Fresh Takes on Summer Food Favorites

Nothing says summer like backyard barbecues or hot dogs at a ball game, but these popular seasonal foods can pack on the pounds. How can you still enjoy the tastes of summer?

Lighten up meats. Roasts and hamburgers can be particularly high in fat. Fried chicken is a real culprit too. **Ideas:** Start with lean ground beef for hamburgers and add moisture by blending pureed fruits or vegetables into the ground meat before cooking. Add flavor to skinless chicken with a spice rub. Top meats with grilled vegetables or serve with salsa.

Toss better salads. **Ideas:** Use light vinaigrette in potato or macaroni salads and add diced vegetables. If you must use a creamy base, choose low-fat mayonnaise, yogurt or sour cream. With tossed salads, skip the croutons, bacon and cheese; try grilled chicken, sliced egg, beans or jicama instead, and top with low-calorie dressing.

Dish out delightful desserts. A cup of soft-serve ice cream can tack on 300 calories and 20 grams of fat to your meal. Low-fat frozen treats are just as satisfying. **Ideas:** Try sorbet, light ice cream or fruit bars, or shortcake or angel-food cake made with fresh berries and low-fat whipped topping.

Another healthy tip? Sometimes two or three bites are satisfying enough and can help you stay true to your diet goals.

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**DR. ZORBA’S LONGEVITY CORNER**

**Big Kids.** According to the National Institutes of Health, the rate of childhood obesity is leveling off but still remains high. Nearly a third of kids are overweight, and 15 percent of boys are extremely obese. **What can you do?** Help your children make better choices by letting them help you cook at home and avoiding fast food. Find a kid-friendly cookbook and start today. It’s fun family time too.

Checking In on New Year’s Resolutions

You’re halfway through the year... how are your New Year’s resolutions panning out? If your success has been less than impressive, June is a good time for a resolution tuneup. Many people fail because their New Year’s goals are too broad or too numerous. Make your goals specific, then break them into smaller steps. Your goals should also be realistic, measurable (track your progress with a log) and timely (set a goal date). Go online! Check out WELL CONNECTIONS for tips for guys at www.personalbest.com/extras/junemen10.

Health Habits That Could SAVE YOUR LIFE

You probably know that a healthy diet, exercise, weight control and not smoking or using tobacco can ward off deadly diseases, but there are other lifesaving health habits that are often overlooked.

☐ **Do you wash your hands with soap and water before cooking and eating, after using the toilet, and periodically during the day?** Studies suggest that hand washing is on the decline even though clean hands can protect you from flu, hepatitis A, food poisoning and other illnesses. Use hand sanitizer for a light cleaning when you can’t get to a sink.

☐ **Are your vaccinations current?** Immunizations save lives by protecting you and others from flu, pneumonia, pertussis (whooping cough), meningitis, tetanus and other diseases. Ask your health care provider if you’re due for any.

☐ **Do you consistently sleep well?** Many people are sleep-deprived despite the fact that resting well helps ward off diseases and guard against injuries. Keep a schedule that allows for 7 to 8 hours of sleep; steer clear of caffeine, chocolate and other stimulants late in the day; and get help if you’re still wishing you could sleep better.

☐ **Are you seeking help for depression or other emotional issues?** Most people with depression go untreated, even though this condition increases the risk of mortality from all causes. Effective treatments such as counseling and medications are available, so contact a professional for help (do so immediately if you have suicidal thoughts).

TopHealth takeaway: The keys to a longer life may be within your grasp.

**Q&A** What’s the No. 1 cause of death in Americans aged 1 to 41?
Quick Guide to Brown-Bag Lunches

Packed lunches can be tasty and nutritious — and save you time and money too. But worried that homemade lunches are boring or time-consuming? Not if you start with these tips:

Think BASICS. Lean meats, fish, cheese, eggs, beans and peanut butter are great protein options. Carbohydrate choices include whole-wheat bread or pasta, crackers, tortillas, rice and potatoes. Try new combinations such as a roll-up with peanut butter; grated carrot and raisin salad; or a chicken-salad sandwich with lettuce and pecans.

Do some PLANNING. Before the workweek begins, stock up on perishables such as grilled chicken, fruit, bean spreads, vegetables and bread. Precut vegetables and ready-to-eat fruit save time. Keep staples on hand such as pasta, peanut butter, olives, dried fruit, canned fish and nuts.

Check for FRESH look and feel. Toast bread and pack fillings separately to prevent soggy sandwiches. Buy a good insulated lunch bag, and keep it cool with a frozen beverage or ice pack. Sprinkle some juice or dressing on cut fruit to prevent it from browning.

Keep VARIETY in mind. Sample ethnic dishes (such as cold sesame noodles) and vegetarian choices (such as a hummus pita sandwich with dark leafy greens or sliced peppers) for some variety.

Double the fun: Buddy up with a co-worker or friend to share portions and try new food combinations.

Straight Talk on Posture

If you sit or stand often, and most of us do, perfecting your posture is important. Try these techniques for better posture:

When sitting:
Sit up straight against the back of your chair and your feet flat on the floor. Your knees should be level with or slightly higher than your hips.

If using a computer, set it up so you don’t need to bend your neck or twist your body.

When standing:
Stand tall with your head up and shoulders back.

If you need to bend down (to lift something, for example), bend your knees, not your back.

When lying down or sleeping:
Position your pillow under your head (not shoulders) so that your neck remains straight.

Maintain the lumbar curve in your lower back. Lie on your back with a pillow (or rolled towel) under your knees, or sleep on your side with your knees bent.

Get up out of bed by rolling onto your side, bringing your knees up and swinging your legs over the edge of the bed. Push yourself up with your hands.

Anytime:
Move and stretch periodically. Keeping your “core” (back and belly muscles) strong is one of the best steps you can take to support good posture.

Happiness lies, first of all, in health. ~ George William Curtis

Q & A

Q: What’s the No. 1 cause of death in Americans aged 1 to 41?
A: Unintentional injuries are the No.1 cause, and the incidence appears to be increasing. Nearly half of all these injuries occur in or around the home.

Top 3 dangers and what you can do:
1. Falls
   • Maintain sturdy railings and banisters near stairs, and make sure walkways are well-lit, clutter-free and non-skid.
   • Remove trip and slip hazards; secure electrical cords and fasten down throw rugs.
   • Use stable step stools and ladders that are securely positioned. Don’t use chairs as a substitute for step stools.

2. Accidental Poisoning
   • Medications, toiletries and cleaners should be secured with childproof locks or kept on high shelves if there are children around.
   • Accidental poisonings can result from mixing medications or failing to follow dosing recommendations. Check with your pharmacy to see if drugs are compatible. Don’t double up on multi-symptom cold and flu remedies.

3. Fires and Burns
   • Have working smoke alarms in your home, and install fire sprinklers if you’re building a new house.
   • Never leave a stove unattended while cooking, especially when frying food.
   • Identify two means of exit in every room of your house, and share this information with the other members of your household.