



Dole Diet Center

Dole Introduces “Get Up and Grow!”

Dole Challenges North Americans to Eat More Fruit and Vegetables



Spring has sprung and it's time to “Get Up and Grow!” For over a decade the Dole Nutrition Institute has brought you news on the power and benefits of a diet rich in fresh fruits and vegetables. Now, Dole is going on the road to directly challenge Americans to eat more fruit and vegetables, because frankly we aren't eating enough of them to promote good health.

According to CDC data, nearly 23% of Americans eat vegetables less than once per day while over 37% lack a daily dose of fruit. The national average for adults is just 1.6 servings of vegetables and 1.1 cups of fruit per day – about half of the recommended amount. Americans are specifically falling short on dark green, red and orange vegetables, like spinach, bell peppers and tomatoes, getting just 50% of what they need.

As for children, snacks are providing as much as 42% of their daily calories, usually in the form of energy-rich but nutrient-poor processed foods. Kids are averaging a whopping 12 to 18 teaspoons of sugar per day – just picture 18 sugar cubes! And while kids are filling up on added sugar, more than 36% of them eat fruit and vegetables less than once a day.

The most alarming fact about this is the toll poor diet is taking on the nation's health. In 2014, in just one year, the obesity rate for adults in the United States increased from 27.6% to 29.4%, and more than a third of children are considered overweight or obese. Nearly 10% of adults have diabetes, and heart disease remains the number one killer in the U.S. Both diseases can often be avoided through healthy diet and exercise.

So, how does Dole plan to help? Dole's “Get Up and Grow!” is a one-of-a-kind, healthy lifestyle initiative that will challenge everyone to add more color to their plates. Through social media, an interactive website, and even a coast-to-coast tour, Dole is out to show you that eating produce can be healthy, delicious and enormously fun. Most importantly, we are challenging everyone to take the Get Up and Grow Pledge, a customizable commitment to better overall health. To take this pledge, find delicious new recipes like our [Heart Smart Salad](#), and find out when the Get Up and Grow tour is coming to your area, visit dole.com/getupandgrow today. Together, we can build a healthier, happier world, one bite of fresh produce at a time!

Hot News



BLUEBERRIES BETTER BLOOD PRESSURE

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HEART SMART SALAD

Pump Up to Slim Down

Weight Training Linked to Least Waist Circumference Increase over Time



When it comes to staying slim, cardio exercise tends to get most of the attention. The good news is that you may not need to log endless hours running to keep your waistline from expanding. In fact, research from Harvard University suggests weight lifting could be the most effective way to keep trim around the middle – but don't discount cardio's benefits.

In a 2015 study published in *Obesity*, researchers examined exercise habits and waist sizes of 10,500 healthy men enrolled in the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study (a survey of male health professionals that has provided information for over 100 published research papers). Over a period of 12 years, participants received biennial questionnaires about their overall health including questions about their physical activity, such as time spent lifting weights and doing aerobic exercise. They also measured their waistlines.

Survey results showed men who increased their weight training by 20 minutes per day had a smaller age-related increase in waist circumference than men who spent an increased 20 minutes on moderate-to-vigorous aerobic exercise. However, weight training did not help in losing body weight, and in some cases even resulted in slight weight gain, likely due to increases in muscle mass. Adding moderate-to-vigorous aerobic exercise each day was most strongly linked to less body weight gain over the 12-year period.

Researchers suggest a combination of weight training and aerobic activity is the key to the greatest health benefits and body composition change. Weight training promotes muscle growth, while shedding fat mass, thereby increasing metabolic rate and decreasing abdominal fat. Adding cardio exercise like jogging or biking to the routine helps to shed pounds and may provide health benefits like improved immunity, brain power, and heart health.

The CDC recommends adults get 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week, plus two or more days of strength training that work all the major muscle groups. If you're just starting out with exercise, try walking for 30 minutes, five days per week, and adding strength training to the mix on two days. No weights? No problem! Pushups, yoga, and even heavy gardening count as strength training, as long as you feel the burn!

EAT YOUR GREENS TO FEED YOUR BRAIN

Low Folate Intake Linked to Risk for Probable Dementia



There's a reason why your mother always made you eat your greens. Dark leafy greens are packed with essential nutrients and are a top source of folate, an important B vitamin linked to preventing birth defects and hearing loss and may help protect against certain cancers. Research now suggests folate may help keep your aging brain sharp. In a 2015 cohort study published in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, folate intake below the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) was associated with increased risk of mild cognitive impairment and probable dementia later in life.

To determine whether certain B vitamins (including folate) are linked to cognition, researchers reviewed food frequency questionnaires and assessed nutrient intake of 7,000 women ages 65 to 79 years from the Women's Health Initiative Memory Study (an ancillary study to the Women's Health Initiative). A physician was then responsible for

determining the presence of mild cognitive impairment or probable dementia over a period of about five years.

