

Targeting Wellness Newsletter

Good News for Good Health!

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Debby Schiffer, Wellness Director for BURLCO & TRICO JIFs

“Surfing The Waves of Life” by Debby

What comes to mind when you read or hear the word “surfing”? Do you think of summer and the many courageous surfers riding the waves of the ocean? Or does your mind go to the internet, scrolling through pages and pages of information? According to the dictionary, surfing is “the sport of riding on a wave on a special board”.

Now, I’m not a surfer and won’t pretend to know what it’s like, but I can only image...

Waiting patiently for the next wave to come. Anticipating it. Preparing for it mentally and physically. Knowing there is uncertainty in whether the “ride” will be good or bad.

Who determines what is “good or bad” anyway? A wave, although ever changing, remains just a wave. Only the person experiencing the wave can “label” the outcome. It comes down to ones perception of his/her own performance.

The goal of any surfer is to “catch” the wave and glide across its surface until the wave breaks and loses its energy. Imagine how thrilling it must be to have that opportunity! What a rush of adrenaline and excitement to face the next unpredictable wave without any fear!

How would our lives be different if we were to approach daily challenges that same way? Instead of waiting in fear and worry for the next “wave to break”, we look forward to it as an opportunity for growth and learning, regardless of the outcome. It seems that as we “ride the wave of life”, WE are the ones losing OUR energy.

Perhaps you might be saying to yourself, “Yeah, but riding the waves of the ocean is a choice. The challenges I face every day are not my choice!” That may be very true, yet how much of our energy is wasted trying to control something that, like the waves in the ocean, are totally out of our power?

So much of our daily stresses and worries put unnecessary risk on our own health by trying to direct the outcome and the direction of whatever “wave” comes our way. The ONLY thing we can control is how we react to the challenge and how we look back on our “performance”.

What if...the next time you anticipate the rising of a big wave (a.k.a. challenge or situation or person☺), you prepare yourself physically and mentally by taking a few deep breaths and relaxing your body. What if ... you hop on that wave/situation, glide across its surface until it breaks; and when it does, instead of being crushed by its force, you can simply look for the gift and opportunity it offered, no matter the outcome?

Asking yourself, “what did I learn from this wave/situation that can prepare me for the next one? What changes can I make so that I am a little more prepared and resilient to get back up the next time?”

Use the situations life offers you to teach you alternate ways for facing the next “wave” perhaps with improved skills along with increased inner strength and insightful inner wisdom.

Wishing you all a thrilling rest of your summer. And enjoy surfing the waves of life....without fear!





Fruit Intake Might Be Linked To Mental Health

A recent study published by the *British Journal of Nutrition* found that eating fruit on a regular basis reduced levels of depression and anxiety. This was regardless of the portion size or type of fruit. However, frequently consuming savory, processed snacks (like potato chips and crackers) were directly linked to increased mental health challenges.

The study was not done on a large group of people (428 healthy adults), yet the results were quite compelling. The eating patterns, psychological health and lifestyle behaviors were measured through a series of questionnaires. One of the unique components of the study involved a Cognitive Failure Questionnaire (CFQ). This measures ones lapses in attention, memory and task completion to assess how ones diet might impact poor cognitive performance. The study also separated the participants' fruit intake from their vegetable intake so results could be separated based on the two food groups.

Findings: After accounting for age, Body Mass Index (BMI), general overall health, and smoking status, the researchers discovered that “frequently consuming fresh fruit, irrespective of the amount eaten, improved psychological well-being” with no association with mental lapses as measured by the CFQ.

Both fruit and vegetables are high in antioxidants, fiber, and essential micronutrients that promote brain health and function. Vegetables actually had a neutral association with mental health and cognitive functioning. This is believed to be due to the fact that during cooking, nutrients are lost. It is much more common to eat fruit in its raw form verses vegetables that are often consumed after being cooked.

Packaged and savory snacks, on the other hand, were associated with higher levels of depression and mental lapse. Many people gravitate to these types of food when they are stressed. Further research is needed to assess the exact relationship between savory snacks and mental health. What is known is that these types of food are low in the mentioned beneficial qualities of fruit (micronutrients, antioxidants and fiber) which increase inflammation and reduce neurotransmitters in the brain that can lead to poorer psychological health.

A 2019 study found that older adults who ate large amounts of saturated fat were at a higher risk for cognitive impairment and Alzheimer’s disease. Clinical Nutrition published another study in 2021 that looked at a significant sampling of adults (over 8,600) found that those who consumed the highest amount of fruit and vegetables scored 10% lower on Perceived Stress Questionnaires compared to those who ate the least of these two food groups.

The take-away message: If you want to give your mental health a boost, reach for the fresh fruit rather than the savory snack. You may find you have a clearer, calmer mind which will help in all other aspects of you life!

According to the CDC, only 1 out of 10 adults meet the recommended daily intake of five fruits and vegetables, that’s a combined number of fruits and vegetables. Not getting enough of these whole foods starves your body of much needed vitamins and nutrients that protect against chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, some cancers and obesity. And as noted above, it can lead to cognitive dysfunction, perhaps contributing to the increase in mental illness and stress related conditions we see today.

