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## Family, Food & Finance

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## Health Benefits of Garlic

Submitted By: Katherine Streeter, RD, MBA

**Garlic** – potent anti-oxidant, anti-fungal, and anti-bacterial, long used in traditional and herbal medicine. Its health benefits are still being realized, and, like with any other one food, should be considered within the context of one's overall diet. It is powerful, medicinally and in flavor, so check with your doctor if you have a significant medical concern or are on medication. Read on to understand how garlic may best be used:

Although a recent study showed that less than one clove of garlic a day may cut prostate-cancer risk in half, and other research links garlic to a lowered incidence of stomach, colon and possibly breast cancers. It all depends on its preparation, says John A. Milner, chief of the Nutritional Science Research Group at the National Cancer Institute.

Garlic's active agents – allyl sulfide compounds – are produced when the clove is chopped or crushed. This breaks the cell walls and starts a cascade of chemical reactions (which also produce garlic's characteristic smell) leading to the desired sulfides. But Milner found that heating the garlic immediately after chopping inactivated a crucial enzyme in the chemical chain.

Chopped garlic tossed directly into hot oil, or whole garlic cooked without crushing (or at least cutting off the top), will still impart the desired taste, but little or no cancer-fighting benefits. Once the compounds develop, however, they are quite stable and will withstand the heat of cooking. Milner's advice: "Crush or chop the cloves, then let them sit for 10 or 15 minutes while you prepare other ingredients. This will give the anticancer compounds a chance to form."

Garlic you buy in jars, already chopped, may be just as healthful. "When chopped garlic was stored in the freezer for weeks," says Milner, "the compounds remained active."

[http://www.eatingwell.com/health/nutrition\\_watch/garlic\\_health.html](http://www.eatingwell.com/health/nutrition_watch/garlic_health.html)

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## **Superior Snacks**

Submitted By: Katherine Streeter, RD, MBA

Snack time's a prime time to work nutritious foods into your diet. If you're hungry for something -- but not sure what - figure out how many calories to consume (50 to 100 if your next meal is within two hours; 150 to 200 if it's more than that). Then reach for one of these no-fuss, stay-full snacks that deliver energy and much-needed nutrients. Each contains at least a little protein, which will help you stay fuller longer. You can even find a few of them on-the-go, or in your office vending machine.

### **50 calories**

1-1/2 cups low-fat microwave popcorn with 3/4 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese

1/3 cup low-fat cottage cheese

1 tomato, sliced, with a small piece (about 1/2 ounce) of part-skim mozzarella cheese

3/4 cup cantaloupe, cubed, and 1 slice of deli turkey

### **100 calories**

1 fat-free pudding cup

15 baby carrots and 2 tablespoons low-fat ranch dressing

1/2 cup non-fat frozen yogurt

1 (1-ounce) box of raisins

### **150 calories**

1 cup nonfat milk and 2 gingersnaps

1 multi-grain cereal bar

1 hard-boiled egg on a slice of whole-wheat toast

1 baked apple topped with 1 teaspoon cinnamon and 1 tablespoon caramel sauce



### **200 calories**

1 cup low-fat plain yogurt with 1/2 cup raspberries and 1 teaspoon chopped walnuts

25 red grapes, 3 tablespoons feta cheese, and 6 fat-free rye crackers

1 (1-1/4-ounce) bag of peanuts

1 (1-1/3-ounce) package peanut butter-on-wheat crackers

Credit: CookingLight.com

<http://www.cookinglight.com/cooking/hl/nutrition/article/0,13803,228335,00.html>

## **Teen Tobacco Use**

Submitted by Diane S. Orr

Ninety percent of smokers begin smoking by the age of 19. Nicotine is considered the number one entrance into other substance abuse. Adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17 who smoke daily are 15 times more likely to use illicit drugs than their peers. Substance abuse is a learned behavior. Teens who begin smoking learn to use the substance. The earlier youth begin using tobacco, the more likely they will continue use into adulthood.

Why is tobacco use addicting? The nicotine in tobacco acts as a stimulant, depressant, or tranquilizer depending on the dosage. An individual builds up tolerance to tobacco use, requiring larger doses to maintain a certain physiological effect. When the body becomes accustomed to the presence of nicotine, it then requires the chemical to function normally. This level of dependence is referred to as an addiction.

