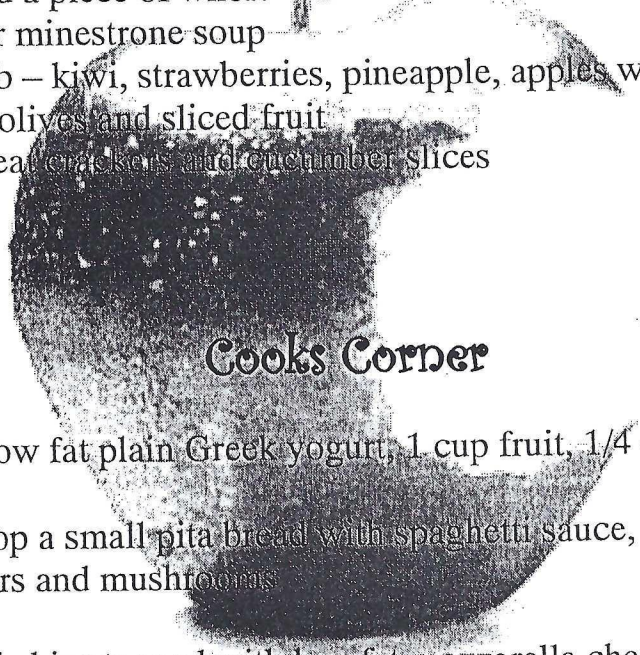
General Tips for Mealtimes

- Supportive seating is very important!
  - Child should be in seat that allows for 90 degrees of flexion at hips, knees, and ankles with foot support and table height halfway between bellybutton and nipples
- Keep mealtimes playful and interesting
  - Allow and encourage play
  - Do not punish/yell during meals as it increases adrenaline, which is an appetite suppressant.
  - Avoid pressuring child to eat. Instead, model it for them (eat with them) and allow them to play, explore, and learn about their food.
- Let food be the focus of every meal, not the child.
  - Try not to comment on how much or how little the child is eating or labeling as healthy or unhealthy during mealtimes.
  - Instead, you can discuss the sensory properties of food, events of the day, etc.
    - "The pudding looks thick," "It tastes sweet," "The smell is strong," etc.
- Limit meal times to 30 minutes max.
- Structure is key
  - Try to maintain a consistent schedule/time for meals and snacks
  - Every meal should have a clear beginning (wash hands, set table), middle (serve food family style and eat), and end (clear table, wash up)
- Avoid using food (e.g. dessert, preferred food) as reinforcement. The best reinforcements are social (e.g. playful/positive interactions and smiles from loved ones, etc.)
- Provide a learning plate for the child to place food that they cannot tolerate on their own plate yet. Talk about the sensory properties to learn about it.
- Repetition and exposure are key to trying new foods.
  - Have to move through steps to eating (tolerates visually, interacts with, touches, tastes, etc.) before actual step of eating.
  - Children need to taste food and swallow at least 10 times prior to determining if they like it. Therefore, keep exposing them (without pressure to eat) even if they say they don't like it initially.
  - Having your child help with meal prep is a great way to promote exposure to a variety of foods and their sensory properties.
- Use positive language
  - For example, "learning plate" rather than "I don't like or no thank you plate"
  - Rather than saying, "It's gross," or asking if they like it, try to phrase more positively or descriptive. For example, "It is slimy," rather than, "It is disgusting."
  - Rather than asking if they like it, talk about the sensory properties. For example, "I wonder if it is sweet."
  - Use "Taste," rather than "try"
  - Avoid demands such as "take a bite," as this can put pressure on the child and increase stress (appetite suppressant)

