

January 8, 2012

Healthy Pantry Staples

Keeping a good supply of pantry staples on hand will provide a solid foundation for putting together quick meals throughout the week. If your cupboard is well stocked, you should only need to shop a couple of times a week for perishable ingredients.

Canned & Jarred Goods

- Albacore tuna and/or wild salmon, packed in water
- Low-sodium beans (black, white, pinto and/or chickpeas)
- Low-sodium broth (chicken, beef and/or vegetable)
- Low-sodium crushed or diced tomatoes
- Olives
- Roasted red bell peppers

Dried Pasta, Grains & Legumes

- Brown rice
- Buckwheat noodles
- Bulgur wheat (quick-cooking)
- Farro (semi-pearled)
- Lentils
- Quinoa
- Rolled oats
- Whole-wheat couscous
- Whole-wheat pasta

Oils & Vinegars

- Canola, peanut or grapeseed oil
- Olive oil (regular and extra-virgin)
- Sesame oil (toasted)
- Balsamic vinegar
- Rice wine vinegar
- White or red wine vinegar

Continued on next page

WILLIAMS-SONOMA

Technique Class: Healthy in a Hurry, Part 1: Superfoods

Recognizing the impact that foods have on our overall health and well-being is the first step to eating well, but putting that knowledge into action can sometimes be a challenge. Here are simple ways to enjoy nutritious meals even on a hectic schedule.

- **Stay flexible:** Each of us has unique nutritional needs depending on our age, gender and activity level. Most women require between 1,800 and 2,000 calories a day, while men can usually eat a little more, from 2,200 to 2,600 calories.
- **Put color on your plate:** Fruits and vegetables are brimming with disease-preventing vitamins, minerals, plant chemicals and fiber, so strive to fill at least half of your plate with produce, and go for as many colors as you can. The more hues your produce contains, the more nutrition impacts. Round out your plate with one-fourth whole grains and one-fourth lean protein.

- **Keep fats healthy:** It's fine to eat up to one-third of your daily calories from fat, provided it's from healthful sources like avocados; nuts and seeds; olives; and olive, peanut and canola oils. Depending on your size and how active you are, a healthful range of fat is 40 to 75 grams for most women and 50 to 100 grams for most men.

- **Do grains right:** Roughly half of our calories should come from carbohydrates, to supply the energy our bodies and brains need to thrive. Women should aim for 225 to 250 grams of carbohydrates per day, while men will require 275 to 325 grams.

Like fat, not all carbohydrates are created equal. Choosing minimally processed, fiber-rich carbohydrates from whole grains such as oats, quinoa and whole-wheat bread, pasta and couscous will provide sustained energy to keep you feeling your best. Eating these, along with plenty of fruits, vegetables and beans, will provide the 25 to 28 grams of fiber needed to keep us full and to promote digestive and heart health.

- **Think lean protein:** Slowly digested proteins help us stay full, keep our immune system strong, and build muscle, tissues and hormones. Yet we need surprisingly little—only 10% to 20% of our daily calories.

- **Go easy on the salt:** Most of the sodium in our diets comes from packaged foods. Eating too many of these can quickly add up, exceeding the 1500 to 2300 milligram upper limit that most of us should have each day. Start with fresh foods and you'll naturally reduce the amount of sodium in your diet.

Quinoa Salad with Dried Cherries and Pistachios

This flavorful, protein-rich salad will provide a welcome energy boost. Dried tart cherries are loaded with antioxidants, which reduce inflammation associated with heart disease and arthritis. Pistachios, one of the lowest-calorie, highest-protein nuts, promote satiety, helping you eat less overall. They are a rich source of vitamin B6 to help regulate mood and promote brain health.

Put the quinoa in a fine-mesh strainer and rinse well under cold water. In a saucepan over high heat, bring the 2 cups water to a boil. Add the quinoa and reduce the heat to low. Cover and simmer until the grains are tender and the water is absorbed, about 15 minutes. Remove the quinoa from the heat and let cool slightly. Transfer to a large bowl and fluff with a fork to separate the grains. Stir the radicchio, vinegar, olive oil, cherries, pistachios and parsley into the bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Serve warm or at room temperature. Serves 4.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma *Healthy in a Hurry*, by Karen Ansel, MS, RD and Charity Ferreira (Weldon Owen, 2012).

Everything Smoothie

This delicious and nutritious smoothie is packed with several popular superfoods.

