



EAT RIGHT MONTANA

A coalition promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles

www.eatrightmontana.org

February 2010

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the second issue of Eat Right Montana's 2010 theme: *Treasure Your Family's Health: Back-to-Basics with Food & Fitness.* With Valentine's Day and American Heart Month to celebrate, February is a natural time to focus on heart health, chocolate, baking, and fun ways to be active with your sweetheart.

This packet takes a back-to-basics approach to these topics. For more on the baking angle, we recommend the **Home Baking Association**. In 2009, they celebrated February as *Bake for Family Fun Month* (www.homebaking.org/familyfun/). Check out the tasty recipes, baking tips, and baking as a way to encourage family meals and bonding.

Media Release:

Smart Ways to Be Sweet to Your Heart

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Bonus Brownies

Cooking Basics:

Easy Ways to Enjoy Successful Baking Projects

Fitness Basics:

Fun Ways to Get Your Heart Pumping - from A to Z

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Wherever possible, we want to incorporate your ideas and input into our monthly packets. Just send your thoughts to me at EatRightMT2000@gmail.com - and remember, past issues of **Healthy Families** and other ERM materials are available on the ERM web site at www.eatrightmontana.org/.

Dayle Hayes, MS, RD

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Treasure Your Family's Health: Back-to-Basics 2010



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MT Department of Public Health & Human Services

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Smart Ways to Be Sweet to Your Heart

Ah February! It's that sweet time of year when our thoughts turn to roses, romance, and chocolate hearts. American Heart Month is also a wonderful time to appreciate the daily beat of your own heart and to renew your personal commitment to the basics of a heart-smart lifestyle.

"February is a great month to discover how delicious and enjoyable healthy choices can be," says Crystelle Fogle, MS, RD, (registered dietitian), with the Montana Cardiovascular Health Program. "To celebrate Heart Month, hospitals, health departments, and fitness centers all across Montana will offer free and low-cost opportunities to learn the latest about nutrition and fitness for the whole family. Many groups will also feature screenings for stroke and heart disease risk factors, such as blood pressure and cholesterol levels."

The good news is that heart-smart choices are also effective in preventing stroke, diabetes, cancer, and other conditions. The basics are all the same: a nutrient-rich, low-fat eating style; 30 to 60 minutes of daily physical activity; maintaining a healthy weight for your body type; and not smoking. These same healthy habits will also help you feel your best and be more productive at both work and play.

As program manager for the Montana Cardiovascular Health Program, Fogle coordinates statewide efforts to prevent heart disease and stroke in a variety of settings, including worksites and healthcare. "Montana is fortunate to have top-notch hospital programs for people with cardiovascular disease. We also have many healthcare providers who donate time to educate people about preventing heart problems before they need medical intervention." Here are two Billings examples of educational Heart Month events:

- **Walk N Talk with the Doc:** For nearly four years, Dr. Cheryl Cook has been hosting free 30-minute walks, co-sponsored by St. Vincent Healthcare and MSU-B. Every Tuesday at 5:30 PM, walkers get a daily dose of activity and a chance to talk informally with experts about their health concerns. During Heart Month, the walks will feature cardiac physicians from Montana Heart Institute and Yellowstone Heart Center.
- **Heart-Smart Eating for a New Decade:** On February 4, 2010 at the Billings Clinic, Registered Dietitian Dayle Hayes and Sodexo Innovations Chef Mark Perez will *Stir Up a Tasty Rainbow of Health*. Attendees will enjoy a light stir-fry dinner and explore tasty, easy, nutrient-rich food choices for every meal. Other February events include presentations on exercise, stress reduction, and understanding risk factor numbers.

"For Heart Month programs in your community, check the newspaper and hospital websites," says Fogle. "If you live out of town or cannot attend events, there are many excellent resources available for free online and by phone. Here are three places to get the information and tools you need to be sweeter to your heart."

- **American Heart Association:** Life's Simple 7 (<http://mylifecheck.heart.org/>) focuses on small changes.
- **Montana Tobacco QUIT LINE:** Offers personalized free help to stop smoking at 1-800-QUIT-NOW.
- **Eat Right Montana:** Serves up monthly packets with helpful tips and delicious heart-healthy recipes for free download at www.eatrightmontana.org/eatrighthealthyfamilies.htm.