Snacks on the Go

Cottage cheese and pineapple or blueberries
Salsa with vegetables, corn tortillas or baked chips
Greek yogurt and sliced strawberries sprinkled with whole grain cereal
String cheese and whole wheat crackers
Popcorn - air popped or low fat microwave; can sprinkle with Parmesan cheese
Peanut butter on apple or banana
½ turkey sandwich on whole wheat bread
Hummus or bean dip with pita bread and sliced bell peppers
Hard boiled egg and a piece of whole wheat toast
Cup of vegetable or minestrone soup
Fruit / cheese kabob – kiwi, strawberries, pineapple, apples with mozzarella cheese
Finger food: nuts, olives and sliced fruit
Tuna on whole wheat crackers and cucumber slices



Cooks Corner

Fruit smoothie: low fat plain Greek yogurt, 1 cup fruit, 1/4 cup juice, ½ cup milk

Personal pizza: top a small pita bread with spaghetti sauce, mozzarella cheese, green peppers and mushrooms

Nachos: baked chips topped with low fat mozzarella cheese, tomatoes, green onions, peppers, black beans and avocado slices

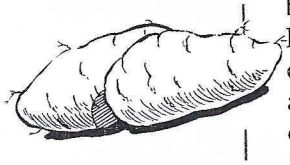
Tortilla or lettuce roll ups: low fat cream cheese, pineapple, ham and lettuce OR low fat veggie cream cheese, turkey, tomato, sliced green peppers, and mushrooms

Quesadilla: melt mozzarella cheese on a whole wheat tortilla – spice it up with salsa, avocado cubes, olive slices

Discover more food secrets!

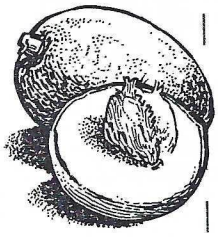
10 Super Foods ... For Better Health!

At least one will surprise you ...



1 Sweet Potatoes.

A nutritional All-Star – one of the best vegetables you can eat. They're loaded with carotenoids, and are a decent source of vitamin C, potassium, and fiber. Cook and then mash in one or more of your favorite spices – sweet (cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, allspice) or savory (cumin, coriander, paprika, chili).

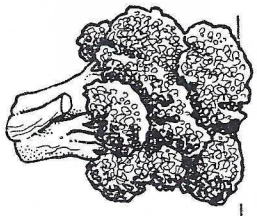


2 Mangoes.

About a cup of mango supplies 100% of a day's vitamin C, one-third of a day's vitamin A, a decent dose of blood-pressure-lowering potassium, and 3 grams of fiber. Bonus: mango is one of the fruits least likely to have pesticide residues.

3 Unsweetened Greek yogurt.

Non-fat, plain Greek yogurt has a pleasant tartness that's a perfect foil for the natural sweetness of berries, bananas, or your favorite breakfast cereal. It's strained, so even the fat-free versions are thick and creamy. And the lost liquid means that the yogurt that's left has twice the protein of ordinary yogurt – about 18 grams in 6 ounces of plain Greek yogurt.

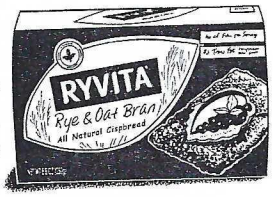


4 Broccoli.

It has lots of vitamin C, carotenoids, vitamin K, and folic acid. Steam it just enough so that it's still firm and add a sprinkle of red pepper flakes and a spritz of lemon juice.

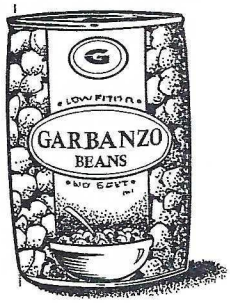
5 Wild Salmon.

The omega-3 fats in fatty fish like salmon may help reduce the risk of heart attacks. And wild-caught salmon has lower levels of PCB contaminants than farmed salmon.



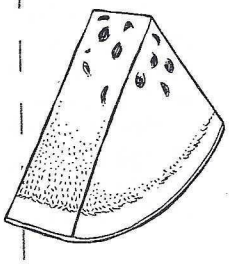
6 Crispbreads.

Whole-grain rye crackers, like Wasa, RyKrisp, Kavli, and Ryvita – usually called crispbreads – are loaded with fiber and often fat-free. Drizzle with a little honey and sprinkle with cinnamon to satisfy your sweet tooth.