Teens who are addicted to tobacco have several common experiences. A number of them tried their first cigarette in the sixth or seventh grade. Smokers often do not perform well at school. They do not feel they are a part of school and are isolated from those students who are active in sports. Most of the smokers feel they have little hope of going to college or getting a good job after high school. They also report

addictions to other substances, such as alcohol. They experience pressure from home and school, and use tobacco as a form of relief. In addition, teen smokers enjoy trying to hide their smoking or outwit school administration. This has made school more fun for some tobacco users.

Tobacco use has short-term and long-term physiologic, cosmetic, social, and economic consequences. Both cigarette smoking and smokeless tobacco use have direct health consequences. Even though people are aware of the health hazards, many find it difficult to stop using tobacco. According to a 1993 Nebraska study, rural youth are not exempt from drug use. In fact, these youth were at a greater risk of alcohol and tobacco use than their national peers.

### **Why Teens Begin Smoking**

The initiation of smoking is influenced by having a friend, particularly a best friend, who smokes. Risk factors indicate that teens who have close association with peers who use or have favorable attitudes toward tobacco use are more apt to use it themselves, especially if they are vulnerable to peer pressure. Youth associated with informal peer groups are more susceptible to tobacco use. On the other hand, memberships in pro-social youth groups decrease a youth's likelihood to begin smoking.

Peers are not the only influence on teen tobacco use. Parental smoking establishes nicotine use as normative behavior. Mass media presentation of smoking, whether in television, movie, or sporting events, makes tobacco use attractive and downplays the negative health consequences. To further compound the problem, irregular teen smokers who develop a nicotine addiction have easy access to tobacco. In fact, when there is a double standard or a permitted smoking time and location, unclear messages are sent about smoking endorsements.

### **Decreasing Tobacco Use Among Teens**

- Parents and family members can promote a tobacco-free norm by establishing a hard-line disapproval of tobacco use. Even parents who smoke can express their

regrets of becoming addicted to nicotine, which is controlling their own smoking behavior. It is important to develop clear policies of abstinence to include behavior expectations, a supportive atmosphere, and natural consequences for use.

- ♦ Peers can promote a tobacco-free environment by promoting pro-social pressures rather than influencing peers toward misconduct. Peer role models teaching refusal skills is particularly useful.
- ♦ Schools have an opportunity to teach consequences of tobacco use as a part of health education. Schools can also establish norms by having tobacco-free policies in place, involving students in the development of such policies. School administrators and teachers should correct any erroneous beliefs about actual use rates. They should also help teens identify personal values and goals and clarify how tobacco use might be in conflict with those goals.

School programs can also provide information on immediate negative consequences of tobacco use, which include decreased stamina, stained teeth, foul-smelling breath and clothes, and ostracism by nonsmoking peers. Some teens say they began smoking to be accepted by peers, cope with stress, and appear more mature. If these are important goals for teens, how can we help them find alternatives for reaching these goals?

Help teens develop skills that recognize and refute pro-tobacco use messages from the media, adults, and peers. Personal and social skills such as assertiveness, communication, goal setting, and problem-solving help teens avoid tobacco use and other risky behaviors.

- ♦ Communities can establish norms by restricting tobacco use in public places and by making access to tobacco inconvenient for children and youth. The community can offer opportunities, skill building, and rewards for pro-social involvement and community service.

Workplaces can also adopt nonsmoking policies since more than half of high school students hold part-time jobs. Malls are an area in which youth socialize, entertain themselves, and pass time in an unsupervised setting. Smoke-free malls promote a smoke-free norm in an adult environment and diminish the opportunity for tobacco use. Laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco to minors should be strictly enforced.



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## ***Parent-Teacher Conferences When the News is Not What You Want to Hear***

Submitted by Kathy Bowers

One of the hardest things teachers have to do is sit down with a parent and deliver bad news. One of the hardest things parents have to do is hear it.

Whether it's that your child seems to be having trouble learning, is thought to have a serious coordination problem, has out-of-control behavior or needs to be referred to a specialist for testing, the news is hard to take in. One thing's for sure: hearing it is painful in a way that's hard to put into words.

After you get home and have time to think, you may begin to question what you've been told:

*If what she's said is true, why did she wait so long to tell us?*

Teachers understand that the business of growing up is uneven for most kids. They tend to appreciate each child's individual pace and know it takes a long time to grow and learn. If they suspect something is not going smoothly for your child, experienced teachers don't jump to conclusions. They first want to be sure they know your child well, that she feels at home in their classroom, and that they've seen her in a variety of situations before deciding to talk their concerns over with you. It all takes time.

*Could she be wrong?*

Teachers are teachers, not medical doctors, speech therapists, or psychologists. They can't and don't diagnose. But along with their background in child development, they've seen lots of kids over the years, most of them the same age as your child. Their insights are usually accurate. At the same time, you know your child better than anyone else. Listen to your own good sense, as well as that of the teacher's.

