

PENNY SAVER NEWS

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Don't Give Up the Good Things

As we look at the coming year and resolve to 'do better', sometimes it seems easier to resolve to avoid rather than add. We're all busy, we all have our daily routine. It can seem overwhelming to even think about adding more exercise time or a new cooking method. Even a new food can be a bother if we have to figure out how to store it or prepare it. Last year there were certainly plenty 'miracle' claims made about new foods we 'must eat', from açai and goji berries to ganoderma fungi and dozens of new weight loss supplements. Most of them are more hype and hot air, with little to no good evidence for any real benefits.

But as we read the headlines about foods and health throughout the year, there seemed to be a lot of foods we were being told to avoid also. There were some long-time favorites on these lists, things that many people really don't want to give up. And the good news is that despite the headlines, there's no need to avoid them. Some of them are very healthy, nutritious foods. They can and should be part of healthy diets. So just in case you were considering giving up old stand-bys, here are a few you shouldn't stop eating.

Let's start with breakfast. Yes, please skip the bacon, but don't give up on the eggs! And eat the egg yolk too! Medical science just keeps showing again and again that an egg a day won't hurt you. They won't raise your cholesterol levels. They may well protect your vision, and they are certainly one of the least expensive sources of top quality protein. Most of the 13 nutrients in eggs are in the yolks, including natural vitamins D, E, A and 4 minerals. The yolk gets its yellow color from lutein and zeaxanthin, both of which help prevent blindness by preventing age related macular degeneration. The problem with eggs is how you cook them and what you eat with them. Boil, poach or fry with pan spray is fine, but just don't use butter or bacon fat.

Another good breakfast, lunch and dinner ingredient is milk. If you have children in the home, or if you just prefer it yourself, go ahead and get chocolate milk! As long as it is low fat (1% or less), milk provides more nutrients than any alternative. Children who drink milk, even if it is flavored milk, tend to be taller and weigh less than those who don't drink milk. People who drink milk of any flavor

usually have more calcium, vitamins A, D and riboflavin, and more phosphorus and potassium in their blood than those who don't.

Whether you want them for breakfast, lunch or dinner, please don't avoid the potatoes either. They've been getting a bad rap for too many years! Did you know that a medium potato has more potassium than the famous banana? They also have magnesium. Both of these minerals help counterbalance the effect of sodium on blood pressure. Plus, potatoes are good sources of dietary fiber. But aren't they fattening? Anything can be fattening! If you chow down on French fries every day, sure, all that grease will add up. But baked, boiled, in salad or soup, there are plenty of ways to enjoy potatoes in reasonable amounts in healthy diets.

Here's one more to gladden the hearts of many people - don't stop eating bread and pasta. Unless you're part of the 1% of the population who has been diagnosed with celiac disease, make the switch to whole grains, and keep on enjoying them. Most of us can easily fit 5 or 6 servings a day into a healthy lifestyle. Those whole wheat servings are full of good fiber. Cereal fiber gives different benefits than fruit or vegetable fibers do. They help our guts function better and help build our immune systems, probably through the good bacteria that grow better on wheat fiber in our guts. Whole wheat also helps manage blood pressure, either because of its fiber, minerals or antioxidants.

Here's a quiche with less fat than usual. If you prefer to make it with a crust, use a prepared crust but read the labels to select one with no *trans* fat. Eat to your health!

Crustless Quiche

1 tsp vegetable oil	1 cup chopped onion (1 medium)
1 10-oz pkg frozen chopped spinach or broccoli	4 eggs
6 oz (1.5 cups) shredded 75% reduced fat cheddar cheese	
1/3 cup fat free cottage cheese	¼ tsp ground red pepper
pinch of salt, optional	1/8 tsp ground nutmeg

Thaw and drain the frozen vegetable of your choice. Preheat oven to 375° F. Coat a 9" pie plate with cooking spray. Heat oil in skillet. Cook onion over medium-high heat 5 minutes, stirring often, until soft. Add drained vegetables and stir until almost dry, about 3 more minutes. Spread cheese in bottom of pie plate. Top with vegetables, spreading evenly. In small bowl beat eggs, cottage cheese and seasoning. Add dash of hot pepper sauce if desired. Pour over vegetables. Bake 30 minutes or until set in middle. Let stand 5 minutes before cutting. Serves 4.

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