

NUTRITION

Notes



August 2023

Published monthly for the clients of Meals on Wheels.

UPCOMING HOLIDAY

In the later part of this month you will receive a shelf stable holiday meal. This meal will be used for the Labor Day holiday (9/4/23) as Meals on Wheels will not be delivering on that day.

It Is Important That You Call

As you know we rely tremendously on our Volunteers to assist with meal delivery each day of the week. They take time from their days, and are willing to deliver in all kinds of weather. Recently we are receiving an increased number of no answer calls during or after routes. When this happens on frequent occasions the Volunteers can become frustrated with not being able to deliver the meals. Absence of our clients on delivery is also a waste of a meal, and as this continues over time it can cause an increase in the costs incurred by the program. We ask that you please ensure to call the office when;

- 1) You are going to be absent from your home during the delivery hours of 10:00am - 1:00pm.
- 2) You happen to be transferred to the hospital, if you are not able to call perhaps a friend or family member can contact the office.

It is important that you contact the office by 9:00am on the day of the delivery, or before if possible, to cancel your meal. You can hold the meal for any number of days. If you are going to be gone for an extended period of time we can

suspend your deliveries until we hear back from you.

During meal delivery we are also looking at ensuring you are doing well, if a volunteer does not reach you they will call into the office. When the office receives a no answer call they will follow up with you to ensure you are safe and doing okay. If we are unable to reach you we will then contact your emergency contact listed in your file to inquire about you. If we are concerned further with your well-being a welfare check can be requested. It is important that;

- 1) You please return the office staff calls when you receive them, so we can document that you are not in any distress.
- 2) Ensure that current phone numbers for yourself and your emergency contacts are updated if any changes occur.

We truly appreciate your willingness to work with us to make meal delivery a successful process.



ASK OUR DIETITIAN

By LuAnn Soliah, Ph.D., R.D.



Please call Meals on Wheels at 267-0122 to submit your question.

QUESTION: How many vegetables and which kind should I eat each day?

The current recommendations state that half our plate should be vegetables and/or salads. The exact portion or quantity is based on your calorie limit. If you are following a 2000 calorie diet/day, then 2-3 cups of vegetables should be included in your daily diet. This may seem like an overwhelming amount of food, but salads and vegetable juices count toward this total quantity.

Here are the distribution proportions for each week for a 2000 calorie diet.

- Dark Green Vegetables
– 1.5 cups per week
- Red and Orange Vegetables
– 5.5 cups per week
- Beans and Peas
– 1.5 cups per week
- Starch Vegetables
– 5 cups per week
- Other Vegetables
– 4 cups per week

This looks like an enormous amount of vegetables, but keep in mind that this information is for an entire week and several meals/day are included in the above list. Also keep in mind, that not everyone needs 2000 calories per day. Smaller adults may only need 1600 calories each day. Nevertheless, the overall message is to eat more vegetables and explore the opportunity to eat more salads

each day. Plan your meals to always include these food options and see if you just might surprise yourself with a new eating plan.

Energy Savings and Conservation Tips for the Summer

The Summer heat is surely upon us as we have seen numerous days with temperatures hovering around 100 degrees. Last month we talked about the importance of staying hydrated during these warm months. Electric bills are surely taking a toll on many as our homes try and keep up and keep us cool. Here are a few ways to help increase energy savings, according to Reliant Energy out of Texas (A Guide to Saving Electricity This Summer | Reliant Energy).

- Raise your thermostat 2 to 3 degrees from 2 to 9 p.m. and use fans to feel 4 to 6 degrees cooler.
- Follow the 4-by-4 rule: If no one is going to be home for more than 4 hours, set the temperature 4 degrees higher while you're gone.
- Use a timer on your pool pump to prevent it from continuously running.
- Wait until after sundown to wash clothes and use your dishwasher.
- Don't use the dishwasher until you have a full load.
- Opt for thermal drapes or blackout curtains to keep the heat outside your home and the cool air inside.
- Install ceiling fans and set the blades to spin counter-clockwise to circulate cool air.
- Look into different lighting options. LED lighting is much more energy efficient than incandescent bulbs. You should also take advantage of natural daytime lighting when possible so you can keep lights turned off during the day.

Why Should I Eat So Many Vegetables?

By LuAnn Soliah, Ph.D., R.D.

The new Healthy Guidelines promote a generous reliance on vegetable intake for adults. We know that vegetables provide texture and color to a dinner plate, but what else makes vegetables such an important part of our daily intake? The two main reasons are: 1) key nutrient provision and 2) important health benefits.

Key Nutrients

These nutrients are potassium, magnesium, fiber, iron, beta carotene (vitamin A form), folate, vitamin C, vitamin K, and special plant nutrients called phytonutrients. Also, vegetables are low in calories and contain no cholesterol.

Vegetables are divided into several sub-groups and some of the groups are favored more than others. For example, the dark green vegetables and red and orange vegetables are higher in folate, vitamin C, and beta carotene compared to starchy vegetables. Beans and peas contain higher amounts of iron, thiamin, fiber, potassium, phosphorus, zinc and magnesium. The starchy vegetables offer carbohydrate value, vitamin B6, and potassium. The general idea is to eat some of each category and consistently include salads and vegetables in your daily diet.

Important Health Benefits

Vegetables may help lower our risk for several diseases - including several chronic diseases that adults try to successfully manage. Let's look at a few other reasons for adding more vegetables to your diet. Vitamin C helps heal wounds, keeps teeth and gums strong, and it aids in iron's absorption. Vitamin A is important for vision, lung, and skin health. It is also credited to reduce various infections. Folate helps form red blood cells. Vitamin E is an important fat soluble

antioxidant. Potassium is associated with lower blood pressure measurements and it may help maintain bone mass. And of course fiber helps with proper digestion and the sensation that we have had enough to eat/meal.

I guess you could say, that vegetables and other plant foods are just as important as any other food group that we tend to prioritize (such as dairy or meats). Experiment with some new vegetables and see what variety you can achieve. It just may help you live longer, healthier and happier.

Cold Meals

During the month of July we began serving a cold meal on Tuesdays and Thursdays, this will continue through the month of August as well. Why was this change made? The reason is twofold; first we hope to change things up a bit and offer some varied items for you to enjoy. A cold sandwich or salad is always nice to have during the warm months. Speaking of warm, that leads to the second reason - the request was made by the Head Cook in the kitchen. When ovens, braziers, and the steam table are all on it gets quite warm in the kitchen during 100 degree days, the kitchen was looking for a little reprieve from the heat as well. A change of pace is always good, we hope you are enjoying this change. Your feedback is always appreciated.

Menu Notations

Thank you to the individuals who return their menus at the end of the month. We enjoy getting the feedback that you provide in regards to the meals that were served. This information is shared with both the Social Services office and the Kitchen staff. We do review comments, suggestions, and preferences and make adjustments as we can. It is hard to ensure 850 persons are all happy with their meal...but we try.

**Suggested Donation
\$10 Monthly**