5 Delicious Ways to Enjoy the Benefits of Chocolate

Oh chocolate - loved and feared so much that some people refer to themselves as *chocoholics*! Whether you enjoy chocolate for its fabulous flavors and mouth feel or for its health benefits, it is important to realize that more isn't necessarily better. Keep these tips in mind to get the most out of any chocolate experience.

1. Go to the dark side of the chocolate aisle.

It's all about the flavonoids, antioxidant compounds that can help your heart in several ways, including lowering blood pressure and improving cholesterol levels. There are more flavonoids in dark and baking chocolate than in milk or Dutch chocolate. Some products now list the amount of cacao on the package. Higher percentages are better.

2. Enjoy chocolate after a balanced meal.

While the health benefits of flavonoids are real, no chocolate product is nutrient-rich. Chocolate is not a good protein source like lean meats nor is it packed with vitamins and minerals like fruits, veggies, whole grains, and low-fat dairy foods. Your best bet is to enjoy chocolate **after** a meal that includes something from each of those food groups.

3. Be size-wise about chocolate servings.

Many studies have concluded that a piece of dark chocolate a day - a very small piece - can help keep the doctor away. No matter how dark the chocolate, a king-size candy bar is not a smart choice, because it is high in calories, fat, and sugar. Look for small, individual portions (about 1/4 oz. each) or divide a large bar into very small pieces.

4. Combine chocolate with fruit and nuts.

Here's a heart-smart way to have your chocolate and multiply your health benefits too! Enjoy the rich, creamy flavors of dark chocolate with nutrient-rich fruits (blueberries, strawberries, or pears, for example) and nuts (like almonds or peanuts). Create these combos in desserts or make a snack mix with dried fruit, nuts, and dark chocolate bits.

5. Savor every chocolate bite completely.

When we slow down and truly savor our meals and snacks, we can be satisfied with smaller quantities. When it comes to eating, enjoyment involves several senses: smelling aromas, feeling textures, and tasting the wide variety of flavors. When we give chocolate the attention it deserves, that very small piece can be just the right size!



Bonus Brownies

Ingredients:

- 1 box brownie mix, enough for a 9 x 13 inch pan of brownies
- 1 (15 oz.) can black beans, rinsed under cold running water and drained
- 1 cup water

Seriously, we're not kidding about the beans! The beans replace the oil and the eggs, which lowers calories and total fat.

The beans add moisture and flavor, as well as a little bit of fiber and protein.

No need to tell your guests. Just smile and say thanks to the compliments!

YIELD: 20 brownies

Instructions:

- 1) Preheat oven to 350°.
- 2) Lightly oil a 9 x 13 inch baking pan with cooking spray or liquid oil.
- 3) Puree beans and water together in a blender or food processor until smooth.
- 4) Pour dry brownie mix in medium bowl. Stir bean-water mixture into brownie mix until combined. (**No need to add the eggs or oil!**)
- 5) Pour the mixture into prepared pan.
- 6) Bake for 28 to 32 minutes or until a toothpick inserted 2 inches from the side of the pan comes out clean.
- 7) Cool completely on a wire rack and cut into squares.

Additions:

- Choose one of the new brownie mixes with dark chocolate for some extra heart-healthy flavonoids.
- Use 1 (15 oz.) can of pumpkin puree in place of the black beans and the water.
- Use 1 cup vanilla yogurt with one box brownie mix to replace eggs and oil (you will still need to add the water).
- Before baking, sprinkle the top of the mix in the pan with a few dark chocolate or raspberry chocolate chips.
- Serve with vanilla yogurt, low-fat frozen yogurt, or double churned low-fat ice cream.
- Use your own brownie recipe for a 9 x 13 inch pan. Substitute black beans and water puree for the oil and egg in your recipe (see step 3).

