it two hours post-exercise (11). Furthermore, from the results of various studies whey protein should be ingested as close to a bout of exercise as possible in order to reap the most beneficial effects on the muscle.

In conclusion, there is ample evidence to support the popularity for the ingestion of the ergogenic aid, whey protein. Supplementation of whey protein has shown to promote greater muscle hypertrophy and increase muscle mass during a resistance training program. Also, the timing of ingestion of whey protein, either before or after, should be as close to a bout of exercise as possible to produce the best effects.

**Whey Protein Shake Ideas**

Consuming whey protein doesn't have to be bland and tasteless. There are hundreds of recipes and ideas to incorporate whey protein into shakes, drinks, and smoothies. Here are a few recipes I found that sounded really tasty! You can find more recipes at [www.bodybuilding.com](http://www.bodybuilding.com).

**Wild Berry Boost Shake**

1-2 scoops vanilla whey protein.

8 raspberries

4 strawberries

15 blueberries

16 oz nonfat milk

1/2 cup ice cubes

**Peanut Butter And Banana Shake**
2 scoops protein powder
100g almond flakes
1 tbsp peanut butter
500ml skim milk

Half banana

Strawberry Yogurt Smoothie
1 scoop Vanilla Whey Protein
4 large ripe strawberries
3/4 cup milk
1/2 cup plain yogurt
3-4 ice cubes

How Safe Is Whey Protein?

The U.S. FDA does not regulate herbs and supplements, and thus there are no safety "guarantees". However, if taken properly and in the right dosages, whey protein is considered safe for the general population. Prolonged and excessive whey protein use can cause kidney damage. Whey protein tends to lower blood glucose levels and individuals who are diabetic should take caution. It can also lower blood pressure and increase the risk of excessive bleeding (13). Some other common complaints are gastrointestinal issues such as gas, bloating, and cramps.

References


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**Follow me on PINTEREST!**

*PINTEREST* is a pinboard-style social photo-sharing website that allows users to create and manage theme-based image collections such as events, interests, hobbies, and more. Users can browse other pinboards for inspiration, 're-pin' images to their own or 'like' photos. PINTEREST's mission is to “connect everyone in the world through the ‘things’ they find interesting”.

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What Are The “Healthiest” Oils??

Oils are a type of plant, animal, or synthetic fat used in cooking, baking, flavoring, and food preparation. The macronutrient composition of oils are comprised 100% of FAT. You’re probably thinking that fat doesn't sound like a good thing...Well, think again. There are many complex components that make certain fats and oils “healthy” while others are considered “unhealthy”.

Choosing what type of oil to buy and use can be an overwhelming experience. There are so many different options: Vegetable, Olive, Peanut, Soybean, Sunflower, Canola, Corn, Almond, Avocado, Coconut, and Sesame Oil...Which one do you choose and why?

What constitutes as a “healthy oil”?

It is recommended that a healthy diet should be comprised of 25-35% of calories from fat. There are two main types of fats: Saturated and Unsaturated.

**SATURATED FAT:** Saturated fats come mostly from animal fats and are solid at room temperature. Saturated fats are completely saturated with hydrogen atoms along the fatty acid chain and there are no double bonds between the carbon atoms.

Saturated fats contain no double bonds within the carbon chain. This specific molecular structure is Myristic Acid.

This is considered the “bad” type of fat because it has been shown to increase the risk of heart disease by raising total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol (the “bad” cholesterol).

**UNSATURATED FAT:** Unsaturated fats come from both animal and plant products and are generally liquid at room temperature. Unsaturated fats contain at least one double bond within the carbon chain. Unsaturated fats can be in either the cis or trans isomer. A cis isomer is when the hydrogen atoms are on the same side of the double bond, whereas a trans isomer is on the opposite side of the double bond. In general, trans fatty acids are unhealthier. Fatty acids have two different ends: the carboxyl end (-COOH) and the methyl end (-CH3).

There are several different types of unsaturated fats:

1.) **Monounsaturated fats:** Contains 1 double bond. Monounsaturated fats have been shown to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease by decreasing LDL cholesterol (the “bad”
2.) **Polyunsaturated fats:** Contains 2 or more double bonds.

- **Omega-3 fatty acids:** This is an essential fatty acid from mostly plant and marine/fish sources. It is essential because the human body is unable to synthesize omega-3's and therefore it must be consumed in the diet. It is considered an omega-3 because the first double bond starts at the 3rd carbon atom from the methyl end of the carbon chain. Omega-3 fatty acids are reported to have several health benefits, which are still under scientific review and debate. The reported *health benefits* are decreased risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer, inflammation, depression, cognitive decline, arthritis, and dry skin.

- **Omega-6 fatty acids:** This is also an essential fatty acid with the first double bond starting at the 6th carbon from the methyl end of the carbon chain. Omega-6 fatty acids are reported to have *adverse health effects* such as increased risk for cardiovascular disease, asthma, arthritis, and certain cancers.

3.) **Trans fats:** This is an unsaturated fatty acid in the trans position (two hydrogen atoms are on the opposite side of the double bond). Trans fats have different chemical and physical properties that make it valuable in food production, such as increasing the shelf-life of food. However, trans fats have been shown to be one of the “worst” types of fats for the human body. This is because it increases the risk for heart disease by increasing LDL cholesterol (the “bad” cholesterol) and decreasing HDL cholesterol (the “good” cholesterol). Therefore, most leading health organizations recommend consuming as little trans fat as possible or consuming <1% of total energy from trans fats.

**Healthy vs. Unhealthy Oils and Uses in Cooking**

When choosing an oil, in general try to choose oils that contain more mono and polyunsaturated fats and less saturated and trans fats.

**Check out this Cooking Oil Comparison Chart!** It categorizes healthy vs. unhealthy oils, and oils better for cooking vs. dressings.
When it comes to choosing a cooking oil in the grocery aisle, you have to take into consideration the health benefits as well as the cooking technique.

**Safflower Oil:** Safflower oil is high in polyunsaturated fatty acids and low in saturated fat. It is best for medium-heat cooking such as stir-frying or sautéing.

**Canola Oil:** Canola oil got it's name in 1978 as "CANadian Oil, Low Acid". Canola oil is made from the rapeseed. Canola oil is considered very heart healthy due to it's low saturated fat, high monounsaturated, and moderate polyunsaturated fat content. Canola oil has a high smoking point and can be used for high-heat cooking, such as frying.

