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March, 2007

Family, Food & Finance

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Celebrate Soy!

Submitted by: Katherine Streeter, R.D.

April is Soy Foods month. Eating foods low in saturated fat and cholesterol are important components to a healthy lifestyle. Soy foods contain no cholesterol, protect against heart disease, and taste great. New studies indicate that soy foods show promise for boosting mental ability, and protecting against bone loss and some types of cancer.

If you have milk allergies or lactose intolerance, soymilk (soy milk), soy cheese, soy yogurt, and nondairy frozen desserts offer delicious ways to include the essential nutrients of calcium, vitamin A, and vitamin D in your healthy diet. The bountiful nutrient content of soy foods makes it easy to improve health naturally.

Soy foods also provide high-quality protein, and increase the feeling of fullness. When you need a quick snack, try crunching on guilt-free and flavorful healthy soy chips or soy bars. It's simple to make soy foods a healthy component of your weight loss program.

Studies confirm that soy foods boost health at all ages. Whether you are interested in being more heart healthy, wanting to lose weight, or seeking healthful snacks, soy foods can fit into every lifestyle. Scientists continually study the soybean and find new ways soy foods can benefit your general health.

Ways To Enjoy Soy Foods:

- Pour soy milk over your morning cereal.
- Fortify a glass of orange juice with soy protein powder.
- Make soy yogurt and fresh fruit parfaits.
- Enjoy a refreshing treat with soy ice cream.
- Snack on soy nuts.
- Sprinkle edamame (fresh soy beans) over a salad.
- Fire up the grill for soy burgers.
- Try soy crumbles instead of ground beef or turkey.

Adapted from: <http://www.soyfoods.org/>

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

Cornell Cooperative Extension in Niagara County provides equal program and employment opportunities.

Caffeine and Your Health

By Katherine Streeter, R.D.

It is America's most popular drug – yes, caffeine is a stimulant and therefore considered a drug. Caffeine can be found in coffee, tea, chocolate, cola, and some over-the-counter medications and supplements. Nine out of ten of Americans consume some form of caffeine daily, and many consume levels high enough to be addicted to it.

Caffeine affects the body in several ways. As many know, it increases alertness and many use it to counter sleepiness. It temporarily raises blood pressure and promotes the release for fatty acids for use by the body. Contrary to popular belief, it is not an appetite suppressant, but it can boost your metabolism to a slight degree. Some people find caffeine to be effective when fighting off a headache or migraine. Finally, caffeine is a diuretic, and has been linked to calcium loss and increased osteoporosis risk.

Generally, consumption of 200-300 milligrams or less of caffeine daily is safe for adults. It is generally not appropriate for children or teenagers to consume caffeine. Those who are pregnant, with medical conditions, or who are on certain types of drugs should talk to their doctor about caffeine use. You should consider cutting back on or eliminating caffeine if you are experiencing symptoms of sleeplessness, irritability, anxiety, muscle tremors, or gastrointestinal symptoms. When cutting back, do so slowly to avoid withdrawal symptoms.

Caffeine Content in Foods, Beverages, and Supplements:

Item	Caffeine (in milligrams)
8oz. cup regular brewed coffee	90-150
8oz. cup coffeehouse coffee	up to 200
8oz. cup decaffeinated brewed coffee	3-5
8oz. cup black tea	40-70
8oz. cup green tea	25-40
8oz. decaffeinated tea	3-5
12oz. cola, regular or diet	35-40
12oz. "Dew" soda, regular or diet	55-60
12oz. lemon-lime soda, regular or diet	0
Energy Drinks	See Label
1-1.5oz. chocolate bar	10-30



Eating Disorders and Adolescents

Submitted by Kim Mansfield

An Internet search of "eating disorders" yields 15,000,000 websites and almost 20,000 images. Stories about eating disorders among popular performers also regularly appear in the press and on TV. As is often true, when there is a large amount of easily accessed information there is also a large amount of misinformation. The purpose of this article is to inform readers about the facts and recent and emerging research findings about eating disorders.

