



SMART CHOICES

Volume 11 · Spring 2006 Nutrition Connections · A Link to Food, Fitness & Financial Health

A PROGRAM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Supermarket Smarts

Here at *Smart Choices*, we wondered if low-calorie, high-weight foods could fit into a food stamp budget. So, we surveyed the prices of healthy foods in six NH grocery stores.* Our survey showed that healthy foods can be affordable on a tight budget. Add a few of these low-cost, nutritious foods to your grocery cart:

Chicken noodle soup, can: 69¢

Bananas: 64¢/pound

Carrots: \$1.03/pound

Whole wheat bread, 24 oz loaf: \$1.66

Baked beans, 16 oz can: 70¢

Peaches, canned in pear juice: \$1.05

Frozen broccoli, 1 pound: \$1.31

Peas, 14.5 oz can: 52¢

White tuna in water, 6 oz can: \$1.28

Spaghetti, 16 oz: 71¢

Tomato sauces, 26 oz jar: \$1.60

1% Milk, 1 gallon: \$2.67

Lentils, 1 lb: 81¢

Diced tomatoes, 14.5 oz can: 75¢

*In March, we surveyed two small grocery stores, a discount chain store, and three supermarkets. The stores were located in towns of all sizes. These prices are the averages of the stores we surveyed.

Eat More, Weigh Less!

Wouldn't weight control be a lot easier if we could feel full on fewer calories? Here's good news! New research shows that food *weight* actually plays a bigger role in reducing hunger than food *calories*, because weight sends stronger fullness signals to your brain by stretching your stomach. In fact, most of us eat about the same weight of food each day even though our daily calories may vary a lot.

To use the hunger-reducing power of food weight, focus on two types of foods low in calories per gram of weight:

① Foods not overly high in fat are a good choice, since each gram of fat adds 9 calories while the same food weight of carbohydrates or protein adds just 4 calories. For example, compare full-fat mayonnaise (7 calories per gram) with reduced-fat mayonnaise (3 calories); fried chicken has twice the calories of grilled chicken; and a gram of full-fat cheese (4 calories) has nearly twice the calories of 50%-fat cheese (2.5 calories). But don't go too low on fat, since it does add flavor.

② Water-rich foods are even more effective, especially fruits, veggies and broth-based soups. Water not only adds calorie-free weight but also swells food volume so your eyes, mouth and stomach feel you've eaten more than you really have!

For example, a cup of grapes and ¼ cup of raisins both have 110 calories, but the raisins are a lot less filling since the grapes (which contain a lot of water) weigh 160 grams, while dried raisins (same calorie count but little water) weigh just 36 grams. The same is true for pasta, ½ cup of cooked pasta and five pretzels both have 110 calories, but the pasta is more filling since it weighs more than twice as much as the pretzels. Remember, we are trying to add weight, not calories, to your *diet* to help you lose weight!

Water weight helps satisfy hunger only if it's actually part of the food. Drinking water doesn't work, since it leaves your stomach too quickly. That's also why whole fruit is more filling than juice, let alone soda. Need proof? In one study, women had a 270-calorie casserole plus a 10-oz. glass of water as a first course for lunch. But, when the water was cooked into the casserole instead, they felt fuller and ate 100 fewer lunch calories overall.

Some tips for adding hunger-reducing water weight to food:

- Begin a meal with a low-calorie salad.
- Add extra vegetables to pasta, pizza, canned soup, sandwiches or a casserole.
- Cook extra water into a casserole to make it more water-rich.
- "Weigh down" a chicken salad with grapes or sliced apples, or a tuna salad with celery, peppers or tomatoes.
- Include a piece of whole fruit in your breakfast. Add fruit to yogurt. Choose fruit desserts.
- Include skewers with fruits & veggies at the next barbeque.

Another great weight control tip: Eat more lean protein foods like skinless chicken, baked or broiled fish, beans and 1% or skim milk, because protein also has good filling power per calorie.

What Does Buying Lower Fat/Light Products Really Save Nutritionally?

Below is a comparison of products in the “regular” version and “light” version. Look at the nutritional difference!



Nutritional Information	Microwave Popcorn “Movie Theater Butter”	Microwave Popcorn - Light Butter	Choosing “Light Butter” Popcorn compared to choosing “Movie Theater Butter”
Calories	170: 2 tbsp. unpopped 35: 1 cup popped	120: 2 tbsp. unpopped 20: 1 cup popped	Saves 50 Calories
Total Fat	12 g	5 g	Saves 7 g of Total Fat
Saturated Fat	6 g	2 g	Saves 4 g of Saturated Fat
Trans Fat	0 g	0 g	Nothing Saved
Polyunsaturated Fat	1.5 g	0.5 g	Saves 1 g of Polyunsaturated Fat
Cholesterol	0 mg	0 mg	Nothing Saved
Sodium	360 mg	320 mg	Saves 40 mg of Sodium
Total Carbohydrates	16 g	19 g	Adds 3 g of Total Carbohydrates
Fiber	3 g	3 g	Nothing Saved
Protein	2 g	3 g	Adds 1 g of Protein