**Sunflower Oil:** Made from sunflower seeds, this oil has a very high smoke point and is commonly used for frying foods. Even though it has an abundance of polyunsaturated fat and Vitamin E, most of it is unhealthy omega-6 fatty acids and very little healthy omega-3's. Therefore, this is not the best nor the worst oil to choose from. If you're looking for something healthy, try canola or olive oil.

**Corn Oil:** I would stay far away from corn oil. The polyunsaturated content is 98% omega-6 and only 2% omega-3's. It has a high smoke point and is commonly used for frying. Not worth it.

**Peanut Oil:** Peanut oil can be used for deep-frying, sautéing, or grilling food. The proposed health benefits of peanut oil is mixed among the research. It has a relatively high saturated fat content compared to most other vegetable oils, but it also has a high poly/monounsaturated fat content. I would probably avoid this oil and stick to one with more definitive research on the health benefits. Plus, many people have allergies to peanuts.

**Olive Oil:** Olive oil is used in many Mediterranean and Italian dishes because it is one of the tastiest oils. It is high in monounsaturated fat and is beneficial to heart health. Olive oil has a low smoking point and it used for simmering foods on low heat as well as for dipping/dressings.

**Soybean Oil:** Soybean oil is high in omega-6 fatty acids and for that reason, it is probably not the healthiest choice. It has a very high smoke point and if you are looking to buy soybean oil, avoid the hydrogenated versions.

**Avocado Oil:** The fatty acid composition of avocado oil is similar to that of olive oil, and it thus a healthy option. It has a higher smoke point than olive oil and contains loads of monounsaturated fatty acids.

**Butter/lard:** Bad, bad, bad. High in saturated and probably trans fats. Just stay away from...
try to stick to soft tubs of margarine instead of solid bars of butter/lard.

**These are the healthiest options.

Fat composition of common oils

Fat composition of common foods

Oils
- Canola oil
- Corn oil
- Olive oil
- Soybean oil

Dairy Products
- Cheese, regular
- Cheese, light
- Milk, whole
- Milk, 2%
- Ice cream, gourmet
- Ice cream, light

Meats
- Beef
- Ground sirloin
- Pork chop
- Ham
The Mediterranean Diet

I absolutely love this quote by Registered Dietitian, Jane Thacker:

“I think the toughest thing I do as a dietitian is to get people to look at food differently than what we’re used to in the United States. In Europe, people don't eat a frozen dinner in front of their TV; their meals are very social,” she said. “Food is a celebration of life — the tastes, the smell, the laughter, the bonding. Food means so much more to people than sustaining our bodies through calories.”

Where is the Mediterranean Diet typically consumed?

The Mediterranean Diet is typically consumed by populations in the Mediterranean region. This consists of areas such as Spain, Italy, France, Greece, and parts of the Middle East.
Composition of the Mediterranean Diet

- **Fruits and vegetables**
- **Whole grains**
- **Legumes**
- **Nuts** – Around a small handful a day. Even though nuts are high in fat, they are mostly polyunsaturated fats and not saturated fat. Avoid salted, candied, and honey roasted nuts.
- **Fish** – Around 1-2 times/week. Fatty fish such as mackerel, trout, herring, sardines, albacore, tuna, and salmon are rich sources in omega-3 fatty acids. Anti-inflammatory omega-3's have been shown to lower triglycerides and improve heart health.
- **Low-fat cheese and yogurt**
- **Red wine in moderation** – The anti-oxidants in red wine (not white wine) have been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer. Moderation is defined as one glass of red wine per day for women and two glasses per day for men. A standard glass of red wine is 5 oz. Consuming excessive amounts of alcohol can be detrimental to your health.
- **Oils** (especially olive oil) – Unlike butter, oils are high in monounsaturated/polyunsaturated fats and contain very little saturated fats.
- **Low intake of red meats** – Red meats are typically high in saturated fat.
- **Regular physical activity**
Potential Health Benefits of the Mediterranean Diet

Some of the reported health benefits of the Mediterranean Diet include reducing the risk of:

- Overall mortality
- Cardiovascular disease mortality
- Cancer mortality
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Alzheimer's and Parkinson's
- High cholesterol
- Obesity
- Type 2 diabetes

If you want to learn more about the Mediterranean Diet, read a literature review I wrote for an undergraduate nutrition class.

Click: The Effects of the Mediterranean Diet on the Risk for Cardiovascular Disease

Mediterranean Diet 5 Day Meal Plan

If you are considering implementing the Mediterranean-style into your diet, follow this weekly meal plan. This meal plan was developed by Janis Jibrin MS RD and Tract Olgeaty Gensler MS RD.

Monday's Menu:
Breakfast

• Fluffy Pancakes

In a bowl, combine 1 1/2 cups low-fat yogurt (any flavor), 1 large egg, 1 cup whole-wheat or buckwheat pancake mix, and 3/4 cup fat-free milk. This recipe makes 5 servings (each serving is 4 small pancakes). Have 1 serving now and pack away 4 individual servings in the freezer for upcoming meals. Serve with 2 tablespoons light maple syrup, 1 cup fat-free milk, and 1 cup fresh strawberries.

Lunch

• Chickpea Salad

In a bowl, combine 7 1/2 ounces (half a 15-ounce can) canned chickpeas (rinse in a colander for 2 minutes to remove excess sodium and drain well; save other half for Tuesday's snack), 2 teaspoons olive oil, 1/4 cup chopped white onion, 1/4 cup chopped green pepper (save the rest of the onion and pepper for dinner), 1 tablespoon sliced black olives, 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper, and 1 1/2 tablespoons white vinegar. Mix thoroughly. Serve mixture over 2 cups romaine lettuce leaves.

Snack

• Crackers and Dip

Spread 1 Wasa crispbread cracker with 2 tablespoons hummus. Serve with 1 fresh plum.

Dinner

• Chicken Kabobs

Slice 4 ounces raw chicken breast into small chunks to skewer on a kabob stick. Marinate at least 30 minutes to overnight in 1/4 cup fat-free Italian dressing. Slice remainder of white onion and green pepper from lunch into chunks; set out 10 grape tomatoes. Alternate pieces of marinated chicken, onion, pepper, and cherry tomatoes on skewers and grill. Serve with one 6-inch whole-wheat pita pocket, toasted over the grill. Spread pita with 2 tablespoons hummus. Finish with 1 cup fat-free milk mixed with 1 tablespoon strawberry drink mix. For added refreshment, freeze the flavored milk into a Popsicle mold the night before and enjoy this as a healthy dessert! Make 3 Popsicles and save the remainder for Tuesday's and Sunday's desserts.

After dinner, make the chickpea spread for Tuesday's snack.

