

New Year, New You

Meal Planning for Healthier Eating

Starting off the New Year with goals of creating healthy meals for your family is great, but without the proper planning you are very likely to fall back into the habit of quick and easy meals, which aren't always the most nutritious. However, Fruits & Veggies-More Matters provides helpful tools to give you daily menu ideas. They incorporate healthy food choices into your daily meals.

Visit the Fruits & Veggies-More Matters website at <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/menu-for-a-fresh-start-to-a-new-year> to sign up for weekly emails with suggested meal plans, nutrition information, ideas from chefs, and much more! I have included two of their recipes for a well-balanced lunch. The entire meal is only 580 calories for one serving of the Mediterranean Potato Soup and the Strawberry, Spinach and Pecan Salad. Other helpful tips to achieve a healthy diet are to make half your grains whole, vary your vegetables, focus on variety of fruits, consume calcium-rich low-fat foods, eat lean choices of protein, and use MyPlate as your nutrition guide to a healthy meal.

Mediterranean Potato Soup

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 tsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 4 cups (32 oz) chicken or vegetable broth, low-sodium
- 3 medium red potatoes, unpeeled, cubed
- 3 carrots, sliced
- 1/4 tsp ground pepper
- 2 tsp Italian seasoning
- 1 can (15 oz) kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup (2 oz) whole wheat noodles, uncooked
- 2 cups fresh spinach (or 1 cup frozen spinach)
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded

Directions

1. Heat oil in a 2-quart pot. Sauté garlic and onions about 3-4 minutes.
2. Add chicken broth, water, potatoes, carrots, and seasonings. Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 15 minutes.
3. Add kidney beans and noodles. Bring to a boil again. Cook until noodles are soft. Remove from heat.
4. Just before serving, add spinach to the pot and stir gently. Ladle into bowls and serve with Parmesan cheese.

Serves: 4, Cups of Fruits & Vegetables per Serving: 2

Nutritional Information

- Calories: 350
- Carbohydrates: 62g
- Total Fat: 5g
- Cholesterol: 5mg
- Saturated Fat: 1.5g
- Dietary Fiber: 14g
- Sodium: 420 m
- Protein: 19g

Recipe courtesy of Colorado Potato.

Spinach, Strawberry & Pecan Salad

Ingredients

- 1 pound baby spinach, washed and dried
- 1 pint strawberries washed and halved
- 1/4 cup pecans, toasted

Dressing:

- 1/3 cup raspberry vinegar
- 1 tsp dried mustard
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 1/2 Tbsp poppy seeds

Directions

1. Combine dressing ingredients except poppy seeds in a blender. Add poppy seeds and stir dressing by hand.
2. Toss dressing with spinach, strawberries and hot pecans. The hot nuts will slightly wilt the greens.

Serves: 6, Cups of Fruits & Vegetables per Serving: 2

Nutritional Information

- Calories: 230
- Carbohydrates: 12g
- Total Fat: 20g
- Cholesterol: 0mg
- Saturated Fat: 2.5g
- Dietary Fiber: 5g
- % of Calories from Fat: 78%
- Sodium: 190 mg
- Protein: 4g

Recipe Credit Texas A & M AgriLife Extension Services Healthy Living Website

About Fruits & Veggies More Matters

Fruits & Veggies–More Matters® is a health initiative focused on helping Americans increase fruit & vegetable consumption for better health. The program is spearheaded by [Produce for Better Health Foundation](#) (PBH), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has partnered with the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) to help spread the word about the health benefits of adding MORE fruits & veggies to your diet.

For more information on this topic, you may contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office at 903-473-4580 or visit us at rains.agrilife.org. We are also on Facebook at [Facebook.com/pages/Rains-County-Family-Consumer-Sciences](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Rains-County-Family-Consumer-Sciences). Go and “Like” our page to keep up with the latest news, events, and programs offered by Family & Consumer Sciences in Rains County.

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