

WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for March 2, 2020
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, and Healthy Relationships we'll talk about National Nutrition Month and some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

March is National Nutrition Month and this year's theme is "Eat Right, Bite by Bite." It's a catchy little slogan and a great reminder that everything we consume is eaten one bite at a time. We make the choice about what goes into those bites.

When it comes to nutrition, I think the biggest bang for your buck is simple. Eat more vegetables. Were you hoping for something more exciting? It's not flashy by any means, but the benefits are clear. Vegetables (and fruits too) are the best way to add color, flavor and texture to your meals plus vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber. You should aim to eat 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables every day. I encourage people to fill half your plate with vegetables. And, no, in this case French fries do not count as vegetables.

Here are a few helpful hints from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics about ways to enjoy more fruits and vegetables.

1. Wake up to fruit. Make a habit of adding fruit to your morning oatmeal, ready-to-eat cereal, yogurt or toaster waffle. My go-to morning meal is plain Greek yogurt with any kind of berry and a touch of maple syrup.
2. Stuff an omelet with vegetables. Turn any omelet into a hearty meal with broccoli, squash, carrots, peppers, tomatoes or onions with low-fat sharp cheddar cheese.
3. Keep cut vegetables handy for mid-afternoon snacks, side dishes, lunch box additions or a quick nibble while waiting for dinner. Ready-to-eat favorites: red, green or yellow peppers, broccoli or cauliflower florets, carrots, celery sticks, cucumbers, snap peas or whole radishes. Try crunchy vegetables instead of chips with your favorite low-fat salad dressing or hummus for dipping.
4. Place colorful fruit like apples, oranges and bananas where everyone can easily grab a snack-on-the-run. Keep a bowl of fresh, just ripe whole fruit in the center of your kitchen table or in plain sight on the kitchen counter.

5. Mix it up a little when topping your next homemade pizza. Try broccoli, spinach, green peppers, tomatoes, mushrooms and zucchini. A pizza piled with veggies and a little spicy sausage is one of my favorites.
6. Get saucy with fruit. Puree apples, berries, peaches or pears in a blender for a thick, sweet sauce on grilled or broiled seafood or poultry, or on pancakes, French toast or waffles.
7. Grill colorful vegetable kabobs with tomatoes, green & red peppers, mushrooms & onions.
8. Make a veggie wrap with roasted vegetables and low-fat cheese rolled in a whole-wheat tortilla.
9. Add grated, shredded or chopped vegetables such as zucchini, spinach and carrots to lasagna, mashed potatoes, pasta sauce and rice dishes. We have a family friend whose famous meatloaf contains shredded carrots.
10. Stock your freezer with frozen vegetables to steam or stir-fry for a quick side dish.

In addition to increasing your vegetable intake, remember that one of the other best things you can do is to enjoy food with others. If you rarely eat together as a family, make it a goal to schedule meals on the calendar that everyone will commit to be a part of. If you live alone, invite someone over. Or if you know someone who lives alone, invite them over for a meal. It is amazing what healthy food and encouraging conversation can do for the soul.

If you are looking for ways to learn more about healthy lifestyle choices while managing diabetes, then OSU Extension has some great resources available. I am pleased that we will be partnering with the Coshocton Regional Medical Center this April to offer Dining with Diabetes. This is a cooking school and nutrition education program designed for people with diabetes and their family members or caregivers. Dining with Diabetes will be held the four Monday evenings of April from 5:30-7:30 pm at Coshocton Regional Medical Center. The cost of the program is \$20 per person and includes all four classes, educational handouts, and small sized meals that feature a variety of recipes. You can find more details and registration information at coshocton.osu.edu.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!