• Daily calorie total: 1,469
  • Fat: 25 g
  • Percent of daily calories from fat: 15%
  • Saturated fat: 4 g
  • Percent of daily calories from saturated fat: 2%
  • Carbohydrate: 209 g
  • Percent of daily calories from carbohydrates: 64%
  • Fiber: 35 g
  • Protein: 81 g
  • Percent of daily calories from protein: 22%
  • Cholesterol: 120 mg
  • Calcium: 1,150 mg
  • Sodium: 3,005 mg

Tuesday's Menu:

Breakfast

• Yogurt Granola Parfait

In a clear, wide-mouth glass, layer 6 ounces light fruit-flavored yogurt with 1 cup raspberries and 2 tablespoons low-fat granola. Begin with a third of the yogurt, a third of the fruit and then a third of the granola. Continue until all ingredients are layered.
Lunch

• Vegetable Pot Pie

Heat 1 Amy's Vegetable Pot Pie or 1 Swanson's Chicken Pot Pie according to package directions. Serve with 10 grape tomatoes.

Snack

• Chickpea Spread

Make this spread in advance and bring it along to work. Recipe makes 2 servings. Have half the recipe today and save the rest for Wednesday's snack. Use remaining chickpeas from Monday's lunch (half a 15-ounce can). Mash the chickpeas lightly in a bowl with a fork. Mix in 2 teaspoons olive oil, 1 clove minced garlic, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and 1/4 teaspoon salt. If desired, add 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin. Mash all ingredients together thoroughly or, if a smoother spread is desired, use a food processor to blend the ingredients. Bring along 1 cup broccoli flowerets and 1 sliced red, orange, or yellow pepper for dipping.

Dinner

• Tomato and Mozzarella Sandwich

Slice a 6-inch French baguette roll (3-inch diameter) in half lengthwise. Sprinkle the halves with 1/3 cup 33% reduced-fat shredded mozzarella cheese and bake in toaster oven at 250 degrees for 4 to 6 minutes, until cheese is just beginning to melt. Meanwhile, slice 2 large red tomatoes in 1/2-inch slices. Remove baguette from toaster oven, sprinkle with a little dried basil and dried oregano if desired. Top with tomato slices. For dessert, serve 1 frozen strawberry milk Popsicle left over from Monday's dinner (8 ounces fat-free milk mixed with 1 tablespoon strawberry drink mix, then frozen).

Daily calorie total: 1,548
• Fat: 41 g
• Percent of daily calories from fat: 23%
• Saturated fat: 18 g
• Percent of daily calories from saturated fat: 10%
• Carbohydrate: 246 g
• Percent of daily calories from carbohydrates: 62%
• Fiber: 26 g
• Protein: 58 g
• Percent of daily calories from protein: 15%
• Cholesterol: 71 mg
• Calcium: 991 mg
• Sodium: 2,487 mg

Wednesday's Menu:

Breakfast

• Chive and Goat Cheese Frittata

Directions
1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In medium bowl, with wire whisk or fork, mix eggs, milk, salt, and pepper. Stir in diced tomato and chopped chives.
2. In nonstick 10-inch skillet with oven-safe handle (or wrap handle with heavy-duty foil), melt margarine or butter over medium heat. Pour in egg mixture; drop spoonfuls of goat
cheese on top of egg mixture. Cook 3 to 4 minutes until frittata begins to set around the edge.

3. Place skillet in oven. Bake 9 to 10 minutes or until frittata begins to set and knife inserted in center comes out clean.

Make half the recipe. To save on cholesterol, use 2 whole eggs and 4 egg whites or 1/2 cup egg substitute. Your taste buds won't know the difference! Serve half of the frittata now and refrigerate the rest for Thursday dinner. Serve with 1 cup fat-free milk.

Lunch

• Turkey and Artichoke Sandwich

Spread 2 slices of whole-wheat bread with 1 tablespoon light mayonnaise and stuff with 4 to 6 artichoke hearts, 1/3 cup shredded 33% reduced-fat mozzarella cheese, and 3 ounces sliced turkey breast. Serve with 15 baby carrots and 1 cup green or red grapes.

Snack

• Chickpea Spread

Use remaining chickpea spread from Tuesday's snack. Bring along 1 sliced cucumber to dip.

Dinner

• Mediterranean Grilled Sea Bass

Make half of recipe and reserve half of that for Thursday lunch. Increase your vegetable intake by serving half a bag of baby arugula leaves with this meal (save the other half for Thursday). Serve with 1 ear of corn and 1 cup cooked sugar snap peas topped with 2 teaspoons trans-fat-free light margarine. For dessert, have 1 frozen fruit juice bar (limit 80 calories for the bar).

- 2 lemons
- 3 tablespoon(s) olive oil
- 1 tablespoon(s) chopped fresh oregano leaves
- 1 teaspoon(s) ground coriander
- 1 1/4 teaspoon(s) salt
- 2 whole(s) (about 1 1/2 pounds each) sea bass, cleaned and scaled
- 1/4 teaspoon(s) ground black pepper
- 2 large oregano sprigs

Directions

1. Prepare charcoal fire or preheat gas grill for covered direct grilling over medium heat.
2. Meanwhile, from 1 lemon, grate 1 tablespoon peel and squeeze 2 tablespoons juice. Cut half of remaining lemon into slices, other half into wedges. In small bowl, stir lemon juice and peel, oil, chopped oregano, coriander, and 1/4 teaspoon salt.
3. Rinse fish and pat dry with paper towels. Make 3 slashes in both sides of each fish. Sprinkle inside and out with pepper and remaining 1 teaspoon salt. Place lemon slices and oregano sprigs inside fish cavities. Place fish in 13” by 9” glass baking dish. Rub half of oil mixture over outsides of fish; reserve remaining oil mixture to drizzle over cooked fish. Let stand at room temperature 15 minutes.
4. Lightly grease grill rack; place fish on hot rack. Cover grill and cook fish 12 to 14 minutes or until fish just turns opaque throughout and thickest part flakes easily when tested with a fork, turning fish over once.
5. To serve, place fish on cutting board. Working with 1 fish at a time, with knife, cut along backbone from head to tail. Slide wide metal spatula or cake server under front section of top fillet and lift off from backbone; transfer to platter. Gently pull out backbone and rib bones from bottom fillet and discard. Transfer bottom fillet to platter. Repeat with second fish. Drizzle fillets with the remaining oil mixture. Serve with lemon wedges.

