

Staying Whole in a Processed World

COVID-19

- If your group is gathering in person, check with your coordinator for updated guidelines related to preventing COVID-19 transmission.
- COVID Specific Food Safety and Healthy Eating: [ISU Extension COVID-19 resources](#)

Background for Facilitators

- [High Fructose Corn Syrup](#)
- [Grocery Shopping Mistakes to Avoid](#)
- [Foods That Look "Healthy"](#)
- [Food Packaging Claims](#)

Behavior Goals

Participants will:

1. Understand which nutrients to look for and which to avoid on a nutrition food label.
2. Identify the meanings of health claims on food packages.
3. Be able to identify that being physically active can be interesting.

Meeting Preparation

1. Review the newsletter. Send questions or concerns to your coordinator.
2. Review background resources (website links are provided above).
3. Create BINGO cards and determine how to distribute to participants. See example word bank below.
 - a. Possible variation for virtual: Ask participants to bring a piece of paper with them and display the bingo words on the screen for them to make their own bingo cards.
4. Choose one of the recipe options. Make the recipe at least once before the meeting. Write down helpful hints for the group. If virtual, have ideas on what to share about the recipe you tried.
5. Determine how to transport and taste featured food tasting.

(Continued on page 2)

! The suggested wording for the presentation is in regular font and the *facilitator directions are in bold, dark red italic*. It's best not to read the presentation, but to use your own words, staying close to the meaning.

Meeting Preparation (continued)

6. If the meeting is virtual, prepare ideas for how to engage participants in the recipe making process.
 - a. Deliver pre-packaged ingredients or whole unprepared foods for participants to make at home
 - b. Prepare a grocery list for the recipe chosen that can be sent with newsletter for participants to purchase
 - c. Demonstrate recipe making process on video and direct participants to the recipe in the newsletter.
7. See grocery list at the end of this document and distribute to participants, if desired.

Props

- BINGO Game
- Comparison of two salad mixes, whole grain bread package, yogurt package (***Virtual can show nutrition facts labels***)
- Other examples of Nutrition Facts Labels
- Pictures or powerpoint to visualize going through a grocery store

Conversation

Welcome to Fresh Conversations! We are so glad you joined us today! Last meeting we started our discussion on processed foods. Let's take a few moments to share anything you found interesting. ***We talked about the health consequences of ultra processed foods. We also discussed some healthier options to stock up your pantry for times of emergency. Allow time to share. If virtual, go in round robin. If in person, use the technique that works best for you.***

Introduction

This is the 2nd newsletter in a series of 3 on processed foods. Today we are going to dive a bit deeper in the grocery shopping experience by looking closer at food labels. We will discuss specific words to look for and words to avoid.

Nutrition Discussion

Let's play a BINGO game to start. (***See example word bank below. Pre-make cards for participants or have participants make their own 5 by 5 BINGO cards with the sample word bank below.***)

Word Bank:

- | | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| • Low Fat | • Potassium | • Black Beans | • Carbohydrates |
| • Natural | • Fiber | • Wellness | • Walking |
| • Wheat | • Vitamin D | • Vitamins | • Dyes |
| • Whole Grain | • Calcium | • Minerals | • Flavor Enhancers |
| • Organic | • Sodium | • Health Claims | • Fat Free |
| • Gluten Free | • Fortified | • Ultra-processed | • Food & Drug Administration |
| • Added Sugar | • Trans Fat | • Essential | |
| • Food Label | • Physical Activity | • Supermarket | |

Play BINGO game. Allow enough time between calling each word. Possibly display words on screen using powerpoint or physical paper for them to see in case they did not hear you.

Allow time to put BINGO cards away and begin the next discussion.

That was fun! That helps us to get familiar with some of the terms we will now discuss as we go through the newsletter. Let's begin our discussion by virtually taking a stroll through the grocery store and make our own grocery lists.

You can use pictures or a powerpoint of each section to pretend like you are traveling through a grocery store.

Where do you start? I typically start in the produce aisle. Think about how you make your decisions in this section. ***Is it price? Do you look for sales? What are some staples from this section you always have in your cart? (Bananas, Salads, Cucumbers).***

Let's compare 2 pre-made salad mixes ***(Show on screen or show in person 2 separate pre-made salad mixes, point out serving size and calories per serving on the nutrition facts label)***. Are there any words that pop out at you on the front of the package that would encourage you to buy it?

Next, on to the bakery. Think of what is important enough to you in this section to get a place in your cart. What do you look for? Do you choose familiarity in this section? Brands you are comfortable with?

Think about some food claims you see in this section.

Can you think of any words commonly seen on packages of bread products? (White, Wheat, Multigrain, Whole Grain). Let's talk about a few of these.

The gold standard in the bread aisle is "whole grain." Whole is the "it" word when it comes to bread products. This can be found by taking a quick look at the nutrition facts label ingredient list. If whole is the first word, it would be considered the all mighty "whole grain." Multigrain is defined as a product that contains more than one type of grain. This doesn't mean any of the grains are whole. This is a common claim that can be used on the outside of packaging for marketing.

(Show on screen or in person a whole grain bread product and where to find that on the nutrition facts label).

What's next? The shelf stable middle aisles. ***What are some staples from these aisles? What types of things influence your decision in this section? This is where a bulk of decision making takes place during grocery shopping. What types of claims have you seen on packages?***

Let's talk about a few common claims used for marketing. The FDA has legally defined the claims that can be used on food labels. **Refer to newsletter page #2 for the chart with some of the nutrient claims. Refer to supplemental document for Food Packaging Claims.**

Ask about any foods they have seen with low fat or fat free claims.

