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Have an Egg, It's Okay

With rising costs and a tight economy, many people are looking for ways to cut their food budget. What to cut? In many diets protein is the most expensive item. Beef, pork, fish, even chicken can be too costly for many people. Beans are definitely inexpensive, high in protein and in fiber. But beans can have uncomfortable side effects on people who are not used to them. Another inexpensive and very healthy source of protein - eggs!

At about 16 cents per serving, eggs are definitely economical. They are super easy to prepare. And eggs have one of the lowest calorie counts per serving of high quality protein, on average only 72 calories. So why don't more people use them?

Many people believe that eggs are too high in cholesterol to be healthy. This is an unfortunate idea, because the problem comes not from the egg but from how it is prepared. An egg fried in bacon grease is definitely much less healthy than an egg fried without oil in a non-stick pan. An egg in a high fat, cheesy quiche is not nearly as healthy as a boiled egg.

The problem comes not from the eggs but from the other fat in the diet. If that is saturated fat, it's true our livers will use it to make more cholesterol. But eating the egg with its cholesterol is not going to raise ours. For most people, our blood cholesterol level depends more on the saturated fat in our diet than it does the cholesterol. Limit the fat and choose unsaturated fat to lower the cholesterol.

In fact, people on a diet to lose weight will lose more if they include eggs for breakfast. On an overall low fat diet, including eggs did not raise cholesterol any more

than a low fat diet without eggs. People who ate eggs and lean Canadian bacon for breakfast actually ate about 750 fewer calories a day and felt more full through the rest of the day. They lost more weight than people who avoided the eggs.

Whether you're trying to lose weight or just stay healthy, getting some protein each day is important. Eggs are a useful, easy to cook, source of high quality protein. One, even two eggs a day, is not likely to increase any risk of heart disease in most adults. Adding eggs to a diet all ready high in fat or in calories is not going to make you healthy! But using eggs in a healthy diet is not going to make it unhealthy.

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