- Daily calorie total: 1,543
- Fat: 50 g
- Percent of daily calories from fat: 29%
- Saturated fat: 14g
- Percent of daily calories from saturated fat: 8.4%
- Carbohydrate: 169 g
Thursday's Menu:

Breakfast

• Fluffy Pancakes and Fresh Raspberries

Serve fluffy pancakes from Monday's breakfast with 2 tablespoons light maple syrup, 1 1/2 cups raspberries, and 1 cup fat-free milk.

Lunch

• Mediterranean Grilled Sea Bass

Serve remaining sea bass from Wednesday's dinner over rest of baby arugula leaves.

Snack

• Vegetables and Sweet Sour Cream Dip

Mix 1/2 cup fat-free sour cream with 1 tablespoon light maple syrup and 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract. (One 8-ounce fat-free sour cream will take you through Thursday's and Friday's snack.) Dip 10 grape tomatoes and 1 cup fresh string beans in this sweet, creamy dip.

Dinner

• Frittata and Baklava

Have rest of frittata from Wednesday's breakfast. Serve with 2 cups baby spinach leaves, topped with 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar, and 1 cup fat-free milk. Have 1 slice of whole-wheat toast topped with 2 teaspoons light trans-fat-free margarine. For dessert, have one 2-inch-square piece of baklava, a traditional Greek pastry with flaky fillo dough and walnuts. Athens Brand Frozen Baklava Pastry is available in many groceries nationwide. It's a great choice since the portions are tiny, and no baking or heating is required. (Have 2 squares if choosing Athens brand.)

Friday's Menu:

Breakfast

• Creamy and Crunchy Yogurt

Serve 6 ounces light yogurt, any flavor, in a bowl topped with 1 cup high-fiber cereal such as Kashi Good Friends. You can choose 100 calories of any cereal, such as 1 cup Cheerios or a heaping 1/2 cup of Raisin Bran. Top with 3 tablespoons chopped walnuts.
Lunch

• Vegetarian Pita Sandwich with Greek Cucumber Yogurt Sauce

Mix together 1/2 cup plain light yogurt with 1/2 finely chopped cucumber, 1/2 minced garlic clove, and a shake of salt and pepper if desired. Spread half of yogurt sauce (save remaining sauce for later use) on one 6 1/2-inch whole-wheat pita and fill with 5 halved grape tomatoes and 1 cup string beans. Serve with 1 cup (about 23) fresh cherries.

Snack

• Crackers with Sweet Creamy Spread

Mix remaining 1/2 cup fat-free sour cream (from Thursday’s snack) with 1 tablespoon light maple syrup and 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract. Spread between 6 squares (2 1/2 inches) graham crackers, any flavor.

Dinner

• Mediterranean Sweet and Sour Chicken

   2 teaspoon(s) olive oil
   8 small (about 2 pounds with bones) skinless chicken thighs
   1/4 teaspoon(s) salt
   2 clove(s) garlic, crushed with press
   1/2 cup(s) chicken broth
   1/4 cup(s) red wine vinegar
   2 teaspoon(s) cornstarch
   2 teaspoon(s) brown sugar, or to taste
   3/4 cup(s) (about half 10-ounce package) Mission figs, each cut in half
   1/4 cup(s) salad olives, (chopped pimiento-stuffed olives)
   1 bag(s) (5 ounces) baby arugula

Directions

1. In nonstick 12-inch skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat until very hot. Add chicken and sprinkle with salt; cook 17 to 20 minutes or until chicken is browned and juices run clear when thickest part of thigh is pierced with tip of knife, turning chicken over once. Transfer chicken to plate. Add garlic to skillet and cook 30 seconds, stirring.
2. Meanwhile, in cup, with wire whisk, mix broth, vinegar, cornstarch, and sugar.
3. Stir broth mixture and add to skillet; heat to boiling. Boil 1 minute, stirring until browned bits are loosened from bottom of skillet and sauce thickens slightly. Stir in figs and olives; return chicken with any juices to skillet and heat through.
4. To serve, arrange arugula on 4 dinner plates. Spoon chicken mixture over arugula.

Make one fourth of the recipe. Serve with 1/2 cup cooked brown rice topped with 2 teaspoons light trans-fat-free margarine. Enjoy 4 ounces of wine with dinner.

• Daily calorie total: 1,579
• Fat: 36 g
• Percent of daily calories from fat: 20%
• Saturated fat: 4 g
• Percent of daily calories from saturated fat: 2.3%
• Carbohydrate: 226 g
• Percent of daily calories from carbohydrates: 55%
• Fiber: 24 g
• Protein: 80 g
• Percent of daily calories from protein: 20%
• Cholesterol: 169 mg
• Calcium: 709 mg
• Sodium: 1,786 mg

Sources:

http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/mediterranean-diet/CL00011
http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/health/diet-plans/mediterranean-mpw1
The 4th of July. America's day of independence. A time for family, friends, fireworks, and of course the best part of this patriotic holiday...FOOD! Summertime barbecues can add thousands of calories that typically consist of gut-busting menu items such as fried chicken, hamburgers, hot dogs, potato chips, pepperoni rolls, ice cream, and beer. I'm not saying the holidays aren't a time to enjoy your favorite summertime meals. Go ahead and treat yourself...but there are some simple tricks and food swaps that can save dozens of calories and fat without suffering your taste buds.

The STARters and stripes

Before you start munching aimlessly on cheese curls and chips, take a look at some simple swaps before the main course is off the grill. Try to fill up on healthy foods first so you don't overeat throughout the meal.

**Vegetable Platter** – Create a quick and easy veggie platter full of carrots, celery, tomatoes, peppers, and any others you like. Try hummus as a dip instead of creamy and fatty ranch.

**Fruit, Fruit, Fruit!** Eat any kind you like. Fruit is low-calorie and full of vitamins, nutrients, fiber and water...which will make you feel fuller longer. Classic 4th of July favorites are watermelon, strawberries, blueberries, cantaloupe, and pineapple. To make fruit more appealing and fun to eat, try making colorful fruit kabobs!
Salads - Get creative with different types of salads that include fruits and nuts. Avoid creamy dressings like ranch or bleu cheese that are full of fat and calories. Top salads with vinaigrettes or balsamic mixed with olive oil.

Spinach and Strawberry Salad Recipe

Serves: 8

- 2 bunches spinach, rinsed and torn into bite-size pieces
- 4 cups sliced strawberries
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds

1. In a large bowl, toss together the spinach and strawberries.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the oil, vinegar, sugar, paprika, sesame seeds, and poppy seeds. Pour over the spinach and strawberries, and toss to coat.