Nutrition Analysis

Serving Size: 1 brownie

Calories: 129

Total Fat: 3.0 g

Calories from Fat: 21%

Saturated Fat: 1.0 g

Trans Fat: 0.0 g

Total Carb: 25 g

Dietary Fiber: 1 g

Sodium: 68 mg

Protein: 2.3 g

Calcium: 11.6 mg

Iron: 0.3 mg

Recipe Source

Tara Andrews, MSU Extension Custer County

5 Easy Ways to Enjoy Successful Baking Projects

Baking is a wonderful way to fill kitchens with tantalizing aromas and tummies with satisfying whole grain breads, rolls, and muffins, as well as cakes, cookies, and bars. Family baking projects are also great ways to teach cooking skills to children and to create lifetime food memories. Here are five tips to make every project a winner.

1. Follow directions precisely.

While cooking can be a delightfully creative outlet for many people, **baking is one place to follow recipes exactly.** Successful baking projects are a careful balance of ingredients and temperature combined in a precise sequence. Changing any one of these factors can result in baking failures: cakes that fall, bread that is tough, or cookies that ooze all over the pan.

2. Heat the oven correctly.

Most baked recipes call for the oven to be **pre-heated** so that the temperature is right when you put the item in. For most ovens, this takes about 10 minutes, so turn on the oven as you begin to measure and mix ingredients. Expert bakers often use an **oven thermometer** (around \$6) to insure correct temperatures. This is especially important as ovens get older.

3. Measure accurately.

In terms of measurements, **some ingredients are more critical than others.** Leavening agents (ingredients that help baked goods to rise) are especially important. These include baking powder, baking soda, and yeast. When making yeast breads and rolls, take special care with sugar and salt, since these help control the growth of yeast.

4. Combine carefully.

The way that ingredients are combined is another key to getting the right texture. Here are three common terms and their meanings. **Beat** is to stir quickly and completely to add air into the mixture. **Blend** is to stir together until just combined (the mixture may be lumpy). **Mix** is to stir until the ingredients are thoroughly combined and uniform in texture.

5. Substitute sensibly.

While it's easy to substitute one vegetable for another in a casserole or salad, baking is a different story. Substitutions can be made, but the replacement ingredient must be able to provide the same function. For a long list of basic ingredient substitutions and other cooking tips, visit Nebraska Extension at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/food/ciqsubs.shtml>.



5 Fun Ways to

Get Your Heart Pumping - from A to Z

Regular aerobic activity is essential for a healthy heart, a healthy weight, and even a healthy mind. Experts recommend at least 30 minutes, preferably 60 minutes, on most days of the week. Aerobic activity is any activity that gets your heart pumping and makes you sweat a bit. **Make it FUN and you'll be more likely to just do it!**

1. Go easy on your body with low-impact AEROBICS.

If you hate running, can't dance, or have problems with your knees, hips, or ankles, you can still get plenty of enjoyable aerobic activity. Look for low or no impact classes, like water or chair aerobics. Just right for folks with arthritis or older joints, these classes are frequently offered at colleges and YMCA/YWCA pools - or through community recreation programs.

2. Glide your way to fitness with BALLROOM DANCE.

Learn to dance with your local "stars" in ballroom dancing classes, often offered through recreation departments or fitness centers. Ballroom dance is much more than a nice skill to celebrate at family weddings; it can be a wonderful way to get your heart pumping with your sweetheart. Give it a whirl; you'll probably use muscles you didn't know you had!

3. Go with Montana's state step - SQUARE DANCE.

For a fun group activity, give the official dance of Montana a do-si-do. With lots of twisting and turning, square dancing offers a real dose of heart-healthy and bone-strengthening fun. Following the calls also keeps minds sharp, to help stave off age-related memory loss. Look for a group, like Yellowstone Square Dance Council (www.squaredancebillings.com/) online.

4. Take a fun WALK with music or friends.

While some people see walking as boring and monotonous, others find lots of ways to pick up the pace and make it part of a daily routine. Music is always nice, while podcasts or books on tape can provide mental stimulation along with the physical activity. Human friends are great to talk with, while furry friends can offer wonderfully quiet companionship.

5. Heat up your dance steps with ZUMBA®.

One of the hottest trends in the aerobics world pulses to a Latin rhythm. Advertised as a party rather than a workout, Zumba® features an easy-to-follow combination of dance steps from salsa, merengue, and reggaeton done to the joyful beat of music from around the world. Check it out on YouTube, pick up a DVD, and try it at a local YMCA or dance studio.