



Food & Fitness



Alice Henneman, RD, LMNT, Extension Educator

February is "Heart Month." Here's a recipe from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute's "Stay Young at Heart Program" at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/other/syah/index.htm that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol, thanks to the small amount of oil and eggs used. The liberal use of spices helps give a sweet flavor without adding a lot of sugar. (See this month's NEBLINE article on spices and herbs.)

For additional heart-healthy recipes, check the "Delicious Decisions" Web site of the American Heart Association at: www.deliciousdecisions.org.

Carrot-Raisin Bread

1-1/2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
 1/2 cup sugar
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1-1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
 1 egg, beaten
 1/2 cup water
 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
 1-1/2 cups carrots, finely shredded
 1/4 cup pecans, chopped
 1/4 cup golden raisins

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly oil two 9 x 5-inch loaf pans.
2. Stir together dry ingredients in large mixing bowl. Make a well in center of dry mixture.
3. In separate bowl, mix together remaining ingredients; add this mixture all at once to dry ingredients. Stir just enough to moisten and evenly distribute carrots.
4. Turn into prepared pan. Bake for 50 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.
5. Cool 5 minutes in pan. Remove from pan and complete cooling on a wire rack before slicing.

Yield: One loaf. Serving Size: 1/2-inch slice. Each serving provides: 99 calories, 3 g total fat, less than 1 g saturated fat, 12 mg cholesterol, 97 mg sodium

FAST MEALS
 using few ingredients

FREE Workshop

Are you tired of eating the same old foods, but you don't want your cupboards full of ingredients purchased for just one recipe? You also find yourself short on time to spend in the kitchen. At this program, you'll learn how to stock up on basic foods that quickly assemble into dozens of different and delicious meals. Alice Henneman, registered dietitian and extension educator with the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County, will give you tips and recipes to help you prepare healthy meals in a hurry from just a few ingredients.

This FREE program is offered at the Plaza Conference Center, BryanLGH Medical Center East, 1600 S. 48th St. on Monday, March 18, 7 to 8:30 p.m. To register, call BryanLGH at 481-8886 (AH)

Add a Little Spice (& Herbs) to Your Life!

Alice Henneman, MS, RD
 Extension Educator

Part 1 of 2

Spices and herbs have been used in foods for centuries. Archeologists estimate that by 50,000 B.C. primitive man had discovered that parts of certain aromatic plants help make food taste better, according to the American Spice Trade Association (ASTA).

In ancient times, spices were used to make food taste palatable. With a lack of fresh foods during colder months and with stored foods deteriorating in quality, a dash of cinnamon or pepper could help make foods more edible.

Spices were once so costly only the wealthy could afford them. In 11th Century Europe, many towns paid their taxes and rents in pepper. The reason for Columbus' voyage in 1492 was to seek a more direct passage to the rich spices of the Orient.

Flavor and Food Combinations

The following flavor and food combinations, adapted from information provided by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (www.nhlbi.nih.gov), have the added benefit of making meat, poultry, fish and vegetables tasty without adding salt.

- BEEF: Bay leaf, marjoram, nutmeg, onion, pepper, sage, thyme
- LAMB: Curry powder, garlic, rosemary, mint
- PORK: Garlic, onion, sage, pepper, oregano
- VEAL: Bay leaf, curry powder, ginger, marjoram, oregano
- CHICKEN: Ginger, marjoram, oregano, paprika, poultry seasoning, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme
- FISH: Curry powder, dill, dry mustard, marjoram, paprika, pepper
- CARROTS: Cinnamon, cloves, dill, ginger, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage

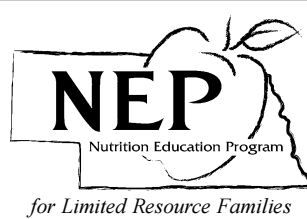
- CORN: Cumin, curry powder, onion, paprika, parsley
- GREEN BEANS: Dill, curry powder, marjoram, oregano, tarragon, thyme
- GREENS: Onion, pepper
- POTATOES: Dill, garlic, onion, paprika, parsley, sage
- SUMMER SQUASH: Cloves, curry powder, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage
- WINTER SQUASH: Cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, onion
- TOMATOES: Basil, bay leaf, dill, marjoram, onion, oregano, parsley, pepper

The flavor of certain spices and herbs has been associated with different cultures, for example:

- Oregano with Italian cooking
- Cilantro with Mexican cooking
- Ginger with Chinese cooking
- Marjoram with French cooking

see SPICE (& HERBS) on page 11

What Does 65 Pounds of Sugar Have To Do With You?



Mardel Meinke
 Extension Assistant

This is the amount of sugar consumed if a person drinks only one can of soda a day for one year. Visualize over 16 four-pound bags of sugar stacked up. Add to this the amount of sugar commonly consumed from other food sources. The amount is staggering! We all know drinking too much soda is probably not good for our health, but few of us consistently choose a healthier alternative. Here are some facts about soda that may inspire you to make some changes in your family's choice of beverages.

Q: Will I gain weight by drinking soda?

A: You will certainly add extra calories to your diet. A 12-ounce soda contains 10-12 teaspoons of sugar. Sugar content is listed in "grams" on the label. Four grams equal one teaspoon of sugar. Grab the nearest can of non-diet soda you can find and read the sugar content. It will probably contain around 40 grams of sugar which is the equivalent of 10 teaspoons. Those 10 teaspoons add about 150 calories to your diet. On a 2,000 calorie daily diet, with no other changes to your activity level, you could easily gain up to 15 pounds over a

year. It is common to purchase soda in a 20-ounce, 44-ounce, or even 64-ounce size container and sip throughout the day.

Q: Does soda contribute to tooth decay?

A: Sugar in soda certainly can contribute to tooth decay especially if the soda is consumed slowly throughout the day. Soda has no dietary benefits and is acidic which can break down tooth enamel.

Q: Is diet soda a better choice?

A: Diet soda contains almost no calories and does not contain sugar that causes tooth decay.

It contains an artificial sweetener that is not metabolized in our system. There are no nutritional benefits from diet soda when it replaces other more healthful beverages.

Q: Is the caffeine content in soft drinks harmful?

A: Consuming beverages that contain some caffeine is not harmful for most people, but consuming larger quantities of caffeinated beverages can be mildly habit-forming. Caffeine can cause hyperactivity and sleeplessness, especially in children. Individuals can also experience headaches or other symptoms if they suddenly stop consuming a large quantity of caffeinated soda. Many soft drinks contain 20 to 70 milligrams of caffeine per 12-ounce can. An 8-ounce brewed coffee contains about 80 to 175 milligrams. If a quantity of soda is consumed, the amount of

caffeine can easily be comparable to drinking several cups of coffee. Companies are not required to list the caffeine content on the label. Soft drinks that are caffeine-free usually state this on the label.

Q: Are carbonated drinks harmful?

A: Carbonated drinks are not harmful if consumed in small amounts. In some people, large amounts can cause an upset stomach and heartburn. Non-carbonated water satisfies thirst more completely.

So, the issue we face is whether to continue to drink soda at our current rate of consumption or should we seek other alternatives. "Soft drinks are a source of calories and little else" states Lisa Harnack, PhD, RD with the University of Minnesota. By the time kids reach the teen years, nearly a fourth are drinking more than 26-ounces of soda per day. Obesity is becoming a huge health concern. The percentage of overweight adolescents has nearly tripled in the past two decades. Osteoporosis is another health issue, especially among females. When soda replaces milk there could certainly be an effect on bone strength. When soda replaces juices, important nutrients such as folate, vitamin A and vitamin C are also lacking. The positive part is there are choices. *Will we choose to consume those 65 pounds or more of sugar this year, just by drinking soda?*