Munchies, chips, and dip - Yes, go ahead and have some chips. Just don't go overboard. Portion control is everything here...the average serving of potato chips is around 11-12 chips (not half the bag!). Probably the healthiest options are chips that are whole grain and baked, not fried. In terms of dips, hummus and salsas are great. Salsa is low in calories and full of veggies. Avoid cheese dips, sour cream, and creamy ranch. Guacamole is an okay alternative. Even though guac is high in calories, avocados are packed with healthy fats (monounsaturated fats) that are good for your heart. Try these healthy chips and dips:
Baked Lays – A serving of 15 chips is only 120 calories and 2 g of fat (compared to Ruffles potato chips that contain 140 calories and 7 g of fat)

Baked Tostitos Scoops – This tortilla chip will only cost you 120 calories and 3 g of fat

Rold Gold Honey Wheat Braided Twist Pretzels – 8 pretzels is only 110 calories and 1 g of fat

SunChips – 16 chips is around 140 calories, 6 g of fat, and is low in sodium. These are one of my all-time favorite chips. Each serving provides 18 g of whole grains which is about a third of your daily requirement of 48 g/day.

Popcorn! – It still gives you something to munch on, just watch out for the butter.

The Main Event

Where's the beef? Grilling burgers and steaks is an American tradition. This 4th of July, aim for buying leaner cuts of meat – 95% lean, top sirloin, top round, or T-bone. Top your burger with a whole wheat bun (and the skip the cheese). There are some great alternatives to the traditional beef hamburger. Try a turkey, black bean, tuna, portobello mushroom, chicken, or even salmon burger! However, if you are at a 4th of July party with no other healthy alternatives, go ahead and eat the burger but without the bun. This goes for hot dogs as well...just by removing the bun, this can save you up to 200 calories.

Another great option is to cook kabobs on the grill – load a skewer with healthy items such as lean beef, chicken, shrimp, mushrooms, and all the veggies you can fit. Marinate with olive oil and throw on the grill.

Black Bean Burger Recipe

Black Bean Burgers are a great alternative to the traditional beef burger. This recipe is only 198 calories and 3 g of fat for each black bean patty!

Ingredients

Serves: 4

• 1 (16 ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
• 1/2 green bell pepper, cut into 2 inch pieces
• 1/2 onion, cut into wedges
• 3 cloves garlic, peeled
• 1 egg
• 1 tablespoon chili powder
• 1 tablespoon cumin
• 1 teaspoon Thai chili sauce or hot sauce
• 1/2 cup bread crumbs

1. If grilling, preheat an outdoor grill for high heat, and lightly oil a sheet of aluminum foil. If baking, preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C), and lightly oil a baking sheet.
2. In a medium bowl, mash black beans with a fork until thick and pasty.
3. In a food processor, finely chop bell pepper, onion, and garlic. Then stir into mashed beans.
4. In a small bowl, stir together egg, chili powder, cumin, and chili sauce.
5. Stir the egg mixture into the mashed beans. Mix in bread crumbs until the mixture is sticky and holds together. Divide mixture into four patties.
6. If grilling, place patties on foil, and grill about 8 minutes on each side. If baking, place patties on baking sheet, and bake about 10 minutes on each side.
Hot Dogs – I’ll be the first to admit that hot dogs are absolutely delicious and are perfect for outdoor grilling. If you are throwing some hot dogs on the grill, aim for ones that are less than 150 calories, <14 g of fat (no more than 6 g saturated fat), and less than 450 mg of sodium.

- One of the best hot dog brands to choose is Hebrew National 97% Fat Free Beef Franks. One frank is a mere 40 calories, 1 g fat (0 g saturated fat), and 520 mg sodium.
- One of the worst hot dog brands to choose is Ball Park Beef Franks. One frank costs nearly 190 calories, 16 g fat (17 g fat saturated), and 550 mg sodium.

Chicken – Fried chicken is definitely a 4th of July staple. However, fried chicken adds hundreds of calories, fat, and the dreaded saturated fat. An easy swap is to grill, bake, or sauté chicken breasts instead of frying them.

All-American Side Dishes

Baked Beans – Beans are a great side dish for cookouts. Beans are filled with fiber to help fill you up and aid with digestion. A 1/2 cup of cooked baked beans contains 120 calories, 1 g fat, and 5 g of fiber.

Coleslaw – Coleslaw isn't the worst option to put on your plate. A 1/2 cup of coleslaw is around 150 calories, 8 g fat, and 350 mg sodium.

Corn on the Cob – Typically I’d say corn is a healthy option, but I’ve seen too many people pour a stick of butter and slop a ton of salt on their cob. I’d say eat the corn on the cob, just go easy on the butter.

Veggies – Load up with any fresh or cooked veggies you can find...broccoli, corn, green beans, carrots, tomatoes, bell peppers, onions, zucchini. Even throw them on the grill for that great grilled taste.

Potato and Pasta Salads – Don't let the words potato “salad” fool you into thinking it's nutritious...it's loaded with mayonnaise. A 1/2 cup of potato salad will run you around 200 calories, 12 g fat, and 560 mg sodium. Pasta salad is definitely a better choice over the potato salad. Make a healthier version by using whole grain pasta, low fat dressings, load it with veggies, and skip the cheese.

Flag Down the Desserts

Fruit Salad – Okay, okay. Maybe it's not what you think of when you want a dessert, but fruit can be a low-calorie option for curbing your after-dinner sweet tooth.

Ice Cream Sandwich – One of summers best dessert options. Typically will only run you 160 calories.

Cookies – Here is a healthier version of the chocolate cookie made with whole wheat flour.

“Healthier” Chocolate Chip Cookies
Chocolate Chip Cookies made with whole wheat flour. One cookie contains 124 calories.

Ingredients

Makes 2 dozen cookies

- 1/2 cup(s) instant oats
- 1/2 cup(s) whole-wheat pastry flour
- 1/2 teaspoon(s) baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon(s) baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon(s) salt
- 1/3 cup(s) light brown sugar
- 1/4 cup(s) honey
- 3 tablespoon(s) unsalted butter, softened
- 3 tablespoon(s) canola oil
- 1 1/4 teaspoon(s) vanilla extract
- 1 large egg
- 3/4 cup(s) pecans, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup(s) bittersweet chocolate chips or chunks

1. Grind or process oats in a blender or food processor to a fine powder, scraping down the sides as necessary. Whisk the oats, flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a medium bowl until well combined.
2. Beat brown sugar, honey, butter, oil, and vanilla in a large bowl with an electric mixer until well combined. Beat in egg until combined. Add the dry ingredients and beat on low speed until combined. Stir in pecans and chocolate chips (or chunks). Refrigerate the dough for at least 1 hour or overnight.
3. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or a nonstick baking mat.
4. Drop level tablespoons of chilled dough onto the prepared baking sheet, at least 2 inches apart, to make 8 cookies at a time. Bake the cookies, in batches, until just golden, 7 to 9 minutes. Cool on the baking sheet for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool.