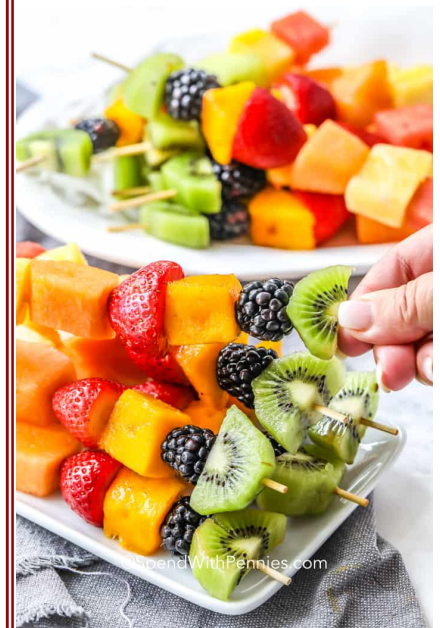
Many times it’s not the fault of the individual. It could be high cost, limited availability and access and perceived lack of cooking/preparation time that could interfere with getting adequate amounts.

For some, it’s just a matter of choice. When strapped for time, prepared and/or processed foods which are often low in these needed nutrients, are much easier and more convenient to get.

Changing ones lifestyle to more whole food options takes planning and patience. (There are many options now available that will deliver healthy meals right to your door.)

If you are looking to make some changes in your lifestyle whether it be eating more fruits and vegetables, getting more exercise, or reducing stress, we could all use a little support and accountability. As a Board Certified Health & Wellness Coach, I’m here to help in any way I can.

Reminder to Wellness Coordinators: You can use your wellness funds to purchase fresh fruit & veggies to offer your employees. Stock up the employee break room or have some delivered to each department. It’s a great grab-and-go snack for everyone!



Crispy Coconut Lime Baked Cauliflower Tacos



This recipe screamed summer to me! If you like fish tacos but are open to trying a plant-based version, this ones for you! Crispy, crunchy and creamy yet healthy! It's baked not fried!

Ingredients

Baked Cauliflower:

- 1 medium cauliflower sliced into long pieces - see note
- 1/2 cup full fat coconut milk
- Juice and Zest of 1 lime
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup panko breadcrumbs gluten free if necessary
- 1/2 cup cornmeal
- 1/2 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 1/2 teaspoons smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon turmeric
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Sweet and Sour Slaw:

- 3/4 cup chopped red cabbage
- 3/4 cup chopped green cabbage
- 1/2 cup shredded carrots
- Juice of 1 lime
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar
- 1-2 teaspoon(s) pure maple syrup
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Tangy Vegan Tartar Sauce:

- 1/3 cup vegan mayo
- 1/3 cup diced dill pickle
- Juice and Zest of 1 lime
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried dill
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Dash of sriracha optional



Servings: 4
Prep time: 30 mins
Cook time: 30 mins
Author: Jenn Sebestyen of veggieinspired.com

Instructions

Preheat oven to 400°F.

For the Slaw:

Make the slaw first so it has time to marinate and soften just a bit. Whisk all the wet ingredients together and pour them over the veggies in a medium bowl. Cover it and put it in the fridge.

For the Baked Cauliflower:

1. Whisk together the coconut milk, zest and juice of 1 lime and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a wide shallow bowl, set aside.
2. Whisk together the panko, cornmeal, shredded coconut, smoked paprika, cumin, garlic powder, turmeric, 1/2 teaspoon salt and the pepper in another wide shallow bowl, set aside.
3. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and line up your breading station in this order: cauliflower, wet batter, dry breading, baking sheet.
4. Take a slice of the cauliflower and place it in the coconut milk batter, flipping it over to make sure all sides are covered. Next, place that piece of cauliflower in the dry breading mix, pressing it down and flipping it over to make sure it's coated evenly on both sides. The breading should stick easily and not fall off. Transfer your breaded piece of cauliflower to the lined baking sheet. Repeat with all remaining slices of cauliflower. My medium sized cauliflower filled up one baking sheet perfectly!
5. Bake the breaded cauliflower for 25 to 30 minutes, flipping each piece over after 15 minutes, until both sides are golden brown and crispy.

For the Tartar Sauce:

While the cauliflower is baking, make your tartar sauce. In a small bowl, stir together all ingredients. Place in the fridge until you are ready to use it.

For the Tacos:

To assemble the tacos, place a tortilla (use corn or whatever kind you want) on a plate, top with a bit of the slaw, a piece or two of the crispy breaded cauliflower and top with a big dollop of tangy tartar sauce. Garnish with an extra squeeze of lime or dash of sriracha.

Note: The cauliflower piece can be long and fairly thin for this recipe or you can keep them in chunks if that is what you prefer.

Nutrition facts: Calculated for baked cauliflower, tartar sauce, and slaw. This does not include tortillas.

Calories: 413kcal | Carbohydrates: 47g | Protein: 10g | Fat: 22g | Saturated Fat: 12g | Sodium: 877mg | Potassium: 857mg | Fiber: 12g | Sugar: 11g | Vitamin A: 2950IU | Vitamin C: 175.7mg | Calcium: 80mg | Iron: 2.2mg

Debby Schiffer, NBHWC, Wellness Director for BURLCO & TRICO JIF

E-mail: debby_schiffer@targetingwellness.com Office: 856-322-1220

Cell: 856-520-9908