Many cookies, crackers, fruit snacks are marketed as "fat free" or "low fat." **(Example, you could discuss that a fruit snack package claims "fat free" but shows added sugars of 11g or 22% DV per package).**

This shows that even though it is labeled a certain way on the outside of the package, it may not be a healthful part of your diet.

Lastly, let's talk about dairy. Do you ever look at the yogurt section and wonder when it grew so much? The number of options is endless. **What do you look for in this section? Do you look for brand familiarity?** Do you look for prices or sales? Many flavored yogurts can be loaded with added sugars.

You can show a picture of a yogurt package and where to find added sugars. You can visually show how much sugar that is using teaspoons. You can scoop the number of teaspoons into a clear cup. Example yogurt with 12 g added sugars would be 3 teaspoons of sugar.

But why do all of these words matter? When shopping in the grocery store, it's easy to get overwhelmed by all of the choices but equipping yourself with this knowledge to come prepared will help you to make "better for you" choices. **Allow time for any comments, questions, or discussion.**

Challenge

Homework Activity: Look through your pantry and find a product that has more than 10% of sodium, added sugars, or saturated fats. Show a picture of a food label to show where those 3 nutrients are. Make a note of this staple product to look in the store for a similar product that meets the 5% or less goal.

Tasting Activity

Preferred Option: #1: Easy Black Bean Dip from Newsletter

Option #2: Homemade Salad Dressing

<https://www.acouplecooks.com/how-to-make-homemade-salad-dressing/>

Teaching Tips:

1. *Easy Black Bean Dip*

- Encourage them to get creative with using different spices/herbs they enjoy.
 - Chili Powder (if they would like it spicier)
 - Garlic Powder
 - Lime Juice
 - Dried Oregano
 - Cilantro
- Encourage them to look for “no added sodium” black beans. You can show them an example.
- This can be enjoyed with fresh vegetables such as carrots, cauliflower, or other raw vegetables.
- If 6 servings is too much, consider making ½ of the recipe and freezing the remainder of the can of black beans for up to 3 months. Another option could be the full recipe can be made and the remaining portion can be frozen to be enjoyed later. Be sure to freeze in a sealed freezer bag with label and date. Beans should be drained before frozen.

2. *Homemade Salad Dressing*

- Many store bought salad dressings are marketed as “low fat” or “fat free” but often have added sugars.
- Fun Fact: Some nutrients need fat to be absorbed into our bodies (such as Vitamins A, D, E, K), so you may need to have some fat in your salad dressing.
- You can make your own with your favorite flavors.
 - Start with a 3 to 1 ratio of oil vs. vinegar (balsamic, red wine, apple cider)
 - Add in chopped herbs, minced garlic, shallots, etc.
 - Store in a glass jar with a tight lid in the refrigerator; bring to room temp and stir before serving.

Physical Activity

The newsletter talks about walking around your neighborhood. Does anyone have a favorite path they take? Why do you find that route interesting and enjoyable?

The newsletter also discusses ways to make your walk more interesting. The first two suggestions talk about locations for an interesting walk.

1. Taking a walk at a different location, other than your home. Maybe a trail or park, or from the senior center or church.
2. Taking a walk to run an errand where you would normally drive.

Does anyone try to diversify their walk from the usual route to keep things interesting? ***Be prepared to share an interesting place you walk and/or an errand where you have replaced a car trip with a walk.***

The second two suggestions provide more ideas for entertainment on the walk.

1. Researching community history and exploring on a walk.
2. Finding a book or podcast to listen to on the walk.

Has anyone done either of these things? ***Be prepared to share ideas for entertainment you have used on a walk or something similar.***

Facilitator Note: If questions about specific podcasts for older adults, here are a few examples. TED Talks, Lux Radio Theater, Freakonomics Radio, Stuff You Missed in History Class, This American Life, The Daily

When out for interesting walks it is always important to remember to keep safety in mind. Some tips to keep in mind especially when walking in a new location:

- Let someone know where you are going
- Take a cell phone
- Be aware of your surroundings
- Take a walking buddy for companionship
- Keep the volume of your headphones at a reasonable level so you can hear others, cars, etc.

Take Action

I'll close the meeting with a couple of sample action steps to help you think of your action steps. You can adopt one of mine or come up with your own.

Here are some possible ideas to consider.

- I enjoy walking through my neighborhood. I will take one extra walk this week.
- I eat yogurt every day. This week, I will look for yogurt with less added sugars.
- I have been feeling more lonely lately. I will make a phone call to an old friend to catch up this week.

Grocery List

Fruits / Vegetables

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Meat / Poultry

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Grains

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Condiments / Sauce

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
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- _____
- _____

Canned Goods

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
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- _____
- _____
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Dairy / Deli

- _____
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Toiletries

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Home Supplies

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Other

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____





This Month's Conversations

- Making healthy choices at the store
- Decoding nutrition food labels
- Get dipping with a black bean recipe

FRESH CONVERSATIONS

How to join:



Fresh Conversations is a social opportunity to connect with other older adults for a friendly discussion focused on nutrition and physical activity education. Join us right from the comfort of your home for a fun conversation that will help you learn how to maintain your health and independence during one of these sessions this month.

Contact:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Call 2-1-1 for food resources near you.

For more information on *Fresh Conversations*, contact the Iowa Department of Public Health at (515)782-9451