

**PENNY SAVER NEWS**

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PH:(813)744-5519 x 136, FAX:744-5776  
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If you have children or grandchildren in the household, there's a good chance you have a plate of colored eggs sitting in the refrigerator right now. Hopefully they're in the refrigerator, because if cooked eggs are at room temperature for more than 2 hours they're probably not safe. They should be admired for their colors, then thrown away! Just a few bacteria inside the protective shell, with all that good protein food in there, can grow very fast. And it just takes a few bacteria to make a child sick. Don't take risks with health. If the eggs haven't been refrigerated, don't let anyone eat them.

Since *your* eggs are safely refrigerated, what should you do with them all? Do you worry that there's too much cholesterol, or too much fat? There is cholesterol. An egg has about 200 mg of it. And there is fat, about 5 g or a teaspoon's worth, in the yolk of a large egg. But the cholesterol in our diet does not have a big effect on our blood cholesterol levels. Our liver usually manages to process that just fine. It's the saturated fat in the diet that is our problem. Most of the fat in an egg is unsaturated. So that's not a problem either.

We need to look at the good nutrients, the health benefits in eggs too. For one thing, the protein in eggs is very high quality. It has all the amino acids we need to make protein. Protein in our body is more than just muscle. Enzymes to digest our foods are proteins. The immunity factors that float around in our blood fighting off infections are proteins. Red blood cells are full of proteins. Without enough of the right kinds of proteins we would not be able to survive. Eggs give us the right building blocks

to build our human proteins. Protein in our diet keeps us feeling full longer too, so we don't want to eat as much.

Eggs have a lot of one particular building block that does a lot more than make protein. Leucine is an amino acid. Besides being part of protein, leucine acts as a messenger that tells our body it can make more muscle. This is especially important for people who are trying to lose weight. If you just go on a diet and lose weight without exercising you'll lose both fat and muscle. That's not good, because muscle burns more calories and keeps you healthier. You don't want to lose muscle. If you eat enough protein that has leucine in it you tell your body to keep making muscle when you exercise. Eggs are an excellent way to get your leucine.

Another nutrient in eggs that we rarely hear about is choline. This stuff is absolutely necessary to keep our brains and nervous systems in good shape. It starts working before we're born, to get our brains and bodies developing right. It helps to manage how much homocysteine we have, and that is tied to heart disease. Without enough choline we suffer liver damage and have higher risks of some kinds of cancer and of hardening of the arteries. And it keeps on working as we age, the whole way along our lives until we're old and gray.

Eggs are the best place to get choline in our diets. One egg gives us about one quarter of what we need in a day. Liver, beans, oatmeal and cabbage have a little choline too but not nearly as much as an egg. Choline supplements don't seem to help.

If they're boiled, poached, or even fried without saturated fat, eggs won't raise our risk of heart attacks. They will improve our protein intake, help us build more

muscle and keep what we have. They'll keep our brains and nervous systems working well. And they'll reduce our chances of cancer. Not bad for a little egg, whether it's white, brown or even pink, purple and green!

So, back to the first question, what do you do with all of them? Are you tired all ready of sliced eggs, egg salad and deviled eggs? Here's an elegant way to use the last of the Easter eggs. Be sure to look for reduced fat Alfredo sauce at the store.

#### Tomato and Eggs Alfredo

1 large ripe Florida tomato	½ tsp dried thyme
¾ Cup prepared reduced fat Alfredo sauce	4 hard cooked eggs, peeled
2 English muffins	4 slices turkey bacon, crisp-cooked

Wash, core and slice tomato. Sprinkle with thyme (and salt if desired). Warm Alfredo sauce in pan or microwave according to package directions. Split and toast muffins. Slice eggs. Pat bacon dry and crumble. Put one muffin half on each of four plates. Spread about 1 Tbsp of sauce on each one. Sprinkle a little bacon on each one, then add a slice of tomato. Add the sliced egg, divide the rest of the sauce over the eggs and garnish with the last of the crumbled bacon. Serve immediately. Serves 4.