Patriotic Beverages

There's nothing like having an ice cold drink on a hot summer day, but drinking too many sweetened beverages, sodas, and juices can add many unwanted calories. The best trick is to stick to good old water...it has no calories and will keep you hydrated in the hot sun. If water gets a little boring, add a lemon, lime, cucumber, or a flavored Crystal Light packet to spice things up (this adds only about 5 calories a packet). If you are looking for a drink with a little more kick, however, here are some go-to alternatives for you to try.

Juice – Make sure the container says 100% juice, if not then it is probably packed full of sugar. Try these healthy juices (numbers based on an 8 oz serving):
Tropicana Pure Premium Orange Juice – 110 calories, 22 g sugar, and 250% of your vitamin C.

Tropicana Light Lemonade – 10 calories, 2 g sugar (made with Splenda)

Simply Grapefruit – 90 calories, 0 g fat, 18 g sugar

V8 Fusion Light – 50 calorie, 0 g fat, 10 g sugar

Langer’s Zero Sugar Added Cranberry - 30 calories, 0 g fat, 8 g sugar

**Beer** – Stick to light beers and avoid dark brews and ales. Don’t overdo it... moderate drinking is considered 1 drink/day for women and 2 drinks/day for men.

Here are your **best** beer options (12 oz):

- Michelob Ultra – 95 calories, 2.6 g carb, 4.1% alcohol
- Yuenglish Light – 98 calories, 6.6 g carb, 3.8% alcohol
- Amstel Light – 99 calories, 5.5 g carb, 3.5% alcohol
- Guinness Draught – (not to be confused with Guinness Extra Stout) 126 calories, 10 g carb, 4% alcohol
- Beck’s Premium Light – 64 calories, 4 g carb, 3.8% alcohol
- Miller Lite – 95 calories, 4.2% alcohol
- Bud Light – 110 calories, 4.2% alcohol
- Corona Light – 109 calories, 4.5% alcohol

Here are your **worst** beer options (12 oz):

- Sierra Nevada Pale Ale – 200 calories, 12 g carb, 5.6% alcohol
- Samuel Adams Triple Bock: 340 calories
- Sam Adams Cream Stout – 190 calories, 24 g carb, 4.9% alcohol
- Sam Adams Boston Lager – 160 calories, 18 g carb, 4.8% alcohol
- Guinness Extra Stout – 176 calories, 14 g carb, 6% alcohol
- Blue Moon – 171 calories

**Cocktails/Wine** – Not a beer drinker? Sugary mixers in cocktails can add some serious calories to your drinks. (A pina colada can top close to 500 calories!) Instead, stick to these classic healthier cocktails:

- **Screwdriver** – (6 oz) 130 calories
- **Bloody Mary** – (8 oz) 140 calories
- **Champagne** – (5 oz) 127 calories
- **Mojito** – (8 oz) 180 calories
- **Red or white wine** – (5 oz) 120 calories
- **Mimosa** – (4 oz) 75 calories

Hopefully these helpful tips will allow for a healthy and delicious 4th of July... HEALTHY COOKING!

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Posted in **Healthy Recipes**

Tagged **4th of July, healthy drinks, party food**

3 Comments

July 2, 2012

The Paleo Diet
Lately, I have had several people ask me about the “Paleo Diet”. After some investigating of my own, I realized this caveman-like diet is coming back into popularity. This diet is based on the wild plants and animals that our ancestors ate during the Paleolithic Era, a period of 2.5 million years that ended about 10,000 years ago along with the human development of agriculture. This diet was popularized in the 1970’s by gastroenterologist, Walter Voegtlin, who published the book, *The Stone Age Diet: Based on In-Depth Studies of Human Ecology and the Diet of Man*. The nutritional theory behind the Paleo Diet is that the human species has rarely changed genetically since the dawn of agriculture, and the best diet is that which was consumed by our ancient relatives. Paleo supporters suggest that individuals who consume a hunter-gatherer type diet benefit from being generally free of modern diseases. The Paleo diet is believed to possibly prevent “diseases of modern civilization” such as obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, depression, colon cancer, and acne.

The Paleo Diet is high protein (19-35% of energy) and low carbohydrate (22-40% of diet) with the majority of energy coming from animal products (56-65%) compared to plant products (36-45%). Sounds a lot like the Atkins Diet, right? The Paleo Diet consists of foods such as grass-fed meats, seafood, eggs, insects, fruit, nuts, seeds, vegetables, fungi/mushrooms, roots, herbs, and spices. Compared to the modern American diet, the Paleo diet is much less energy-dense and is mostly free of grains, legumes, dairy, salt, refined sugar, processed oils, food additives, and chemicals. The Paleo diet is NOT the Raw Food diet…fruits and veggies *can* be cooked. What about beverages? Not surprisingly, water is the only drink of choice, although tea is sometimes allowed. Coffee, alcohol, and sweetened beverages are totally out of the question as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OK to eat</th>
<th>Avoid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>Dairy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>Grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean Meats</td>
<td>Processed Foods and Processed Sugars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seafood</td>
<td>Legumes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuts and Seeds</td>
<td>Starches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Fats</td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
used about 1/3 of their caloric energy on physical activity (that is equivalent to burning around 1000 calories on a 3000 calories/day diet). This is similar to the recommendation proposed by the World Health Organization that individuals should average about 60 minutes/day of moderate-intensity physical activity.

What are some potential benefits of the Paleo Diet?