Place all the ingredients into the Vitamix container in the order listed and secure the lid. Select Variable 1. Turn the machine on and quickly increase the speed to Variable 10, then to High. Blend for 1 minute, using the tamper to press the ingredients into the blades. Makes 4 cups.

Courtesy of Vitamix.

Broccoli with Red Pepper Flakes and Garlic Chips

Broccoli, a member of the cabbage family, is a cruciferous vegetable thought to reduce the risk of cancer. Containing lots of vitamins A and C and several minerals, it is one of the most healthful vegetables. This version is drizzled with a spicy red pepper oil and garnished with crisp garlic chips.

In a small fry pan over medium-low heat, combine the olive oil, garlic and red pepper flakes. Heat, stirring, just until the garlic begins to turn golden on the edges, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove from the heat. Place a fine-mesh sieve over a heatproof bowl and strain the oil. Reserve the oil and the contents of the sieve separately.

Trim ½ inch off the stem ends of the broccoli stalks, then peel the tough outer layer from the stalks. Cut off the florets and the slender stems from the tops; trim so they are 1 to 2 inches long. Cut the large stalks crosswise into slices ¼ inch thick.

Place all the cut broccoli in a steamer rack set over boiling water, cover tightly and cook until tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer the broccoli to a warmed serving dish. Drizzle with 2 tsp. of the reserved garlic oil and toss to coat. Reserve the remaining oil for another use. Sprinkle with the crisp garlic slices and red pepper flakes and serve immediately. Serves 4.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma *Essentials of Healthful Cooking*, by Mary Abbott Hess, Dana Jacobi & Marie Simmons (Oxmoor House, 2003).

Ingredients for Quinoa Salad with Dried Cherries and Pistachios

- 1 cup quinoa
- 2 cups water
- ½ head radicchio, cored and thinly sliced
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup dried tart cherries
- ¼ cup pistachios, chopped
- 3 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- ¼ tsp. sea salt
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste

Ingredients for Everything Smoothie

- ½ cup soy milk
- ½ cup grapes (red or green)
- 1 medium orange, peeled and halved
- ½ peach, pitted
- ½ cup pineapple chunks, core included
- ½ medium carrot
- ½ cup chopped fresh broccoli
- ½ cup fresh spinach, washed
- 1 cup frozen unsweetened strawberries
- ¼ banana, peeled and frozen
- 1 cup ice cubes

Ingredients for Broccoli with Red Pepper Flakes and Garlic Chips

- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbs. thin, crosswise-cut garlic slices
- ¼ tsp. red pepper flakes
- 1 bunch broccoli, about 1½ lb.

Healthy Pantry Staples continued

Other Flavorings

- Agave nectar
- Asian chili sauce
- Capers
- Dijon mustard
- Honey
- Hot-pepper sauce
- Low-sodium soy sauce
- Maple syrup
- Sea salt and kosher salt
- Spices and dried herbs
- Tomato paste (tube)

Baking & Misc.

- Baking powder
- Baking soda
- All-purpose, unbleached flour
- Buckwheat flour
- Whole-wheat flour
- Dried fruit
- Nuts and seeds
- Brown sugar
- Granulated sugar

Fresh Foods

- Garlic
- Onions
- Shallots

Spotlight on Superfoods

While variety is the key to healthy eating, some foods pack a superior nutritional punch. These foods should always find a place on your menu and your shopping list. Below are 14 of the most common superfoods.

