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## Nutrition Nibbles

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### Thoughts for a New Year

I recently read an article in the Billings Gazette, a Montana newspaper, that had some very powerful thoughts and wishes for the New Year. Let me share them with you:

Fear less, hope more.

Rush less, play more.

Eat less, chew more.

Whine less, breathe more.

Sit less, move more.

Talk less, say more.

Worry less, sleep more.

Hate less, love more.

—Written by Dayle Hayes, RD

May 2008 be your healthiest and most joyous year yet! Let this year's editions of *Nutrition Nibbles* provide you with some fabulous nutrition and wellness ideas!

~Mary



### Favorite Food

Everyone always asks me “So, what does a dietitian eat?” How about: “What does a dietitian drink during the holiday season?” Two words: Soy Nog. It has fewer calories and fat grams than typical egg nog but still remains delicious! While I'm not usually a fan of calorie-filled beverages, a dietitian does have the right to some fun every now and then! So, cheers to you in 2008!



### Fat Breakdown

There is a lot of confusion surrounding dietary fat. How much is enough? Is there such a thing as too much? Does the type of fat and quality of fat make a difference? Let me provide a breakdown on fat for you...

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### College Corner: Snack Attack!



Students are some of the busiest people I know! Always pressed for time and often eating on the go, they are on the lookout for healthy grab-n-go snacks. With a plethora of 100-calorie snack packs, yogurt-flavored foods, and vitamin-infused drinks available, they think they are treating their bodies to a nutritious nosh. How healthy are some of these popular and quick snacks?

- ☹ **100-Calorie Snack Packs:** Face it, these are pre-portioned amounts of the regular food. Just because they contain 100 calories, does not automatically make them a healthy, nutritious food. However, these packs can help you keep a lid on your consumption when you are really craving your favorite cookies or chips. Beware: these packs often contain partially hydrogenated oil (code for trans fats), palm oil (a type of saturated fat), and/or high fructose corn syrup (sugar). For alternate 100-calorie snacks you can pack yourself, check out this article (snack ideas available at the end): <http://www.webmd.com/diet/guide/100-calorie-snacks>
- ☹ **Yogurt-Covered Fruit Snacks and Bars:** While yogurt and fruit seem like a nutrient-packed combination, unfortunately most of these foods contain sugar and partially hydrogenated oil as the first 2 ingredients; yogurt powder is further down on the ingredient list. Opt for real low-fat yogurt and whole fruit instead.

[More Details on page 2](#)

## Fat Breakdown continued...

Fat is actually a necessary and vital macronutrient in our diet! It provides essential fatty acids, as well as contains the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K. While fat is part of our cell membranes, provides insulation for our bodies, and is a source of energy, an excessive fat intake can contribute to overweight, heart disease, and certain cancers. Per gram, fat contains 9 calories (which is more than twice the amount of calories provided per gram of carbohydrate or protein). We want to be choosy about our fat intake—careful to pick the healthiest options in the appropriate amounts. The acceptable daily fat intake range is 20-35% of total calories, or 45-75 grams daily for someone on a 2000 calorie diet.



**Saturated Fat:** Predominantly found in animal foods and products (think high-fat beef and pork, sausage, chicken skin, butter, cream, ice cream, whole-fat dairy, many snack foods, palm, palm kernel, and coconut oils), saturated fat is solid at room temperature and not the most heart-healthy. This type of fat will raise your total and bad LDL cholesterol levels. Opt for the leanest cuts of meat you can, non-fat or 1% dairy, low-fat cheese, and skinless chicken or turkey breast. No more than 10% of your daily calories should come from saturated fat sources.

**Trans Fat:** This type of fat does a double whammy on your heart health by lowering your good HDL cholesterol and raising your bad LDL cholesterol. By taking liquid vegetable oil and putting it through the process of hydrogenation, a solid (or trans) fat has been created. Think shortening and stick margarine. Often found in baked goods, snack foods, and fried foods, trans fat goes by the name *partially hydrogenated oil*. Always check the ingredients list for this, as a food containing half a gram or less of trans fat per serving can be labeled as *trans fat free*. Very sneaky! One percent or less of your total calories should be from trans fat.



**Unsaturated Fat (includes polyunsaturated fats like omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids, as well as monounsaturated fats):** Touted as being more heart healthy, these fats tend to be in liquid form at room temperature and include vegetable oils, many oil-based salad dressings, canola oil, olive oil, fatty fish, avocados, nuts, and seeds. The bulk of the fat in our diet should come from these sources. (*Stay tuned: More information on omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids to follow in a future newsletter.*)

## Snack Attack! Continued...

- ☹ **Bottled Green Tea:** Green tea is filled with health-boosting antioxidants called polyphenols. Unfortunately, many bottled green teas have more sugar than tea in them and pack in 120 calories or more! The best bet: brew it yourself without sugar (and without calories), and pour it into your own water bottle to take on the run. Warning: green tea does contain caffeine, unless otherwise specified.
- ☹ **Vitamin-Enhanced Water:** What could be better? Water packed with vitamins sounds like the ultimate in wellbeing. Too bad sugar generally tops the ingredients list and the bottle contains 100 calories or more. Did you even realize that each bottle is 2-plus servings? Make your own vitamin water: start with a bottle or tall glass of pure water and squeeze a lime, lemon, or orange wedge into it for a vitamin C blast.

Watch out for these convenient but empty-calorie snack foods. Chances are they contain more calories than you bargained for, while having very few naturally-occurring vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fiber.

## Substitute with Super Snacks!

Be a smart snacker. Stock up on these yummy and nutritious noshes instead:

- ☺ A handful of nuts with a piece of fruit
- ☺ Baby carrots with low-fat cottage cheese
- ☺ Edamame (soy beans)
- ☺ Low-fat yogurt topped with a high-fiber cereal and fruit
- ☺ Whole grain crackers with a string cheese stick
- ☺ Air-popped popcorn

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