- **Chronic disease prevention** – This topic is debated among researchers, but the results seem promising.
- **Weight loss** – Due to a mere lack of calorie density.
- **High in fiber** – Found in high quantities in fruits, veggies, and beans.
- **Absence of allergens** – The Paleo diet is naturally casein-free and gluten-free. Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, and rye and is the proponent of Celiac Disease that causes inflammation of the lining of the small intestines (causing bloating, abdominal discomfort, and poor absorption of nutrients).
- **High in omega-3 fatty acids** – Found in fatty fish (such as salmon) and nuts, omega-3's have been shown to reduce the risk for heart disease.
- **Satisfying for meat-lovers**

Want to try a 1 week Paleo Meal plan (with shopping list)?  Paleo Meal Plan and Shopping List

What's the risk for people starting the Paleo Diet?  Vitamin and mineral deficiencies are the major concern. With little dairy being consumed, calcium needs to come from green, leafy vegetables (a hard thing for some people to do). A high fat diet can also also be detrimental. Even though some argue that the high omega-3 content of the diet can help in the prevention of heart disease, the Paleo diet is also moderately high in saturated fat. Thus, dieters should try to buy leaner cuts of meat to avoid the saturated type of fat. One of the things that concerns me the most is that this diet is extremely difficult to follow and stick to over a long period of time. In today's modern age, it is simply unrealistic to cut out entire food groups from your diet...not to mention this diet just doesn't sound that palatable or tasty (I mean come on, who doesn't love carbs and cheese?!). And being that I am in grad school, cost is always weighing on my mind. Constantly having to buy lean cuts of meat, fish, fresh fruits, veggies, and nuts is going to burn a whole in your wallet and have you running to the grocery store a few times a week. Who has the cash or the time for that? In fact, in 2011 The U.S. News and World Report ranked the Paleo diet dead last in a ranking of Best Diets Overall. A panel of experts ranked the diets based on health benefits, weight loss, and ease of following.

The Paleo Diet sounds like it could work if someone is able to stick to it religiously and willing to spend money. But personally, it is just not realistic for me. What do you think of the Paleo diet?

Want to try to make a Paleo-inspired recipe at home? There are numerous Paleo recipes and cookbooks on the market. I thought this one sounded pretty simple…and it looks delicious!

Salmon with Cherry Tomato Salsa and Asparagus Recipe
Salmon Preparation

Ingredients

- 4 wild salmon fillets, skin-on
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- 1 tsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp olive oil

1. Set your oven to broil.
2. In a small bowl, combine the garlic, salt, pepper, paprika, lemon zest, lemon juice and olive oil. Whisk well. Rub the salmon thoroughly with the mixture on both sides. Place in a covered dish to marinade in the refrigerator for about 35 minutes.
3. Line a baking sheet with foil. Once the salmon has marinated, place on the baking sheet and place in the oven to broil for 8 to 10 minutes, or until pale pink and flaky.

Roasted Asparagus Preparation

Ingredients

- 1 bunch asparagus
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- 1/4 tsp garlic powder
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1/2 tsp fresh lemon juice

1. Preheat your oven to 400 F.
2. Remove the tough part off of the asparagus stalks. Spread the asparagus out on a large baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and garlic powder. Toss the asparagus to ensure it's all evenly coated and cook for 10 minutes, flipping once after 5 minutes.

Cherry Tomato Salsa Preparation

- 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- 1 tsp fresh lemon juice
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- Freshly cracked black pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup fresh oregano, chopped

1. In a small bowl, combine the garlic, lemon zest, lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper. Whisk well. Add the cherry tomatoes. Toss the mixture together.
2. Serve over the salmon once it's cooked.

Good luck! Let me know if you try the recipe 😊
Healthy Foods in the Frozen Section

Next week, Emily and I will be presenting the first of six “Lunch and Learn” wellness series, where employees eat their lunch in a classroom while we teach them about various health topics. The “Lunch and Learn” series is part of a corporate wellness initiative for the employees at the Davis College at WVU. The objective of the healthy lunch series is to encourage healthy living and healthy eating at work. There is currently not a very consistent corporate wellness program at the Davis College, so we are working to develop more wellness initiatives for the employees.

The six “Lunch and Learn Series” and some general topic to be discussed are:

1. **Living Well in Morgantown...Eating Well While Working On Campus** – *This is the lesson Emily and I will be giving next Friday!*
   1. What is Wellness
   2. How to pack a healthy lunch
   3. *The “5-20” Rule when looking at a nutrition facts label* – For fat, sodium, and cholesterol you want sources that contain less than 5% of your DV. And for carbs, fiber, and vitamins and minerals you want sources that contain 20% or more than your DV.
   4. Pack this, not that
   5. Eat this, not that – Vending machine
   6. Eating at restaurants—pass out dining guide

2. **Exercising in Morgantown**
   1. Gyms in Morgantown – Membership information, locations, etc.
   2. Rail Trail
   3. Walking Map of Downtown/Evansdale Campus – Walking routes, miles, calories burned, etc.
   4. Local Race Information – 5ks, Color Run in Pittsburgh, Relay for Life
   5. Sign up for walking buddies?

3. **Stress Management/Sleeping Well**
   1. Benefits of getting enough sleep
   2. Tips for sleeping well
   3. How stress can harm your body
   4. Different stress-management technique – Meditation, yoga
   5. CD of calming music?

4. **Healthy Eating During the Holidays (Oct, Nov, Dec)**
   1. Halloween
   2. Thanksgiving
   3. Christmas
   4. New Year’s Eve

5. **Eating for Heart Health (February = Heart Health Month)**
   1. Heart Disease Info
   2. Calculate your Risk Factor, Worksheet
   3. “10 Foods for Heart Health”
   4. Behaviors to Avoid
   5. Recipe ideas?

6. **Eat Your Best, Look Your Best**
   1. What you eat affects how you look
   2. Hair health- vitamins & minerals
   3. Nail health- vitamins & minerals
   4. Skin health- vitamins & minerals
   5. Importance of drinking water
   6. “10 foods that will make you look your best” handout

In order to promote our lesson, we will be posting flyers around the Agricultural Sciences
Building and inviting several of our professors and advisors. Take a look at the flyer I made!

Click: brown bag lunch series flyer

Because the overall theme of our lesson is “Eating Well While Working On Campus”, the topics we will be discussing are the 5-20% Rule, vending machines, sugary drinks, fast food restaurants, and frozen food entrees. We have been working on developing a nutrition guide for the vending machines that are located in the Ag Sciences Bldg. The vending machine guide gives a red, yellow, or green light corresponding to a snack or drink item. The red, yellow, and green lights are designated based on calorie and fat content. Red items should be consumed never or rarely, yellow items should be consumed sometimes, and green items are always a go!

I have also been developing a handout with a list of healthy frozen food entrees that employees can easily throw in the microwave for lunch. The handout includes tips and guidelines for choosing healthy frozen foods, the benefits of frozen foods, and separates frozen foods into chicken, beef, fish, pizza, and pasta categories. The handout is not completely finished yet, but take a look at the rough draft I have so far!

Click: Frozen Foods For Lunch Handout

Another handout that we are in the process of making is an “Eat This, Not That – Fast Food In Morgantown Edition”. This handout is going to include several restaurants and fast food places on both Evansdale and Downtown campuses that employees typically go to for their lunch break. This is going to be a small booklet that participants can flip through to see the top 3 healthiest options and the 1 option they should totally avoid at each location. The guide is meant to give tips and be a quick reference guide when eating out for a healthy and delicious lunch off campus.