What are Eating Disorders? In restrictive anorexia nervosa (AN), a person severely restricts caloric intake, and often exercises excessively because of an overwhelming desire to lose weight. In bulimia nervosa (BN), a person is afraid of gaining weight, but ingests large amounts in a brief period (binges), then tries to rid the body of the effects of these extra calories by fasting, vomiting, exercising, or using laxatives immediately afterward. Most people with an eating disorder do not fit neatly into either of these categories and are said to have an eating disorder, not otherwise specified (ED-NOS), popularly called "disordered eating".

How Do Adolescents with Eating Disorders Behave?

The best way to understand how adolescents with an eating disorder might behave is to put one's self in their shoes. Imagine believing that losing weight is the only way that you can achieve a sense of mastery in your life. Things are happening all around and within your own life that seem out of your control. Also

imagine that you have always been a perfectionist, but have never really felt very good about yourself – regardless of praise that you get from others. Finally, you are surrounded by "you can never be too thin" messages from a variety of sources. This might be the situation

for a person with AN. What do you do? You might: stop eating breakfast, schedule a class during lunch, eliminate snacks, exercise every way possible, and keep busy. However, when these behaviors become extreme or numerous and affect every organ system, including your brain, you end up feeling worse, not better, and assume that you just need to lose more weight to feel better about yourself.

Likewise, imagine that you have an intense fear of obesity, but lack the “will power” to limit calories on a consistent basis, the motivation to exercise regularly, and the ability to control impulses or sad moods. You also find comfort eating large amounts of high-calorie foods, but doing so only makes you feel worse. So, you do things to rid your body of calories. Although harmful, these things are less frightening than gaining weight, and may even make you feel less guilty or sad. This might be the situation for a person with BN. You might end up not eating breakfast or lunch because you want to lose weight, but then come home from school, feeling lonely or sad and eat a donut. You start feeling better eating donuts and before you know it, you’ve eaten the whole box. This makes you feel guilty and ashamed, and the only thing you can think of is to vomit before anyone else gets home. Your brother arrives home a few minutes later, goes to the pantry and starts yelling at you because all the donuts are gone. Embarrassment, sadness and anger cause you to vow to never binge and vomit again, but you know deep in your heart that you will, because you are trapped in an addictive cycle, and don’t see any way out of the pattern.

The AED reports that among late adolescent and young adult females, at least 10% have symptoms of eating disorders and those with BN outnumber those with AN by at least 2-to-1.

Eating disorders typically are first diagnosed between 10 to 20 years of age, with AN generally appearing at 13 to 17, and BN tending to emerge at 15 to 19.

Simply put, there is no single cause for an eating disorder. They are complex illnesses

with multiple causes that require treatment across a number of domains. Eating disorders are better considered as “developmental” rather than “mental” problems. This acknowledges the depth and breadth of systems that are affected, and minimizes the stigma still associated with psychological disorders. Source: Linda K. Earley, Extension Educator, CCE – Columbia County

Selecting a New Water Heater: There’s More Than Meets the Eye

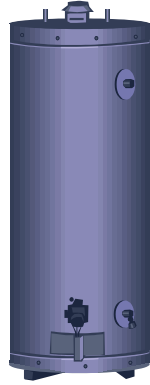
Submitted by Diane S. Orr

Are you in the market for a new water heater? There are some things to consider before you take the plunge. While replacing an existing electric resistance storage tank water heater with a newer unit is relatively inexpensive in and of itself, paying for the electricity that type of water heater consumes will cost an average family of four about \$850 a year (cost based on the average rate of 17.3 cents per kwh in New York State). And if you project that amount over the typical 13-year life expectancy of the heater, the total cost for electricity would be about \$11,000 (plus or minus any adjustments for inflation).

What makes electric resistance water heaters so expensive to operate? While most electricity is produced by burning fossil fuels, over 60% of the energy of the fuel used to produce electricity is lost to inefficiency during the generation and transmission process. This means that electricity is much more expensive to use for heating water than fossil-based heating fuels.