1. **Oats:** Oats have long been touted for their health benefits. Study after study has shown the fiber in oats to have positive effects on cholesterol levels. But the benefits don't end there. In addition to fiber, oats also contain essential vitamins and minerals, protein and heart-healthy antioxidants. Regular consumption of oatmeal has also been linked with the prevention of type 2 diabetes. In short, a bowl of oats is one of the best ways you can start your day.
2. **Avocados:** They seem like an indulgent treat: avocados have a buttery texture, mild and delicious flavor, and they mash beautifully into creamy guacamole. It's true that avocados are high in calories and fat, but it would be a mistake to avoid them for this reason. These fruits are loaded with nutrients that we all should be getting more of, including heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, fiber and folate. They are also high in potassium, vitamin K and the carotenoid lutein.
3. **Pomegranates:** One of the earliest cultivated fruits, juicy red pomegranates are native to the Mediterranean Middle East and are a truly seasonal pleasure, available from fall to early winter. This ancient fruit has gained attention lately for its antioxidant power, but pomegranates are also good sources of vitamin C, potassium and fiber.
4. **Tomatoes:** A vitamin C powerhouse, one tomato contains more than half of the recommended daily allowance. Tomatoes also contain fiber, thiamin, potassium and the antioxidant lycopene. Cooking tomatoes destroys some of their vitamin C but enhances the absorption of their lycopene, so for best results, eat tomatoes both ways!
5. **Peppers:** A good source of fiber, vitamins and important antioxidants, bell peppers are deliciously versatile. Chili peppers, members of the same family, are even more nutritious than their milder cousins, though their intense heat makes it difficult to consume them in volume.
6. **Salmon:** Admired for its rosy flesh and succulent texture, salmon is also a terrific source of the omega-3 fatty acids associated with heart health. It is also an excellent source of selenium, a trace mineral linked to a decreased risk of cancer. And salmon is a good source of lean protein and myriad other nutrients, including vitamin B12, thiamine, niacin and potassium.
7. **Grass-fed beef:** Although most beef is high in omega-6 and saturated fats, one way that you can eat well and still enjoy beef is to choose the grass-fed variety. Typically, grass-fed cattle get more exercise than corn-fed ones as they roam and graze for their natural food, which is one reason the meat of grass-fed cattle is leaner. A diet of grass results in more healthful omega-3 fats in the meat of grass-fed beef, and it also contains lower residues of hormones and antibiotics.

Continued on next page

8. **Tofu:** Made from soy milk extracted from soy beans, tofu is a nutrient-dense, protein-rich staple for much of the world's population. Tofu is packed with heart-healthy fats, soy protein and phytochemicals called isoflavins, which may help to prevent cancer and heart disease. Some tofu is produced with calcium, making it a good source of that nutrient as well.
9. **Squashes:** Naturally sweet summer and winter squashes are members of the same botanical family and share some of the same nutritional characteristics. Summer squashes are high in vitamin C, beta-carotene and several minerals. Winter squashes are rich in vitamin A, vitamin C and fiber.
10. **Wheat:** For much of the world, wheat is a sustaining staple. Whole-wheat flour is a source of complex carbohydrates, which are the body's main fuel for energy. Whole wheat also contains thiamine, niacin, selenium and magnesium, all essential nutrients that support good health.
11. **Nuts and peanuts:** Chock-full of heart-healthy fats, proteins and fiber, nuts are one of the most nutritious foods you can eat. They play a well-documented role in good nutrition and prevention of disease. Eating an ounce of nuts several times a week has been linked with increased immunity and a significantly lower risk of heart disease and diabetes. These nutrient-rich, flavorful little packages of monounsaturated fats and antioxidants have a lot to offer. Almonds are an excellent source of calcium. Peanuts, which are botanically considered legumes rather than nuts, are loaded with fiber and folate. Walnuts are a significant source of omega-3s, which boost the immune system and promote heart health. Cashews are lower in fat than most other nuts, and the fat they do contain is the same heart-healthy kind found in olive oil.
12. **Broccoli:** Its unassuming profile in the produce bin belies the fact that broccoli is one of the most nutritious foods you can eat. Impressively high in vitamins, minerals and fiber, providing substantial doses of antioxidants and phytochemicals, broccoli is also high in folate, a nutrient that is associated with the prevention of birth defects and diseases.
13. **New world grains:** Everyone's talking about whole grains these days, which has led to the rediscovery of some neglected ancient pseudograins, or seeds, whose nutritional profile makes them exciting alternatives to wheat and other familiar grains. Quinoa and amaranth are complete proteins, a rarity in the plant world. Iron-rich quinoa also supplies fiber, phosphorus and magnesium in addition to protein. Amaranth has a similar nutritional profile; it contains iron, protein and fiber, as well as magnesium and zinc.
14. **Berries:** Let color be your guide when shopping for berries. Their bright jewel hues of red, purple and blue signal their powerful antioxidant punch. Blueberries are the leader in antioxidant capacity, but most berries are good sources of these and other phytochemicals—plant compounds linked with a strong immune system and good health—as well as vitamins and minerals.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma *Eat Well*, by Charity Ferreira (Oxmoor House, 2008).

Notes

Visit williams-sonoma.com to search our extensive recipe collection, find menus and tips for entertaining, and browse an expanded selection of products in every category.