

Words of Wellness

November 2012

GOING ORGANIC: WHAT'S THE PAYOFF?

Nutrients

Q: Do organic foods have higher levels of nutrients and phytochemicals?

A: Yes. About 60% of the studies indicate this, 30% indicate no difference, and 10% indicate that nutrient levels are higher in conventional foods.

Q: How much higher are the levels in organic foods?

A: About 5-15%, but can go as high as 30%.



Pesticides

Q: Are organic foods pesticide-free?

A: No. Although they are grown without the use of synthetic pesticides, they can pick up traces from nearby farms or from processing plants.

Q: Are pesticide levels on organic produce much lower than on conventional?

A: Yes, especially when you take into account the levels of pesticides and how toxic they are.

Q: Is imported produce riskier?

A: Yes. About 20% of the dietary risk from pesticides in the food supply in the U.S. (and Canada) is from fruits and veggies grown in the U.S. – and 80% from imports.

Q: How harmful are the traces of pesticides that are on conventional foods?

A: The evidence is compelling – low-level exposure to organophosphate insecticides from food and the environment has been contributing to a suite of neurological and developmental problems. And it particularly impacts kids – pound for pound children are exposed to more pesticides than adults.

Pomegranate and Pumpkin Seed Tabouli

This dish packs a big punch – crunchy, toasted pumpkin seeds, fresh herbs, and the sweet pop of pomegranate makes a tasty dish. If you can't find pomegranate, use ½ cup of cranberries. Total time: 15 minutes.

- 1 ½ cups bulgur (cereal made from wheat)
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- ½ cup flat-leaf parsley leaves, chopped
- ¼ cup mint leaves, chopped (optional)
- 3 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1 cup pomegranate seeds
- ½ cup toasted pumpkin seeds



In a medium saucepan, bring 2 cups of water to a boil and stir in the bulgur. Cover and turn off the heat. Let the bulgur stand until the water is absorbed, about 8 minutes. Uncover and fluff with a fork, then allow the bulgur to cool. In a large serving bowl, whisk together the oil, lemon juice, and salt. Mix in the parsley, mint, green onions, and pomegranate seeds. Mix in the bulgur and sprinkle with the pumpkin seeds. Serves 8.

Per serving (¾ cup): Calories – 190; Total fat – 8g; Sat fat – 1g; Protein – 6 g; Carbs – 26 g; Fibre – 7g; Sodium – 130 mg

Making Fitness Fit Your Life

Are you finding it tough to fit exercise into your tough teaching-life schedule? With getting up and ready for school, a jam-packed day with little time to go to the washroom let alone exercise, and with a host of meetings/kids activities at the end of the day, our September to June teaching lives make it very difficult to get into an exercise routine that we can live with.

Ideally you can hit the gym or home equipment regularly. But since most of us can't get to the gym on a regular basis, we have to look for opportunities in our lives where we fit movement into the day. Try some of these ideas

1. Make it a priority to walk 15 minutes at least 3 times per week. You may need to combine it with another activity – such as grocery shopping, going to and from school, or as you wait for your child finish their evening activity.
2. Start your day off/end your day with 15 minutes on the treadmill or walking outside – make it “your time” that is non-negotiable.
3. Exercise while you watch TV – even 20 minutes of movement that makes you sweat, 3X per week can do wonders for your health. If you feel too tired to exercise, remember that movement generates energy – getting started is the hardest part.
4. Turn the music on as you cook, clean up or get ready in the morning – dancing around is a good form of exercise!
5. Get as many steps as you can in your day – always take the stairs; park as far away from the door as possible; if you have 10 minutes to wait for something, use it to walk; when your students are moving, make sure you are as well; plan a walking meeting – who says you have to sit down in your classroom/office?
6. Check out <http://www.thewalkingsite.com/10000steps.html> to get some more ideas and to challenge yourself to walk 10,000 steps per day.

Check out our New Website!

