Summertime Fun, Sun, and Food

Ah, the lazy days of summer! For many of us, summer brings vacations, picnics, barbecues, and road trips. With all your summer activities, you might wonder where you’ll get the energy to do the things you want to do. Choosing healthy foods and beverages can help give your body the energy it needs. Eating can be tasty and fun, while still being healthy.

Some people notice that they don’t eat as much during the summer because they aren’t as hungry and are occupied with other activities. But for many of us, summer means many social activities and vacations that involve eating. Here are some common summer eating occasions and suggestions to make healthier eating choices without giving up all the flavor and fun.

Barbecues and Picnics
- Skip the hotdog; instead, choose a hamburger from 95 percent lean beef.
- To make a better burger, replace the bun with a whole grain sandwich thin and add lots of lettuce and tomatoes, but hold the mayo and cheese.
- Swap out fried chicken for grilled chicken skewers with veggies. Grilled vegetables are delicious and provide many vitamins and minerals.
- Replace mayonnaise-based potato or pasta salads with grilled potatoes and corn on the cob (hold the butter).

Sweet Treats on a Hot Day
- Rather than an ice cream cone, choose a fruit pop or frozen fruit skewers instead.
- Lemonade is delicious, but it is loaded with sugar, as are sodas. Rather than a sugar filled drink, try a fruit flavored sparkling water, or whip up a batch of fruit infused-water, also known as “aguas fresca” (see recipe on reverse).
- Freeze 100 percent fruit juice in ice cube trays and flavor plain water with a cube of fruit juice.
- Make smoothies from frozen berries, bananas, and low-fat milk or yogurt.

Road Trips
- Rather than stopping at a fast food restaurant off the highway, pack a cooler and enjoy a healthy lunch at a park instead.
- Keep an emergency snack pack in the car and a cooler stocked for lunches and snacks.
- Pay attention to hunger versus boredom. Eat your “emergency” snacks only when you’re hungry.

Ideas for the cooler include fresh fruits and veggies, hard boiled eggs, drinkable yogurt, low-fat cheese sticks, and single-serving hummus packs.

continued on reverse
Some good choices for outside the cooler include bananas, trail mix, low-sugar granola bars, single-serving boxes of cereal without added sugar, whole grain crackers, and a small jar of nut butter.

With all the eating opportunities you’ll face this summer, use balance, variety, and moderation. Pay attention to hunger and fullness, and be sure you are eating to fuel your body, not for other reasons. Balanced meals with lean protein, carbohydrates, fruits and veggies, and healthy fats will give you sustained energy to enjoy all the summertime fun!

Keep Your Feet Happy!
Nerve damage from chronic high blood sugars can make it harder for you to feel if you have hurt your foot, and poor blood flow can make it harder for you to heal. Follow these steps for good foot care.

1. Check your feet and toes daily for sores, cuts, calluses, redness, or bruises. Use a mirror to check the bottom of your feet.
2. Cut your toenails once a week if you are able. If not, see your healthcare professional.
3. Wash your feet in warm water every day, making sure to dry your feet well, especially between toes.
4. If your skin is dry, rub lotion on the top and bottom of your feet after you wash and dry them.
5. Wear comfortable, well-fitting shoes and socks. Protect your feet from injury by consistently using footwear and not going barefoot.

Fruit-Infused Water (Aguas Fresca)
This is a healthy and delicious way to stay hydrated. Peel and slice about two cups of fruit per half gallon of water and allow it to infuse in the refrigerator for at least two hours. Serve over ice. Discard after three days.

Mix and match any of the following:
- orange
- cucumber
- lemon
- lime
- watermelon
- cantaloupe
- berries
- mango
- pineapple

Be Ready for the Sun!
- Remember to slather on sunscreen if you are outside, even on cloudy days.
- Choose SPF 30 or higher.
- Reapply if you are in the water or sweating.
- If you have sensitive skin, avoid sunscreen with PABA, benzophenones, alcohol, fragrance, or preservatives.