



Welcome to spring. It is still chilly as I write this in NYC but the sun is shining and I am looking forward to warmer weather and springtime produce.

One of the most common road blocks I hear from people struggling to eat healthy is the lack of time to cook. My solution is to make meals ahead of time that you can eat throughout the week in various ways. For example: start with roasting or grilling chicken, if you must, buy it already roasted. Use the leftover chicken in the orzo soup and tabbouleh recipe I have included in this newsletter. Another recipe included tzatziki tastes fantastic as a dressing on a salad, on veggie burgers, or with the chicken in a whole wheat pita...Enjoy!

Folate



It is wonderful that the harsh winter is behind us but unfortunately for many allergy sufferers, spring means coughing, sneezing and itching. I have some good news. Increasing folate in ones diet may help alleviate some of the symptoms. A study at John Hopkins University looked at blood levels of folate with antibodies, including allergies, in over 8000 individuals. They found that those with the highest levels of folate were less likely to suffer with the allergic antibodies or allergic skin rashes.

Folate has been shown to have additional health benefits:

- Supports red blood cell production and helps prevent anemia
- Protects against age-related hearing loss
- Supports cell production, especially in your skin
- Reduces the risk of certain birth defects
- Guards against depression
- Help prevent osteoporosis-related bone fractures
- Excellent sources of folate include romaine lettuce, spinach, asparagus, turnip greens, mustard greens, calf's liver, parsley, collard greens, broccoli, cauliflower, beets, and lentils.

How sweet it is!



Everyone is talking about sugar. From advertisements on the NYC subways to The White House, the message is "Cut Back!" But the question is how much is too much, what about fruit, is brown sugar better, agave...Let me try to cut through the confusion. To start, sugar is one of three kinds of carbohydrates: starch, fiber and sugar. Sugar is found only in foods of plant origin. In food, sugar is classified as either naturally occurring or added. Naturally occurring sugars include lactose in milk, fructose in fruit, honey and vegetables and maltose in beer. Added sugars originate from corn, beets, grapes, and sugar cane, which are processed before being added to foods. The body cannot tell the difference between naturally occurring and added sugars because they are identical chemically. Although, food sources of naturally occurring sugars also provide vitamins and minerals, while foods containing added sugars provide mainly calories and very few vitamins and minerals. For this reason, the calories in added sugar are called "empty calories".

On the Nutrition Facts panel of a food label, "sugars" include both added and naturally occurring sugars; however, on the ingredient list, only added sugars are listed. Added sugars have many names including corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, dextrose, maltodextrins, granulated sugar, invert sugar, and concentrated fruit juice sweetener.

Do not stress out about the sugar in fruits, vegetables, dairy or grains. No one is over weight from eating bananas, sweet potatoes yogurt or carrots. OK, maybe if you eat only those foods at ridiculous volumes, but let's be more realistic. Added sugar is what we need to be conscious of even when from natural sources such as honey, agave or the highly processed high-fructose corn syrup. The added sugar does contribute to the epidemic of obesity and diabetes our nation faces today. The World Health Organization recommends that added sugars should contribute no more than 10% of total calories. That means a person on a 2000-calorie diet should consume no more than 50 grams of carbohydrate in the form of sugar a day.

Beets- more than just a pretty color!



Consuming beetroot juice may boost stamina and allow people to exercise for up to 16 per cent longer, according to a study from the UK. The vegetable juice's nitrate content may reduce oxygen uptake to an extent that cannot be achieved by any other known means, making exercise less tiring, according to findings published in the Journal of Applied Physiology.

A London study suggested that drinking just 500ml of beetroot juice a day may significantly reduce blood pressure. The benefits were linked to the nitrate content of the vegetable, and suggest an alternative explanation for the heart-healthy potential of vegetable-rich diets previously attributed to their antioxidant vitamin content.

Bulgur is not vulgar!

Bulgur is really just wheat in its whole form. Because it is minimally processed, it retains its nutritional value. It comes in three types, coarse grind which has a consistency that is similar to that of rice and can be used in place of rice in any recipe. Medium grind is better for cereal and fillings, while fine grind is mainly used for tabbouleh.

Bulgur wheat is high in fiber, protein and minerals. There are many possible health benefits to this grain including:

- alleviating chronic inflammation
- reducing your risk of developing gallstones
- protecting against cancer

Sharon's Kitchen



Tzayziki



12oz Non Fat Greek Yogurt
1 English cucumber
¼ cup Lite sour cream
2 Tbsp fresh squeezed lemon juice
1 Tbsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp minced garlic
1 tsp minced dill
2 tsp sea salt

½ tsp black pepper

Preparation

Finely grate cucumber

Lightly pat with paper-towel removing most moisture

In a bowl, mix cucumber, yogurt, sour cream, lemon, vinegar, dill, garlic, salt and pepper

Stir well

Servings 4

Calories 70

Fat 1g

Carbohydrates 5g

Sugar 4g

Protein 8.5g

Chicken Orzo Soup



32 oz fat free reduced sodium chicken broth

½ cup uncooked orzo

2 tsp olive oil

2/3 cup coarsely chopped carrot

½ cup coarsely chopped celery

½ cup chopped onion

¾ pound boneless chicken breast cut into ½ inch cubes

1 ¼ cup water

3 fresh parsley sprigs
1 fresh thyme sprig
4 cups baby spinach
1 tbsp lemon juice
Salt/pepper to taste

Preparation

Bring 1 ¾ cup broth to a boil

Add orzo, cook 10 minutes, drain

In large sauce pan over medium heat add oil, carrots, celery, onion and chicken

Cook 3 minutes, stir constantly

Add 2 ¼ cup broth, water, parsley, thyme; bring to boil

Reduce heat and cover for 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender

Discard herbs, add spinach, orzo, lemon juice, salt and pepper

Simmer 1 minutes

Servings 4

Calories 225

Fat 5g

Carbohydrates 23g

Fiber 3g

Protein 22g

Tabbouleh with Chicken and Red Pepper



½ cup uncooked bulgur
½ cup water
1 ½ cups diced tomatoes
¾ cup shredded cooked chicken breast
¾ cup minced flat leaf parsley
½ cup chopped red pepper
½ cup diced cucumber
¼ cup minced fresh mint
1 ½ tbsp lemon juice
1 tbsp olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation

Bring water to a boil, turn off

Add bulgur, cover and let sit for 15 minutes or until tender

Drain and put bulgur in a bowl

Add tomatoes, chicken, parsley, red pepper, cucumber, mint, lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper

Toss well

Servings 4

Calories 150

Fat 5g

Carbohydrates 17g

Fiber 4.5g

Protein 11.2g

Here are some of the things that have been keeping me busy in 2011

On the Tube:



On the internet and in magazines:

- [The Lost Girls](#)
- [Women's Day](#)
- [Kiwi](#)
- [iVillage](#)
- [ESPN](#)
- [Shape](#)

View more videos and articles on the [media page](#).

contact information:

email: info@sharonrichter.com

phone: (212) 977-7779

You only have one body. Treat it with respect!

Disclaimer:

The information provided in this newsletter are suggestions to consider in order to improve health. Please consult your physician before trying any new regime, food or herb.