Results showed nearly half the women fell below the folate RDA of 400 micrograms. Women below the folate RDA had two times the risk of incident mild cognitive impairment or probable dementia, even after controlling for factors like multivitamin use. This means that taking folic acid in supplement form might not fully compensate for low levels of folate in the diet.

Folate plays an essential role in helping to regulate the concentration of homocysteine in the blood. High levels of homocysteine can put you at risk for cardiovascular disease, which can increase the risk for cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's disease. Folate is also important for making DNA, RNA, and neurotransmitters, and folate deficiency has been linked to DNA damage in neurons, affecting brain function.

You can increase your daily folate intake simply by adding more greens to your plate. Just half a cup of cooked spinach or two cups of shredded Romaine lettuce will get you over 30% of the RDA. About ten asparagus spears or one artichoke also provides an excellent source. Try adding a simple green salad to your dinner for an easy way to get more folate. Looking for a folate-packed meal? Try our [Spinach & Chicken Stir-Fry Salad with Raspberries](#), which packs in 25% of your daily folate need.

Nutrition News Desk

Blueberries Better Blood Pressure

Eating Blueberries May Improve Blood Pressure and Arterial Stiffness



Is there anything the blueberry isn't good for? This tiny powerhouse was first brought to nutrition fame by the "Blueberry Man," James Joseph, Ph.D., whose research credits blueberries with the potential to reverse age-related decline in brain function. Blueberries have since been linked to stronger bones, brighter moods, and even protection against radiation-induced free radical damage. According to a 2015 study published in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, eating just one cup of blueberries per day may also

assist in lowering blood pressure.

In an eight-week, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial – the gold standard of study design – researchers from Florida State University recruited 48 postmenopausal women with pre- or stage 1-hypertension to consume either 22 grams of freeze-dried blueberry powder (which equates to one cup of fresh blueberries) or an equal amount of a placebo powder. The two different powders were similar in calories, fat, carbohydrates and taste. However, the blueberry powder naturally included additional nutrients, such as fiber, vitamin C, potassium, and anthocyanins and phenolics, powerful phytonutrients with health-promoting antioxidant properties. Participants were asked to take half of the powder mixed with water in the morning and drink the second half of the mixture in the evening.

Among the 40 women who completed the study, women on the blueberry regimen saw an average 5.1% drop in systolic blood pressure and a 6.3% decrease in diastolic blood pressure, while the women given the placebo had no significant blood pressure changes. Women receiving blueberries also showed significant 6.5% reduction in arterial stiffness, measured by brachial-ankle pulse wave velocity (baPWV), a technology that measures how fast a pulse wave travels through an arterial wall (the faster the wave, the stiffer the wall). Researchers propose these changes were in part thanks to

increased levels of nitric oxide, which is produced in the inner layer of blood vessels and plays a role in blood pressure regulation and prevention of atherosclerosis and arterial stiffness.

Try adding two half-cup servings of blueberries to your day to help with keeping your blood pressure in check. Simply snack on blueberries plain or add them to yogurt, cereal, smoothies, or salads. For a more unique way to enjoy blueberries, try our [Blueberry-Cranberry Chicken Salad](#).

To Cook or Not to Cook?

Cooking High Fat Foods May Unlock Extra Calories



No, it's not a magic trick. Past studies have shown cooking foods high in starch or protein, such as beans or meat, increases energy availability. For the first time, Harvard researchers have looked at the effect of cooking foods high in fat and its effect on caloric availability.

In a 2014 study published in the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, Harvard researchers examined the caloric availability of peanuts, which have 14 grams of fat per ounce. They fed mice a diet of four different preparations of peanuts: raw and whole, raw and blended with a food processor (like “smooth style” peanut butter), roasted and whole, and roasted and blended. Mice were fed each of the four diets for five days, with six days in between each different diet. Energy availability from food was determined by analyzing weight and excretion, adjusting for total food intake and daily activity.

Data analysis showed a diet of whole, roasted peanuts resulted in the greatest increase in body mass, showing cooked peanuts provided more energy from fat compared with raw peanuts. Researchers suggest the cooking process “pre-digests” the peanut oils, making it easier for enzymes to digest the fats once they are eaten. Interestingly, blending peanuts with a food processor did not increase energy gain in this study, but researchers think this has to do with the chewing differences between mice and humans.

These results have important implications for weight loss strategies and public health. First, standard nutritional analysis does not take into consideration the method of cooking – or lack thereof – meaning cooked and raw peanuts or other high-fat foods may actually vary in total caloric content. This is important for people counting calories and trying to lose weight. On the other hand, many parts of the world face the burden of malnutrition. Utilizing roasted rather than raw peanuts could be more efficient in promoting weight gain in malnourished children.

