

# Food & Nutrition Newsletter



Spring  
2017

## Put Your Best Fork Forward

During National Nutrition Month (NNM), celebrated every year in the month of March, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) encourages everyone to make better food choices.

**This year's theme, "Put Your Best Fork Forward," illustrates the idea that you don't have to drastically overhaul your eating plan to reap the rewards of choosing foods rich in nutrients, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein sources, including dairy.**

### Better Nutrition in Small Bites

AND says that making small, healthy shifts in what you eat goes a long way to improving nutrition. The 2017 NNM theme echoes the advice in the 2015-2020 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, which advocates choosing a variety of healthful foods across and within all the food groups, and

aiming for balance. Eating this way helps reduce the risk of preventable, lifestyle-related chronic conditions, such as overweight and obesity, cancer, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and more.

### Quantity Matters, Too

It's best to choose nutrient-rich foods most of the time, and in the right amounts. Switching from snack chips to nuts is beneficial because ounce for ounce, nuts have more fiber, vitamins, minerals, and healthy fats than chips. Yet, that doesn't mean you can eat as many nuts as you like. Everyone has a daily calorie "budget" that they should "spend" on the best food choices possible.

### One Eating Style Does Not Fit All

It's important to create a way of eating that includes your favorite, healthful foods, and that accounts

for personal preferences. Research suggests that many of us, regardless of our eating styles, should keep the following healthful strategies in mind:

- Start the day with a balanced breakfast.
- During each meal, fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables.
- Make at least half of the grains you eat whole grains, such as whole wheat bread, oatmeal, and popcorn. (Include a minimum of three servings whole grains daily.)
- Choose lean protein foods, such as seafood (eat seafood at least twice weekly), lean meats, poultry, soy products, beans, and peas more often.
- Include a serving of dairy or fortified soy beverage three times a day.
- Use oils, including canola and olive, instead of solid fats, such as stick margarine and lard.

## FAST FACT:

AND was started in 1917 to help nourish the US population in the face of severe food shortages during World War I. Today, the Academy counts more than 100,000 registered dietitian nutritionists and other professionals among its ranks.

# SIMPLE SWAPS FOR BETTER NUTRITION



Enjoy your food, but don't eat too much. Here are some simple ways to cut calories throughout the day without really altering your eating routine.

All of the swaps save calories. Some of the better choices are lower in saturated fat, added sugar, sodium, and refined grains, while others are higher in calcium, vitamin D, potassium, and fiber - four of the nutrients Americans need more of.

## INSTEAD OF:

2 slices stuffed crust pizza

Milk chocolate candy bar (1.3 oz)

Single-serve bag snack chips (1.5 oz.)

Plain bagel (4 oz.) with cream cheese

Large caffè latte (20 oz.) made with 2% reduced-fat milk

Ice cream frappé (16 oz.)

Fatty ground beef

## EAT:

2 slices thin crust pizza and a large green salad

100-calorie frozen fudge bar

3 cups reduced-fat microwave popcorn

Whole wheat bagel (2 oz.) with peanut butter

Large caffè latte (20 oz.) made with 1% low-fat milk

Banana smoothie made with 1% low fat milk

95% lean ground beef or 100% ground skinless ground turkey breast

## Chocolate Banana and Peanut Butter "Ice Cream"

There's a serving of fruit, plus potassium, fiber, and heart-healthy fat in every portion of this frozen delight!

Makes 2 servings.

2 medium ripe bananas, cut into chunks and frozen*	2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder	2 tablespoons chopped peanuts
2 tablespoons peanut butter	½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract	

Place bananas in a large food processor. Add the peanut butter, cocoa powder, and vanilla. Blend until smooth, about 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to serving bowls and garnish with peanuts. Serve immediately.

\*Freeze for at least 2 hours

**Per serving:** 252 calories; 29 grams carbohydrate; 5 grams fiber; 12 grams fat (2 grams saturated fat); 7 grams protein; 132 milligrams sodium; 0 cholesterol

## ASK THE RD:



How can I help my family to make better food choices?



Nudge children to eat better by setting a good example. Parents are the most important role models for their children. Show them that you value their health, and yours, by eating right. Talk positively about nutritious foods. Try to cook at least one more meal at home each week than you do now, and have your children help out. Home cooked meals tend to be higher in nutrition than take-out food and restaurant fare, and cooking with kids teaches them important life skills. Keep healthier snack options in the house, and gradually rid your kitchen of soda and other sugary beverages, such as sports drinks and fruit drinks. Visit the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' site, <http://www.eatright.org/> for helpful articles, recipes, and videos about good nutrition.