More to come on the “Lunch and Learn” lesson next week as Emily and I develop a PowerPoint presentation as well as the “Eat This, Not That” guide!

What’s the “beef” on beef?!

Researchers at The Pennsylvania State University studied the effects of including lean beef in a heart healthy diet. The Beef In an Optimal Lean Diet Study (BOLD), published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, examined the effects of varying amounts of lean beef on the blood lipids and lipoproteins on 36 mildly hypercholesterolemic men and women. The participants consumed 4 different diets for 5 weeks each (with one week compliance breaks in between diets). The four different diets were:

1.) Healthy American Diet (HAD) – The control diet that reflected a typical American diet comprised higher in fat. Comprised mostly of full-fat cheese and dairy, more oil and butter, and refined grains.

2.) Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) – The “gold standard” for a heart healthy diet consisted mainly of fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy, and the primary protein source came from white meat and plant sources.
3.) **Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet (BOLD)** – Similar to the DASH diet, but the main protein source came from 4 oz/day of lean beef.

4.) **Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet Plus (BOLD+)** – Similar to the BOLD diet, but with higher amounts of lean beef of around 5.4 oz/day.

The full nutrient breakdown of each diet is explained in the table below. Diet adherence was monitored by daily and weekly food questionnaires, which found 93% compliance to the diets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutritional Breakdown of Study Diets</th>
<th>HAD</th>
<th>DASH</th>
<th>BOLD</th>
<th>BOLD+</th>
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<td>4.0</td>
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</table>

*Weight before cooking*

The results of the study found that LDL and total cholesterol was significantly lower in the DASH, BOLD, and BOLD+ diets compared to the HAD (P<0.05). Compared to the HAD, LDL cholesterol (or the “bad” cholesterol) was significantly decreased by 5.5%, 4.7%, and 4.4% by the DASH, BOLD, and BOLD+ diets, respectively. Also compared to the HAD, total cholesterol was decreased by 3.8%, 3.8%, and 4.6% by the DASH, BOLD, and BOLD+ diets, respectively. Unfortunately, HDL cholesterol (or the “good” cholesterol), was also lowered significantly by the test diets compared to the HAD (refer to the graph below). There were also no significant differences between diets in terms of serum triglycerides, glucose, or insulin levels.

![Figure 2: Change in lipids and lipoproteins. Mean percentage change (±SEM) from the HAD (HAD: n = 33; DASH: n = 35; BOLD: n = 34; and BOLD+: n = 34). The MIXED procedure in SAS software (version 9.2; SAS Institute Inc) was used to test the effects of diet. *Significantly different from the HAD, P<0.05. BOLD: Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet; BOLD+: Beef in an Optimal Lean Diet plus additional protein; DASH, Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension; HAD, healthy American diet; TC, total cholesterol; TG, triglycerides.](image-url)
So what is the bottom line? Including lean beef in a healthy diet can reduce the risk of heart disease. A 3 oz. serving of lean beef (about the size of a deck of cards) has around 150 calories and is an excellent source of protein, zinc, vit. B12, vit. B6, niacin, and selenium. The types of lean beef included in the BOLD and BOLD+ diets composed of Top Sirloin, Tenderloin, T-Bone steak, and 95% lean ground beef. However, don’t forget to follow a low saturated fat diet (<7% of calories from saturated fat) and to meet the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

One of the reasons I am posting about this particular study is because I was personally involved with the follow-up to the original BOLD study. As a requirement for the Penn State Schreyer Honors College, I took part in the 1-year follow-up to the BOLD study for my undergraduate thesis. I was responsible for contacting participants, scheduling appointments, weighing participants in, and analyzing the data. If you want to read more, check out my undergrad thesis here!!

If you want to follow the same heart-healthy diet as the participants in the BOLD study, take a look at The Healthy Beef Cookbook. Below is an example of a delicious and healthy recipe including Top Sirloin.

Tomato & Zucchini Pasta Recipe

Being a grad student can make it really difficult to cook healthy meals on a time crunch. Here is one of my favorite recipes that I made up and tend to throw together on a weekly basis. Since I love, love, love pasta…this is my healthy “go-to” when I don’t have alot of time.

One of the main reasons I love this dish is because it’s nutrient-packed with load of health benefits. Here are just a few of the benefits from the ingredients…
Barilla PLUS pasta – 1 box has the equivalence of the fiber in 35 leaves of swiss chard, the protein in 11 eggs, and the ALA omega-3 in 6 oz of walnuts.

Olive Oil – Olive oil contains a type of healthy fat called monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFA). MUFA's have been shown to lower your total cholesterol and low-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels, normalize blood clotting, and may also benefit insulin levels and blood sugar control.

Tomatoes – Tomatoes are excellent sources of potassium, Vit A, Vit C, Vit E, folic acid, and lycopene. Lycopene is a carotenoid that has been found to reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer, and macular degeneration.

Zucchini – Zucchini is low in calories and high in fiber, making you feel fuller faster and aiding in digestion. Zucchini is also high in the anti-oxidants, beta-carotene and Vit. C.

Chicken – Although some vegetarians may argue it's health benefits, chicken is a good source of protein and niacin. Niacin has been shown to have anti-cancer and anti-Alzheimer effects.

Garlic – Garlic may reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering blood pressure, total cholesterol, and LDL cholesterol levels. Garlic may also be anti-microbial due to a substance called allicin, a sulphur compound produced when garlic is crushed or chopped. Vit C and selenium in garlic may also decrease the risk of cancers.

Ingredients:

- 2 small chicken breasts
- 1 serving Barilla PLUS farfalle pasta, cooked according to box instructions
- 4-5 Tbsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- ~1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
- 1 zucchini
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- Onion powder, basil, thyme, oregano, salt, pepper (to taste)
- grated parmesan cheese (optional)

Directions:

1. Begin by placing the chicken in a greased pan over medium-high heat. Cut chicken into bite-size cubes (appr. 1/2 inch). Sprinkle onion powder, salt, and pepper.
2. While the chicken is cooking, add olive oil in a small sauce pan and put over low heat. Chop zucchini into bite-size pieces (appr 1/2 inch strips) and add to olive oil. Add minced garlic and onion powder, basil, thyme, oregano, salt, pepper (to taste). Cook zucchini until tender.
3. Cut grape tomatoes vertically into halves. When zucchini is halfway done cooking, add the tomatoes to the sauce pan.
4. Add olive oil, zucchini, and tomatoes to cooked pasta. Sprinkle with grated parmesan cheese, if desired.
5. Bon Appetit!