

Celebrate! *A Healthy You*

A newsletter devoted to helping individuals of every size live in a healthy body.

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Stick to the Middle of the Road

Recent news releases from the American Heart Association say we eat too much sugar. It is true that many of us may eat more calories than we need, and sugary foods often lack nutrients. But why do we eat more of these and other high-calorie foods than we need?

Research by well-known nutrition experts like Ellyn Satter and Leann Birch tells us that making a food off limits makes us want to eat more of it. And common knowledge tells us this is true.

On the other hand, eating only candy, cookies, and chips is not healthy. Filling up on foods that offer little more than calories leaves us short of important nutrients for the body to grow, work properly and recover from illness and injury.

The phrase 'moderation in all things' is a good guide for sugar, soft drinks, and other high calorie snacks and desserts. Ellyn Satter has some great advice on how to take a middle-of-the-road approach.

- Be reliable about feeding yourself and your family meals and snacks that taste good. Skipping meals leads to being too hungry to be choosy about what you are eating. With defenses down, you are more likely to grab a high calorie snack than to put a healthy meal on the table.
 - Healthy foods can and should taste good. Vegetables may need a teaspoon of butter, meat a sprinkle of salt, fruit a spoonful of sugar. Really, moderate amounts of these seasonings are okay, unless you are on a special diet because of an illness.
 - Do not graze along all day and evening. Instead, space out meals and snacks to let hunger build between times.
 - Pay attention to eating. Do not watch TV, read, send text messages or talk on the phone during meals and snacks. If you are on automatic pilot while eating, you are not likely to notice when you are full. Eating will not be satisfying so you will want to continue eating past the point where you are comfortably full.
- If you are going to have dessert, put one serving at each person's place when you set the table. Eat it before, with or after other parts of the meal. Everyone gets one but only one dessert serving so they still have 'room' for other foods.
 - Serve chips or fries occasionally at a meal so they are just another food, not a treat.
 - Once in a while offer unlimited sweets like cookies and milk at snack time. Everyone may eat quite a bit the first few times. But soon the excitement will wear off and you will eat less, especially if you pay attention when you eat.
 - Soft drinks are an adult beverage not appropriate for children until they are in upper grade school. Then serve them occasionally at snack time. Soft drinks should not replace milk at meals for any age group. Drink water to quench thirst.

All of this advice is based on discipline and permission. Adults and children need the discipline of structured meals and snacks, and the permission to eat food that tastes good in amounts that will satisfy them.

Read more about Ellyn Satter's common sense approach to healthy eating by subscribing to her online newsletter at www.ellynsatter.com/contact.jsp or look for the second edition of her book Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family, published by Kelcy Press, 2008.

Words to Consider

"Never let formal education get in the way of your learning."
--Mark Twain

"When we are flat on our backs there is no way to look but up."
--Roger W. Babson

"Lead me not into temptation; I can find the way myself."
--Rita Mae Brown

Make Cooking Simple

Quick healthy meals are a necessity for most of us these days. Families of all ages, singles, retirees—everyone seems to have a busy life and a desire to eat more healthfully. Convenience foods can help speed meal preparation, yet many of them are high in sodium, fat and calories, low in fiber and other important nutrients, and not as tasty as foods we make from ‘scratch.’ One way around this dilemma is to use some convenience items to cut preparation time, while adding extra vegetables to improve nutritional value and flavor.

Skillet Lasagna is an example of such a dish. A package of frozen chopped spinach adds fiber and all the vitamin A an adult male needs for the day. Using prepared pasta sauce cuts cooking time, and by making it a sauce with lower sodium, keeps the total sodium count reasonable. A crisp lettuce salad and crusty French bread complete the meal just like traditional lasagna.

This month’s supplement **No Time to Cook?** offers many options for turning inexpensive, quick-to-fix convenience foods into easy, healthy meals. Stock up on mixes when stores put them on sale to save even more.

Skillet Lasagna

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| ½ pound ground beef | 8 ounces wide noodles, uncooked |
| ½ onion chopped (about ½ cup) | 1 10-ounce package chopped spinach, thawed |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced, or ¼ teaspoons garlic powder | 1 12-ounce container low fat cottage cheese |
| 3 cups spaghetti or pasta sauce (26 to 28 ounces)* | ½ cup (4 ounces) shredded mozzarella cheese |
| 1 cup water | |



Cook ground beef, onions, and garlic together in a large skillet or electric fry pan; stir to prevent sticking. When ground beef has turned brown use paper towels to blot up any accumulated fat. Add spaghetti sauce and water to skillet and bring to boil. Add uncooked noodles, stir, cover with lid, turn down the heat, and cook 5 minutes.

Squeeze the thawed spinach to remove the juice and then stir into the pan. Cover and simmer 5 minutes. Spoon cottage cheese over the top. Sprinkle with mozzarella cheese, put the lid on pan and let it heat another 5 to 10 minutes until heated through and noodles are tender.

Makes 8 servings. Nutrition information per serving: 352 calories, 8g fat, 26g protein, 40g carbohydrate, 4g dietary fiber, 551 mg sodium 3750IU vitamin A.

*Note: look for sauce with 350 mg sodium or less per serving to reduce sodium content even more.

Guidelines for Choosing a Healthy Frozen or Boxed Meal

Look at the Nutrition Facts label for the following information. Your meal may not meet all the guidelines, but the more it does, the healthier it is.

- 15 g of fat or less
- 400 calories or less
- 800 mg sodium or less
- 15g protein or more
- 9 oz. net weight or more

Tell Us What You Think



Celebrate! A Healthy You has changed some this year and we’d like to know what you think and how you might have used the information. Please take just a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey and return it by fax to 636-279-3310; or mail to University of MO Extension, 260 Brown Road, St. Peters, MO 63376.

The survey may also be completed online by going to http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=oh2kCOwO5fpUhcXyhjBIWw_3d_3d