Spice It Up With Peppers!

September is a great time to enjoy one of the dozens of varieties of peppers available from your local grocery store, farmer’s market, or garden. Health benefits vary depending on the type of pepper and maturity level, but all peppers are low in calories and a good source of fiber, vitamin C, and vitamin A. Red peppers are especially high in vitamin A, and also a good source of folate and vitamin B6. The rainbow of pepper colors also indicate a wide variety of plant nutrients called “phytochemicals.” Many of these have anti-inflammatory properties, and act as cancer-fighting antioxidants.

Handling Peppers Safely

Certain practices can increase bacterial growth, and therefore the likelihood of making someone sick. Also, hot peppers can cause burns and irritation to your skin or eyes. Follow the guidelines below to make sure you are enjoying the benefits of peppers safely.

Handling

- Choose firm peppers with smooth skin and intact stems. Avoid wrinkled peppers or those with cuts or bruises.
- Wash all peppers before using.
- When handling hot peppers, always wear disposable gloves, and avoid touching your eyes or face.

Storage

- Rinse peppers well and gently rub to clean, especially around the stem.
- Peppers should be stored in your refrigerator’s vegetable drawer.
- When purchasing freshly roasted peppers, refrigerate them within 2 hours.
- Transfer roasted peppers from plastic bags to covered containers for storage.

For more pepper information, visit http://farmtotable.colostate.edu/eat-resources/chile-peppers.php
How hot is too hot?

“Capsaicin” is the substance that makes peppers hot. The level of hotness is rated in “Scoville units,” with bell peppers at the low/mild end of the scale, and habaneros near the upper/hot end of the scale. Use the guide on the right, along with your personal preference, to determine which peppers to use in your recipes.

Did You Know?

Creams made with capsaicin can be used to treat pain from arthritis, muscle aches, or neuropathy. Some studies have also shown capsaicin to have a slight effect on reducing appetite and increasing metabolism. However, known benefits are not great enough to warrant taking a supplement, and it probably would not play a very helpful role in your weight loss plan. Instead, enjoy peppers for their taste and proven nutritional benefits. They are a great way to add a little spice to your diet!

Spicy Guacamole

Ingredients:
2 ripe avocados
1/2 red onion, chopped
1-2 Serrano chiles, insides and seeds removed, minced
2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped
1 tablespoon of fresh lime juice
1/2 teaspoon salt
Dash of black pepper

Directions:
1. Cut avocados, remove pits, and scoop into a mixing bowl.
2. Mash the avocados.
3. Add chopped red onion, Serrano chilies, cilantro, lime juice, salt and black pepper. Stir to combine.
4. Serve with tortilla chips.

Makes 5 servings

Recipe courtesy of Colorado Farm to Table Food Safety. For nutrient analysis, more pepper recipes, or additional information about other seasonal fruits and vegetables, visit their website:

http://farmtotable.colostate.edu/eat-fresh-produce.php
Scheduling Now!

Healthy You: Weight Management and Mindful Eating Program
This fun (research-based) 10 week curriculum promotes healthy eating without deprivation or dieting. Hands-on activities, snacks, and exercises help you understand hunger, portions, labels, menu planning, physical activity, and more.
- Time: 12-1 pm, Tuesdays September 10th-November 12th
- Cost: $175 ($100 for CSU students and employees)
- Special: Register with a partner and each save $50 (not combined with CSU discount)

Dining with Diabetes Program
This program includes 4 weekly classes to help you achieve a healthier lifestyle while controlling your diabetes. Topics include diabetes management, risk reduction, nutrition education, menu planning, portion control, and a hands-on cooking class each week.
- Time: 6-7:30pm, Thursdays October 3-24
- Cost: $100 ($75 for CSU students and employees); scholarships available.

Cooking Classes
This fall we are going back to the basics with our “Learn to Cook” series. Our focus remains on creative, nutritious food, but we’ll spend more time on the “how-to” of cooking. As usual, we will have both noon and evening classes, and you’ll leave with a packet of recipes, nutrition information, and a full stomach!
- September 25 - Fresh from the Garden
- October 16 - Cooking with Beer
- November 13 - Holiday Side Dishes

Time: 12-1 pm or 6-7 pm
Cost: $25 per class ($12 for CSU students and employees)
Special: Register in advance for all 3 classes for just $65 ($30 for CSU students & employees)

Resting Metabolic Rate
Do you wish you knew how much to eat each day for optimal energy, performance, and balance? Our metabolic rate monitor can determine your basic calorie needs in a 30-minute appointment, and we can provide recommendations based on your activity or weight goals.
- Cost: $100 ($50 for CSU students and employees).