

Nutrition E-Bites



April brought some sun, but mostly showers. But with the sun shining and warmer weather ahead of us, many of us are inspired to do some spring cleaning (if you haven't already done so)! While it's exciting to put away the winter clothes for good and prepare the outdoors for an exciting and busy summer, take some time to do some spring cleaning in your kitchen!



This type of spring cleaning involves not only cleaning your cupboards, fridge and freezer, but more importantly, making sure that you have the right items and ingredients to make healthy eating easier.

After a long busy day, do you ever look in your cupboards, fridge or freezer and feel that you can't possibly make anything with what you already have?

Do you ever look a second or third time, hoping that you will find something that you may have missed the first time around?

Meal planning and preparation is a lot less daunting when you have the proper items to build a well balanced meal. This newsletter is dedicated to stocking a healthy and plentiful pantry that will keep you cooking at home and compliment your weekly grocery shopping trips for your commonly bought items.

Lastly, stay tuned for our Recipe newsletter later this month that will feature fresh spring ingredients to use.

Filomena & Gabriella

"A well-stocked pantry, refrigerator, and freezer can help make it a breeze to prepare delicious and nutritious meals."⁽²⁾

Must-Have Pantry items to keep on hand:

- **Canned beans/dried beans:** pinto beans, chickpeas, black beans, and lentils. Beans are high in fibre and source of protein that can be whipped up into a dip or elevate any salad.
- **Nuts and seeds:** unsalted almonds, pecans, pistachios, walnuts and cashews. A small handful of nuts provides heart healthy fats and protein that can be enjoyed on their own or added to yogurt or cottage cheese for a satisfying snack.
- **Canned vegetables:** unsalted tomatoes (diced or crushed) for a homemade sauce or stew.
- **Canned fish:** water-packed, reduced sodium tuna, salmon and sardines. Great sources of protein and omega-3 fatty acids.
- **Dried fruit:** unsweetened dates, raisins and cranberries. Enjoy a small portion and pair with source of protein (yogurt, cottage cheese or nut butter). Great source of fibre, vitamins & antioxidants.
- **Grains:** oatmeal, whole grain pasta, brown/wild rice, barley, quinoa, farro and so much! Excellent sources of fibre and energy!
- **Condiments:** salsa, vinegars (apple cider vinegar, balsamic) and oils (olive oil, vegetable oil, avocado oil)
- **Spices:** be sure to click here to [Get to Know Your Spice Rack](#)

Freezer items to keep on hand:

- **Frozen fruit and vegetables:** frozen alternatives are an easy way to meet your daily fruit and veggie daily intake, that can often be budget friendly and are just as nutritious.
- My go to *frozen fruits* are often berries, for the versatility and fibre content. If you are a banana lover and enjoy adding bananas to

homemade baked goods or homemade smoothies, a tip that may be beneficial for you is to buy overripe bananas and freeze them right away. A good place to check for overripe bananas is on the reduced cart or in the reduced section of your grocery store.

- For *frozen vegetables*, be sure to have a variety of non-starchy vegetables (such as kale, spinach, cauliflower, broccoli) and starchy vegetables (corn, peas, cubed sweet potato/squash). There is a great variety of choices available to you!
- **Grains:** whole grain wraps, sprouted breads, whole grain pitas and english muffins are great to keep on hand for fast, last minute breakfast sandwiches.
- **Poultry/meat/fish:** with the rising cost of food, it's always a good idea to stock up when the price is right and thaw your proteins in the fridge before grilling or baking.

Refrigerator items to keep on hand:

- **Yogurt:** a plain, low fat greek yogurt can be used for dips, sauces and for snacks. There is no shortage of non-dairy alternatives on the shelves. Be sure to choose "unsweetened" and add your own flavouring and sweetness, such as adding fresh, dried or frozen fruit.
- **Cottage Cheese:** plain, smooth, lactose free! Great source of protein and calcium to add to your breakfast or snack.
- **Fermented foods** including Kefir, Kombucha, and Kimchi – fermented foods are excellent to support gut health. Include kefir in smoothies and bowls, drink kombucha in place of pop, and add a few tbsp kimchi to your salad for extra flavour and probiotics!

World Hypertension Day

"World Hypertension (*high blood pressure*) Day is observed annually on May 17 to raise awareness of hypertension and encourage hypertension prevention, detection, and control.

Hypertension affects more than one billion people around the globe and over 30% of the adult population in the world.

It is the primary risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, particularly coronary artery disease and stroke.

Besides, hypertension is also a risk factor for chronic kidney disease, heart failure, arrhythmia, and dementia. That's why sharing information about this condition is essential."⁽⁴⁾

THE DASH DIET

The DASH (*Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension*) diet has been one of the top diets, time and time again, for chronic disease prevention and management, especially for blood pressure management.



Along with physical activity, stress management, potentially medication management, quitting smoking and alcohol reduction, one of the key recommendations for managing blood pressure is dietary changes.

Click [here](#) to learn how to make your meals and snacks more DASH friendly!

Click [here](#) to read the many benefits of the DASH diet

Stay tuned for fun & fresh recipes that feature pantry friendly items and also a never before featured ingredient!

References:

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