We love peanuts both roasted and raw – the difficulty for most people is determining the proper portion size. For whole peanuts, that's one ounce, or 28 peanuts. If you're a peanut butter lover, keep your portion size to two tablespoons, about the size of a ping pong ball. Get the health benefits of peanuts in our recipe for [Grilled Celery with Spicy Peanut Sauce](#), packed with healthy fats and a good source of vitamins E and B6 and an excellent source of vitamin K.

BONUS: Research out of the North Carolina Research Campus found peanut skins, which are packed with polyphenols linked to numerous health benefits, may be beneficial to weight loss. Rats fed the most peanut skin extract gained 21% less weight, while also enjoying 55% lower blood triglycerides and 56% lower VLDL cholesterol (the very worst kind).

Walk Your Stress Away

Group Nature Walks Are Associated with Less Depression and Stress



Picture yourself on a white sandy beach, in a field of colorful flowers, or atop a lush green mountain. Chances are you're feeling more relaxed already. Nature has a way of evoking calmness and easing stress, and research has suggested taking walks in a natural environment may be beneficial to overall well-being. This connection prompted a 2014 study published in the journal *Ecopsychology* where researchers from the UK tested if group nature walks are effective in lessening stress and depression and supporting mental well-being.

To evaluate their hypothesis, researchers looked at data from over 1,500 participants of Walking for Health, a national group walk program in England comprised of 70,000 people attending 3,400 group walks each week. Study participants were categorized as either Non-Group Walkers, meaning they did not attend the group walks, or Nature Group Walkers, describing people who attended at least two walks in natural places such as farmland, urban green spaces, or coastal areas. To determine the success of the program, each Non-Group Walker was matched and compared with a Nature-Group Walker of similar demographics and health status.

Results indicated group nature walks were significantly associated with lower depression and perceived stress, and more positive mental well-being. This happy mindset was even more pronounced in individuals who took additional nature walks outside of the group program. However, the duration of the walk had no effect, meaning just a few minutes walking in nature might be enough to turn a frown upside down, as long as you do it often.

Nature walks not only help mitigate the effects of life events on perceived stress, but also provide convenient, inexpensive, and low-risk exercise, which has been shown to reduce depression. Any natural environment works, whether it's a seascape, forest, or a tree-lined path in the city. To reap the greatest benefit, walk as often as possible, even for a short amount of time, and make it social by bringing a friend (or a few!). Several researchers have found people are more likely to walk in the company of others, and enjoy walking in a group more than walking alone. Stress can negatively affect all aspects of health, and nature walking with a group of friends could be a way to put your mind at ease.

BONUS: Research shows nature walks can not only ease your mind, but boost its power as well. A study from the University of Michigan found a walk in a tree-lined park improved memory test performance. In a related experiment, subjects who merely viewed images of the great outdoors enjoyed a 22% increase in test scores. Those who looked at city scenes actually suffered a 13% drop in scores!

Featured Recipe

Heart Smart Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 avocado, peeled, seeded and diced
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1-½ cups diced fresh DOLE® Tropical Gold® Pineapple
- 1 cup DOLE Spring Mix
- 2 teaspoons toasted pine nuts
- 2 tablespoons Sesame Ginger Vinaigrette (see recipe below)
- ¼ cup DOLE Raspberries and/or DOLE Blueberries



Serves: 2

Prep Time: 15 min.

Directions

TOSS avocado with lime juice.

LAYER avocado using a 4-inch heart cookie cutter as a guide on the serving plate. Place a 3-inch heart shaped cookie cutter on top and create a second pineapple layer.

TOSS spring mix and pine nuts with Sesame Ginger Vinaigrette and arrange on the pineapple. Scatter berries around the plate and serve immediately.

Sesame Ginger Vinaigrette:

WHISK together 1/4 cup rice vinegar, 1 tablespoon water and 1 tablespoon miso paste until blended. Stir in 1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger, 1 tablespoon soy sauce, 1 teaspoon honey, 1 teaspoon canola oil and 1 teaspoon sesame oil.

REFRIGERATE until ready to use. Makes about 1/2 cup.

EDITORIAL TEAM

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The material used as background for publications by the Dole Nutrition Institute (DNI) comes from peer reviewed medical literature, including basic laboratory studies and ongoing human clinical trials. Occasionally, we report on new discoveries, early-stage research of interest to the general public, acknowledging that such research is incomplete and findings are preliminary. The information from the DNI is not intended to replace expert advice, prescribed medications or treatment by a board certified medical doctor.

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