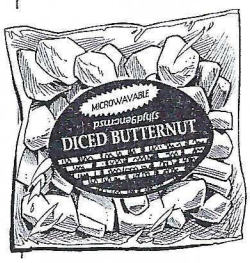
7 Garbanzo Beans.

All beans are good beans. They're rich in protein, fiber, iron, magnesium, potassium, and zinc. But garbanzos stand out because they're so versatile. Just drain, rinse, and toss a handful on your green salad; include them in vegetable stews, curries, and soups; mix them with brown rice, whole wheat couscous, bulgur, or other whole grains.



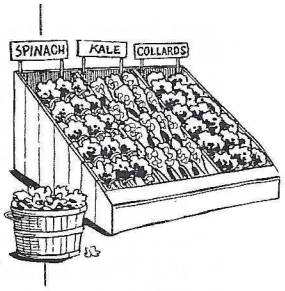
8 Watermelon.

Watermelon is a heavyweight in the nutrient department. A standard serving (about 2 cups) has one-third of a day's vitamins A and C, a nice shot of potassium, and a healthy dose of lycopene for only 85 fat-free, salt-free calories. And when they're in season, watermelons are often locally grown, which means they may have a smaller carbon footprint than some other fruits.



9 Butternut Squash.

Steam a sliced squash or buy peeled, diced butternut squash at the supermarket that's ready to go into the oven, a stir-fry, or a soup. It's an easy way to get lots of vitamins A and C and fiber.

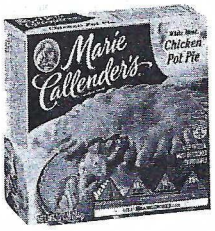


10 Leafy Greens.

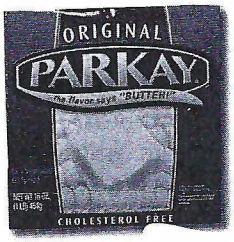
Don't miss out on powerhouse greens like kale, collards, spinach, turnip greens, mustard greens, and Swiss chard. These stand-out leafy greens are jam-packed with vitamins A, C, and K, folate, potassium, magnesium, calcium, iron, lutein, and fiber. Serve with a splash of lemon juice or red wine vinegar.

Nutrition Action Healthletter
Published for Consumers by the nonprofit Center for Science in the Public Interest 1220 L Street, N.W., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20005 | **www.orders.cspinet.org**

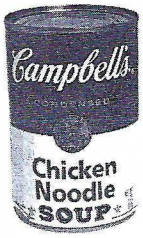
We Name Names!



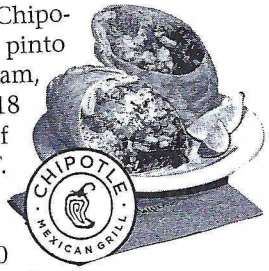
1 Artery Crust. Judging by the label, Marie Callender's (16.5 oz) Chicken Pot Pie has "only" 520 calories, 11 grams of saturated fat, and 800 mg of sodium. But look again. Those numbers are for only half a pie. Eat the entire pie, as most people probably do, and you're talking 1,040 calories, 22 grams of saturated fat (more than a day's worth), and 1,600 mg of sodium (an entire day's worth).



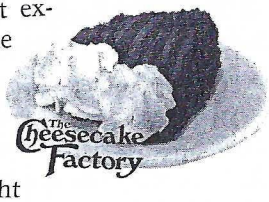
2 Transgression. "0mg Cholesterol" declares the box of Parkay Margarine sticks. Does that mean Parkay stick margarine is good for your heart? Nope. It may be cholesterol-free, but each tablespoon of the spread has 1½ grams of trans fat and 1½ grams of saturated fat. And beware of other trans-filled sticks by Blue Bonnet, Land O Lakes, Country Crock, and Fleischmann's. Shopping tip: Look for tub margarines instead – most have little or no trans fat.