As for being wrong? Keep in mind, that what is really wrong is when a teacher doesn't ever tell you she is concerned.

*Is she blaming us?*

Anyone who teaches young children has an appreciation for how complex development is. And also for how complicated being a parent is these days. Many teachers are parents themselves, parents who have had conferences with their own children's teachers. Teachers are aware that feeling guilty is already an occupational hazard of being a parent. Most teachers want to work with parents, not blame them.

*What do we do now?*

First, go ahead and feel angry, scared, hurt or whatever your immediate reaction is. It is understandable. It is what all parents feel when someone suggests that their child has a problem. But don't let it get in the way of checking things out. If the teacher has suggested that you see a specialist with your child, do so. You might nip a serious problem in the bud by looking into it right away. Or, you might hear that the teacher's concerns were unnecessary. At any rate it is better than not knowing. And much better than not getting help if your child needs it.

Keep in mind, though, that no matter what you find out, one thing won't change. Your child is still same child you loved before you heard this news. And always will be.

Source: The Well-Centered Child



## ***Is It Done Yet?***

Submitted by Chris Brown

**You Can't tell by Looking...**

**Use a Food Thermometer to be sure!**

Why use a food thermometer? Everyone is at risk for foodborne illness. One effective way to prevent illness is to use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of meat, poultry, and egg dishes. Using a food thermometer not only keeps your family safe from harmful food bacteria, but it also helps you to avoid overcooking, giving you a safe and flavorful meal.

### **How to use a food thermometer**

- ✓ Use an instant-read food thermometer to check the internal temperature toward the end of the cooking time, but before the food is expected to be "done".
- ✓ The food thermometer should be placed in the thickest part of the food and should not be touching bone, fat, or gristle.
- ✓ Compare your thermometer reading to the USDA Recommended Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures to determine if your food has reached a safe temperature.
- ✓ Make sure to clean your food thermometer with hot, soapy water before and after each use!
- ✓ Large-dial oven-safe or oven-probe thermometers may be used for the duration of cooking. Because there are so many types of food thermometers, it is important to follow the instructions for your food thermometer.

### **USDA Recommended Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures**

Steaks and Roasts.....	145°F
Fish.....	145°F
Pork.....	160°F
Ground Beef.....	160°F
Egg Dishes.....	160°F
Chicken Breasts.....	165°F
Whole Poultry.....	165°F

## ***Be Food Safe!*** ***Prepare With Care***

Submitted by Chris Brown

**Clean:** Wash hands and surfaces often. Wash your hands with warm, soapy water for 20 seconds before and after handling food. Wash your cutting boards, dishes, etc., with hot, soapy water after preparing each food item. Wash fruits and vegetables with cold water before using. There is no need to wash or rinse meat or poultry.

**Separate:** Don't cross-contaminate. Separate raw, cooked, and ready to eat foods while shopping, preparing, or storing. Never place cooked food on a plate which previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood.

**Cook:** Cook food to the proper temperature. Use a food thermometer to be sure!

**Chill:** Refrigerate Promptly. Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods, and leftovers within 2 hours or sooner. (One hour in air temperatures above 90°F.)

## ***Fiesta Burger***

Submitted by Chris Brown

1 ½ pounds extra lean ground beef  
¼ cup onion, chopped

2 tablespoons red or green bell pepper,  
finely chopped  
3 tablespoons picante sauce or salsa  
2 teaspoons prepared Dijon-style mustard  
1 tablespoon prepared horseradish (optional)  
Salt and pepper to taste  
4 hamburger buns  
Leaf lettuce and sliced tomatoes

Wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds before handling the meat. In a bowl, mix ground beef with onion, red pepper, picante sauce or salsa, mustard, horseradish (if desired), salt and pepper. Form into four burgers, about ¾ inch thick. Wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds after handling the meat. Using utensils, place burgers on grill that has reached medium-heat. Check each burger with a food thermometer after approximately 10 to 15 minutes. Turn burgers as needed. A hamburger is done when it reaches 160°F. Clean the thermometer between uses with hot, soapy water. Place burgers on buns and top with lettuce and tomatoes. After checking the final temperature, remember to clean the food thermometer with hot, soapy water. Makes 4 servings one hamburger each. Calories per serving: 331 (24% from fat). Fat: 8.8 grams. Fiber: 1.5 grams. Resource: Is It Done Yet? [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov)