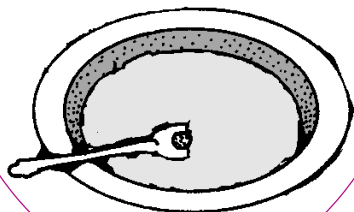
Nutritional Information	Refried Beans	Refried “Fat Free” Beans	Choosing “Fat Free” Refried Beans compared to choosing “Refried Beans”
Calories	150: ½ cup	100: ½ cup	Saves 50 Calories
Total Fat	2.5 g	0 g	Saves 2.5 g of Total Fat
Saturated Fat	1 g	0 g	Saves 1 g of Saturated Fat
Trans Fat	0 g	0 g	Nothing Saved
Polyunsaturated Fat	0 g	Not Listed	Nothing Saved
Cholesterol	0 mg	0 mg	Nothing Saved
Sodium	570 mg	540 mg	Saves 30 mg of Sodium
Total Carbohydrates	25 g	18 g	Saves 7 g of Total Carbohydrates
Fiber	9 g	4 g	Lose 5 g of Fiber
Protein	8 g	6 g	Lose 2 g of Protein

Nutritional Information	Kielbasa	Kielbasa “Lite”	Choosing “Lite” Kielbasa compared to choosing “Kielbasa”
Calories	190: 2 oz	110: 2 oz	Saves 80 Calories
Total Fat	17 g	8 g	Saves 9 g of Total Fat
Saturated Fat	8 g	3 g	Saves 5 g of Saturated Fat
Trans Fat	0 g	0 g	Nothing Saved
Polyunsaturated Fat	Not Listed	Not Listed	Nothing Saved
Cholesterol	25 mg	35 mg	Adds 10 mg of Cholesterol
Sodium	510 mg	550 mg	Adds 40 mg of Sodium
Total Carbohydrates	2 g	0 g	Saves 2 g of Total Carbohydrates
Fiber	0 g	0 g	Nothing Saved
Protein	7 g	9 g	Adds 2 g of Protein

Recipe

Lentil Soup

This soup is power-packed with nutrition and low cost!



Serves: 12

Serving size: 1 cup

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

What you'll need:

1 pound bag of lentils

6 cups water

2 cups chicken broth

2 carrots, diced

1 10 oz. package frozen spinach

1 bay leaf, optional

2 Tbsp. tomato paste

Salt (optional)

Nutrition information

per serving:

Calories: 150

Carbohydrates: 24 grams

Protein: 12 grams

Fat: 1 gram

Sodium: 210 milligrams

Fiber: 13 grams

① Pick over lentils, checking for small stones, then rinse. Put in stock pot with water and broth, heat on medium-high.

② Microwave spinach to defrost.

③ Peel and dice carrots. Add to soup.

④ Break up spinach and add to pot along with bay leaf. Dissolve tomato paste into mixture.

⑤ When soup comes to a boil, lower heat and simmer for about 45 minutes.

Tips/Notes: Lentils are a high protein, low cost legume that do not require soaking prior to cooking. Lentils can be found in most supermarkets, often in the international foods section.

Put the leftover tomato paste into a baggie and freeze it for later use.

Time saver: Use red lentils which require 15 minutes to cook instead of brown lentils which need $\frac{1}{2}$ hour.

Menu ideas: Serve with crusty bread or roll, a green salad, and fruit parfait for a balanced meal. Freezes well.

Ask Miss Smarty

Q. Why should *trans* fats be reduced in my diet?

A. Scientific studies have shown that *trans* fats raise the blood levels of LDL cholesterol ("bad" cholesterol) in blood. High blood levels of LDL cholesterol are an important risk factor for heart disease. *Trans* fat also lowers the levels of HDL cholesterol ("good" cholesterol) in the blood. Low blood levels of HDL are another important risk factor for heart disease.

Q. Which foods contain *trans* fats?

A. Foods that are made with partially hydrogenated vegetable oils: crackers, cookies, some brands of margarine, snack foods, vegetable shortening, and other foods made with fried and partially hydrogenated vegetable oils.

Q. How does fat play a role in good health?

A. Fat is an important source of calories for infants and children. If healthy fats are restricted in the diets of children their growth and development fail. Certain fatty acids from the diet play an important role in developing and maintaining good health. Fats from the diet are the way that the fat soluble vitamins (vitamins A, D, E and K and carotenoids) travel in the body to the cells where they are needed.

Got a question for Miss Smarty?

Write to:

Ask Miss Smarty

**UNH Cooperative Extension
315 Daniel Webster Highway
Boscawen, NH 03303**

Dear Reader, *Smart Choices* is a periodic newsletter specially designed to give you the information you need to improve your and your family's nutrition without increasing the amount you spend on food. It is published by the New Hampshire Food Stamp Program and the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, Nutrition Connections Program. Our goal is to give you the most up-to-date information about nutrition, money saving shopping tips and food safety. We hope you find it informative, useful and entertaining, and welcome your comments.



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