While natural gas, propane or oil-fired storage water heaters are more expensive to purchase and install than electric resistance heaters, they have significantly lower operating costs. And if a homeowner is willing to pay a little more to purchase an electric heat pump water heater or a solar water heater with electric back-up, even lower operating costs are available. For example, a solar water heater costs approximately \$3,000 to purchase, but has

a life expectancy of 20 years and costs only \$260 per year to operate. If you compare long term costs of operating the solar heater to the electric resistance heater, the solar heater will reduce electricity costs by about \$7,700 over a 13 year period.



An added benefit of purchasing a solar or electric heat pump water heater is the significant savings currently available from state and federal tax credits. Information on federal tax credits for energy efficiency improvements can be found at <http://www.energytaxincentives.org/tia-p-consumers.html>. Visit http://www.tax.state.ny.us/pdf/memos/multitax/m06_4c_6i.pdf to find out about New York State tax credit information. You can also learn more about reducing water heating costs and other home-related energy costs by visiting the New York Energy Smart website at <http://www.getenergysmart.org/>

Source: Theresa C. Mayhew, Extension Educator, CCE – Columbia County

Chicken and Sodium Beware

Submitted by Katherine Streeter, R.D.

While shopping for chicken in the store I became aware that many popular brands inject their products with high-sodium chicken broth. This is the case for chicken parts as well as whole chicken. The addition of this broth makes the sodium go from about 75 mg per serving to over 200 mg per serving.

It is best to check the label of the chicken to see if the ingredients include chicken broth or salt/sodium. If you are buying ready-cooked chicken, the sodium is likely to be even higher. The package might state, “All Natural Fresh Chicken is chicken the way you want it. Minimally processed. No added hormones or steroids. No artificial

ingredients.” But the added sodium is a concern for all, particularly those who have high blood pressure or those who don’t want to get it! Make sure you read the Nutrition Facts Panel on chicken products so you can keep the sodium to 200 mg or less per serving. Keep sauces and other prepared foods that accompany them low in sodium, too, so your diet stays within the recommended ranges of the new Dietary Guidelines for 2,000 mg or less for most individuals and 1,500 mg or less for those with high blood pressure. (See back of this page for Recipe) Source: Extension Connection, March 2007

What is the Earned Income Tax Credit?

Submitted by Diane S. Orr

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC or EIC) is extra money you can get if you are working and you file a federal income tax return. Sometimes EITC is called "EIC" or Earned Income Credit. EITC and EIC are the same thing. Because EITC is a "credit," this is money you can get in addition to your tax refund. **If you qualify, you can get as much as \$4,400!** (See chart below)

	Single	Married Income	Maximum Credit
No Children	\$11,750	\$13,750	\$399
1 Child	\$31,030	\$33,030	\$2,662
2 Children	\$35,263	\$37,263	\$4,440

And you don’t have to wait until tax day on April 15th to file. You can get your money back starting now.

Get Thousands Back in Taxes

About 12 billion dollars from the Earned Income Tax Credit go unclaimed every year, just because people don’t know it exists. That adds up to more than 7 million families that don’t file for the EITC—are you one of them?

How do I know if my child qualifies for the EITC?

Qualifying children must live with you in the United States for at least 6 months of the year. They must be under 19 years of age at the end of 2006. If they are full-time

students, they must be under 24 years of age. If your child has a permanent disability, they can be any age. Each qualifying child born before December 31, 2006 must have a valid Social Security Number.

Which children qualify for the EITC?

Children who qualify for the credit can be:

- Your sons, daughters, stepchildren, and adopted children.
- Your brothers, sisters, stepbrothers, or stepsisters (even their children) if you took care of them.
- Other children may qualify as foster children, but only if they were placed with you by a government or private agency.

Why wait until tax time if you can get money back now?

Think you'll qualify for the EITC with this year's income? Instead of waiting until you file to get all of your Earned Income Tax Credit money for next year, you can get part of it in every paycheck starting now. Plus, you don't have to pay taxes on it. This is known as the Advance Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Payment. You can get up to 60% of next year's payment this year and you'll get the rest after you file your tax return in 2008. For more information call

Diane Orr at 716-433-8839 x 227.

Source: IRS