Eat, Drink and Be Merry?

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• Eat fish once or twice a week
• Eat meat in moderation

Dr. Zorba's Longevity Corner

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TopHealth takeaway: Eat right for your body and your mind.

Why Eat Seeds?

People have eaten this nutrition-packed food for centuries. Seeds contain fiber, protein, minerals and phytochemicals. While some people avoid seeds because of their fat content (and calories), the fats they contain are actually a healthy variety.

Which seeds are best? Popular choices include sesame, sunflower and pumpkin seeds. Sunflower seeds are rich in vitamin E, a nutrient that may deter certain cancers yet is lacking in many Americans’ diets. Good to know: A handful of sunflower seeds contains nearly a full daily RDA of vitamin E.

How should I add seeds to my diet? Sunflower and pumpkin seeds are often sold as snack foods; choose varieties low in added fat and salt. Whole seeds can be added to salads or used as toppings for bread or other dishes. When ground, seeds can be added to soups, cereals, batter, smoothies, meatballs and burgers. Good to know: Ground flaxseed can substitute for a portion of fat or oil in baked goods recipes.

How should I prepare them? Roasting enhances flavor but depletes some of the oils. Avoid this by cooking seeds at low heat for only 15 to 20 minutes.

Bottom line: As with any food, check the nutrition label for calories per serving size and plan accordingly.

TERM TO KNOW: Cumulative Head Trauma

Concussions commonly result from falls, collisions or a hit to the head while playing sports. Ninety percent of these are “mild,” with a brief alteration in mental functioning and no loss of consciousness. The symptoms are often so fleeting that many victims don’t even realize they’ve had a concussion. But several mild concussions sustained over months or years can lead to more serious health concerns and neurological problems. Multiple concussions can also lead to problems such as learning disabilities, attention deficit, memory loss and depression that may not become evident until much later.

How to protect yourself from head trauma:

• During contact sports, wear a high-quality protective helmet that fits properly.
• Avoid “head-butting” moves in sports.
• Don’t return to play until a head injury has been assessed by a medical professional and you are symptom-free.
• Know the early symptoms of concussion: headache, dizziness, nausea or vomiting, disorientation, slurred speech, and imbalance or lack of coordination. Anyone who has lost consciousness or experiences symptoms for more than 15 minutes should be evaluated by a doctor. Worsening symptoms require that you seek immediate medical attention.

BEETTER WHITE BREAD. If you want the nutrition of whole-wheat bread without the heavy flavor, here’s some good news: White whole-wheat foods are now available and have the same nutritional value as whole wheat but taste more like traditional white-flour products. When buying bread, check for 100% whole wheat on the label — or at least whole wheat or white whole wheat as the first ingredient listed.

NEXT MONTH: INTERVAL TRAINING