3 Liquid Salt! An average cup of Campbell's regular Condensed Soup has 760 mg of sodium. But most people eat the whole can of soup, which contains 1,900 mg of sodium – more than most adults should consume in an entire day! Look for Campbell's Healthy Request, Progresso Reduced Sodium, and Healthy Choice soups with sodium in the 400s (still a lot if you eat the whole can). Better yet, choose reduced-sodium soups by Amy's, Imagine Foods, Pacific Natural Foods, and Tabatchnick.



4 Tortilla Terror. Interested in a Chipotle Chicken Burrito (tortilla, rice, pinto beans, cheese, chicken, sour cream, and salsa)? Think of its 970 calories, 18 grams of saturated fat, and 2,200 mg of sodium as three 6-inch Subway B.L.T. Subs! Skipping the cheese and sour cream cuts the saturated fat to 6 grams, but you still end up with 750 calories and more than a day's worth of sodium. Yikes!

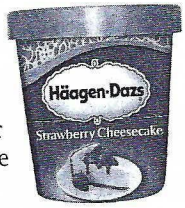


5 Factory Reject. People don't expect low-calorie desserts at The Cheesecake Factory. But the Chocolate Tower Truffle Cake kicks things up a notch. If it weren't served on its side, this one would stand over six inches tall. And upright or not, the slab of cake still weighs in at three-quarters of a pound. What do you get for all that heft? Just 1,760 calories and 2½ days' worth of saturated fat (50 grams), mostly from chocolate, sugar, cream, white flour, and butter.

6 Burial Grands. No one thinks of biscuits as health food. But each Pillsbury Grands! Southern Style frozen biscuit has 170 calories and 1½ grams of saturated fat, plus 3½ grams of trans fat (more than a day's worth). Companies are dumping their partially hydrogenated oils left and right, yet Pillsbury still makes most of its rolls and biscuits with the stuff.

7 Triple Bypass. Can't decide what to pick from a restaurant menu? No worries. Now you can order not just one entrée, but two ... or three ... all at once. Olive Garden's Tour of Italy – Homemade Lasagna, Lightly Breaded Chicken Parmigiana, and Creamy Fettuccine Alfredo – comes with 1,450 calories, 33 grams of saturated fat, and 3,830 milligrams of sodium. Add a breadstick (150 calories and 400 mg of sodium) and a plate of Garden-Fresh Salad with dressing (290 calories and 1,530 mg of sodium) and you'll consume almost 2,000 calories (an entire day's worth) and 5,760 mg of sodium (4 days' worth) in a single meal!

8 Starbucks on Steroids. The Starbucks Venti (20 oz) White Chocolate Mocha with 2% milk and whipped cream is more than a mere cup of coffee. It's worse than a McDonald's Quarter Pounder with Cheese. Few people have room in their diets for the 580 calories, 14 grams of saturated fat, and 13 teaspoons of added sugar that this hefty beverage supplies. But you can lose 130 calories and more than half of the saturated fat if you order it with nonfat milk and no whipped cream.



9 Extreme Ice Cream. An average half-cup serving of Häagen-Dazs ice cream squeezes half-a-day's saturated fat and a third-of-a-day's cholesterol into your artery walls and makes a 300-calorie down-payment on your next set of fat cells – if you can stop at a petite half-cup!

10 Stone Cold. Cold Stone Creamery's Oh Fudge! shake (chocolate ice cream, milk, and fudge syrup) starts at 1,060 calories for the small "Like It" (16 oz) size. That's more than a large (22 oz) McDonald's McCafé Chocolate Shake. The medium "Love It" (20 oz) has 1,360 calories and the large "Gotta Have It" (24 oz) reaches 1,600 calories (almost an entire day's worth) and 62 grams of saturated fat (3½ days' worth). That's the saturated fat content of two 16-oz ribeye steaks plus a buttered baked potato, all blended into a handy 24 oz cup.

Far better alternatives are available to you.

Turn the page for some healthier choices!