

PENNY SAVER NEWS

FAX: 932-5261

March 27, 2008

BY: Mary A. Keith, Ph.D., L.D.
Food, Nutrition and Health Agent**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY**

5339 S. County Road 579

Seffner, FL 33584-3334

PH:(813)744-5519 x 136, FAX:744-5776
e-mail:mkeith@ufl.edu

Skip the Fads, Get the Facts

Grapefruit diet, cabbage soup diet, Dr. This diet and Dr. That diet. Have you gotten tired of all the diets yet? What about those mythical 'rules': Don't eat after 6 pm. Never eat fruit and meat together. Stay away from all carbohydrates. Only use coconut oil. Have they worn you out yet? Why not make a new resolution for National Nutrition Month to skip the fads and depend on the facts for the rest of this year?

It is thoroughly confusing these days. The media and the writers jump on any little tidbit of new research that might offer the solution to some nutrition problem. It might be something that helped a few people lose weight, lowered their cholesterol or brought their blood pressure down. But any little hint of help soon becomes a book promising miracle results.

Very little attention is given to the conditions of the original research. Were 10 people involved, or 10,000? It's much easier to find a miracle promise if you only count what happened to 10 people! Did the participants know who got the 'miracle ingredient' and who did not? If they knew they got it, it's easy to say that it helped. Did they keep everything else in their diet and activity the same? Maybe it wasn't the 'miracle ingredient' but more exercise or fewer calories that made the difference. Are you exactly like the 10 people in the study? A diet that works for one person might be the worst possible diet for their neighbor. Something that helps one person could make the next person sick.

Who can help you sort out all of these questions? A Licensed Dietitian! The registered and licensed dietitians in Florida and the US are specially trained to help you evaluate the fads and myths, sort out the facts and make healthy decisions for YOU. A dietitian can help you evaluate how many calories you need, based on your lifestyle and health needs. She or he can help you figure out what eating patterns are important for you. And finally a licensed dietitian can help you plan how to get the calories you need in a healthy way.

It's not a fact that certain foods are bad, that you must eat before certain hours or in certain combinations. What does matter is your overall eating and exercising pattern. Almost every food could fit into a healthy diet. You might need to adjust, take something else out to fit a new bite in, but it usually can be done. You might need to just take a small portion of it, or fit an extra half hour of exercise into your calendar to burn it off, but it usually can be done! What shows up on our bodies is the balance between what food went into them and how much exercise went out. It still comes back to Calories In and Calories Out!

Some people must have the help of a dietitian to plan menus to suit their medication or medical condition. But most of us could use the help of a true dietitian to avoid getting to the point of needing the medication! How can you tell if you're getting the 'real thing'? Look for a license on the wall. Look for the letters RD - Registered Dietitian, or LD or LD/N - Licensed Dietitian/Nutritionist, behind their names. A 'Nutrition Consultant', a personal trainer, a dietary counselor or a nutrition specialist does not have the same training or expertise. In Florida people doing personal dietary counseling must be Licensed. Use their expertise and don't be duped by a fad!

Here's a breakfast or snack muffin that almost tastes like apple pie with cheese. Be sure to use a reduced fat cheddar cheese to keep the calories and saturated fat down and the health factor high. Wash the apples well but leave the peel on for extra fiber and color. Don't beat the mixture too much or the muffins might be tough.

Apple Pie with Cheddar Muffins

½ cup trans-fat free margarine	1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup low calorie sugar replacer that can be used for baking	
2 eggs or equivalent egg substitute	1 C all purpose flour
½ C whole wheat flour	1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp baking soda	½ tsp salt
1 tsp cinnamon	3/4 C rolled oats
2/3 C grated 50% reduced fat cheddar cheese	½ C chopped walnuts
1 cup chopped apples	½ C low fat or skim milk

Preheat oven to 375° F. Grease 18 muffin pans, spray with nonstick spray, or use paper muffin cups. In large bowl beat margarine and sugars with electric mixer until the creamy and lemon colored. Add eggs and beat well. It might look curdled, but that's okay. Combine the dry ingredients in another bowl, mix lightly then stir into egg mixture until just combined. Stir in the apples and nuts, then the milk. Mix well. Spoon batter in to prepared muffin pans. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until muffins are firm on top.

Hillsborough County Extension is a cooperative service of the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners and the University of Florida.

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences is an Equal Employment Opportunity - Affirmative Action Employer authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap or national origin. COOPERATIVE EXTENSION IN AGRICULTURE, HOME ECONOMICS, STATE OF FLORIDA, IFAS, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND BOARDS OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COOPERATING