

July, August & September 2012

Vitamin D: Are you getting enough?

Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin found naturally in only a few foods such as cod liver oil, salmon, catfish, tuna, eggs and beef liver. Other sources have been fortified with vitamin D, including milk, yogurts, breakfast cereals, margarines and orange juice.

Vitamin D can also be consumed as an oral supplement, and your skin makes vitamin D when it is exposed to the sun's ultraviolet rays. Many individuals think of vitamin D as the "sunshine vitamin." Vitamin D obtained from sun exposure, food, and supplements is biologically inactive and must undergo two hydroxylations in the body for activation. The first occurs in the liver and converts vitamin D to 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25(OH)D], also known as calcidiol. The second occurs primarily in the kidney and forms the physiologically active 1,25-dihydroxyvitamin D [1,25(OH)2D], also known as calcitriol⁽¹⁾. Multi-vitamin & mineral formulas may contain anywhere from 300 to 10000 IU (international units) of vitamin D.

Intake reference values for vitamin D and other nutrients are provided in the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs) developed by the Food and Nutrition Board (FNB) at the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. The FNB established a Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for vitamin D representing a daily intake that is sufficient to maintain bone health and normal calcium metabolism in healthy people. 600 IU are recommended per day for someone between the ages of 19-70, and anyone 70 years of age or greater requires 800 IU per day.

Why is vitamin D so important? Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium and therefore boosts the density of some bones. Adequate vitamin D has also been found to decrease periodontal disease, reduce tumor growth in certain cancers, help lower the risk of diabetes, enhance one's immunity and decrease the risk of osteoarthritis⁽²⁾. Because individuals who are overweight often suffer from vitamin D deficiency and decreased calcium metabolism, all individuals who are considering a bariatric surgery at Port Huron Hospital are screened for possible vitamin & mineral deficiencies. After surgery vitamin D supplements are strongly recommended due to limited intake (compared to prior to surgery) and malabsorption (gastric bypass). If you are unaware of your present vitamin D level, consider asking your physician to have a level drawn the next time you have blood work completed.

References:

(1) National Institutes of Health – Vitamin D – Health Professional Fact Sheet

(2) Center for Science in the Public Interest: Nutrition Action Health Letter, Vol. 33 Number 9, November 2006

What are the good carbohydrates?

Carbohydrates, along with proteins (chicken, turkey, fish, pork, beef, dairy products and legumes) and fats (butter, oils, salad dressings, meat, and dairy products), provide actual calories to the foods that we eat and therefore provide us with energy throughout the day. Carbohydrates are easily converted into glucose during digestion. Glucose is the primary energy source of the body. Most foods (except for meat and fat) contain carbohydrates and are typically classified as simple and complex.

Simple carbohydrates are made up of one or two sugar molecules linked together which are then broken down and absorbed quickly by the body. Examples of simple carbohydrates include honey, fruit juices, fruit (fructose), sugar (sucrose), dairy products (lactose), brown sugar, molasses, white bread & flour, white rice and regular pop.

Complex carbohydrates consist of three or more sugar molecules linked together. They are digested slower than simple carbohydrates and therefore have less impact on your blood glucose level. Examples of complex carbohydrates include vegetables, oatmeal, brown rice, sweet potatoes, lentils, legumes, kidney beans, whole grain bread, and whole-grain cereals.

When carbohydrates are digested they can be used readily for energy or even stored in the liver as glycogen for later use. Anything beyond what the body needs is stored as fat. When trying to lose weight, avoid simple carbohydrates as much as possible. Whole grains, beans, fruits, vegetables and other complex carbohydrates help promote good health and should always be selected over processed foods that will likely lead to weight gain.

Online Links

Check out SparkPeople at www.sparkpeople.com. This site is highly recommended for anyone who is trying to lose weight and stay physically active. From July 29 – August 4, they are promoting a Summer Fun Run – Virtual 5 K (3.1 miles). Step by step directions are provided on how to train for the race using their "5K Your Way" training plans. Three different five week training plans are available for different fitness levels. There is even a chance to win prizes. What a great goal to complete this summer!

Upcoming Support Group Dates

July 17: Guest – Bariatric Advantage

August 21: Guest – Dr. Nicholas Nunnally

September 18: Guest – Chef Dave Straney

"Discipline is remembering what you want."

Author – Unknown

Heart Healthy Pork Feast

Ingredients: 1 pound pork tenderloin, fat trimmed and silver skin removed
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1 clove garlic, smashed and chopped
½ teaspoon black pepper

Sauce: 1 English cucumber, peeled and chopped
1 tablespoon chopped shallot
½ cup low-fat plain yogurt
¼ cup reduced-fat sour cream
1 teaspoon lemon zest
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon fresh mint, chopped

Potatoes: 1 pound new red skin potatoes, washed and scrubbed, sliced ¼ inch thick

Radish Salad: 6 radishes, scrubbed and chopped into matchsticks
5 ounces baby spinach, washed
½ teaspoon black pepper

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Fill a large saucepan halfway with water and bring to a boil.
2. Combine the mustard, garlic, and pepper in a small bowl. Lightly spray the pork with non-stick cooking spray. Pour the mustard mixture over the entire tenderloin. Place a cast iron skillet or heavy bottom pan over moderate high heat. Sear the meat on all sides. Transfer the pan to the oven to finish cooking, until the pork reaches an internal temperature of 150 degrees Fahrenheit (15 to 20 minutes).
3. Remove the pan from the oven and cover the meat with foil. Allow the meat to rest for 5 minutes before slicing.
4. Prepare the sauce. Place the cucumber and the shallot into a small food processor and pulse twice. (You don't want to puree the sauce). If you don't have a food processor just mash the cucumber with a fork in a small bowl. Add the remaining ingredients, stir to combine.
5. When the water comes to boil, add the sliced potatoes and cook until tender, about 7 - 8 minutes. Drain the potatoes, then while the pan is still hot, quickly add the spinach to just wilt. Transfer the wilted spinach to a mixing bowl and add the sliced radish.
6. Slice the meat
7. Arrange ¼ cup of cooked potatoes onto each plate and top with 2 cups of the salad. Top with sliced meat and ¼ cup cucumber sauce.

Serving size: Makes 4 servings. 3 - 4 ounces of pork per serving.

Calories: 266.1, Fat: 5.2 grams; carbohydrates: 25 grams; protein: 28.5 grams.

Recipe source: SparkPeople.com/recipe