

NUTRITION To Go

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FOOD PANTRY

Welcome to the first edition of *Nutrition To Go* with Monica Davis, RDN!

This newsletter provides information about the food you are getting from Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry, tips on food storage, nutrition information, and recipes, and tips for eating for good health.

Food Spotlight: Spring is a Great Time to Eat Greens

10 Healthiest Greens



1. Kale—one of the most nutrient-dense vegetables you can eat; best consumed raw for biggest benefit
2. Microgreens—immature greens that add a flavor punch, quick to grow; available year round
3. Collard—good source of calcium, Vit A
4. Spinach—popular and easy to use; high in folate and Vit A; incorporate in smoothies or sauté
5. Cabbage—cancer protective qualities; fermented sauerkraut has additional benefits
6. Beet Greens—often discarded, this green is rich in potassium, calcium, Vit A and fiber
7. Creasy Greens (winter cress)—a bitter, slightly spicy green said to have medicinal properties; loaded with Vitamins A, K, and C
8. Romaine—firm, crunchy green is popular in salads, good source of Vit. A
9. Swiss Chard-- used in Mediterranean cooking; in the family of beet and spinach; earthy taste
10. Arugula—also known as rocket/rucoli, peppery, full of nutrients; may help lower blood pressure.

Adapted from Autumn Enloe, MS, RD

How to Clean Greens*

*if not pre-washed

Fill your sink with cold water. With clean hands separate leaves and drop into water. Remove spoiled leaves. Swirl the leaves around to help dislodge the grit and dirt. Let soak for several minutes allowing gravity to settle the dirt. Remove the greens, shaking to get rid of excess water. Lay on paper towels or spin dry. Greens may be stored in plastic bag with a dry paper towel in the bottom. Remove as much air as possible. Refrigerate.

Best Salad Dressing

- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ⅓ cup apple cider vinegar or other vinegar
- ¼ cup honey or maple syrup (optional)
- 2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 2 garlic cloves, minced or grated (or ¼ tsp garlic powder)
- ¼ tsp salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place all the ingredients into a 2-cup mason jar.
2. Shake well until the ingredients are mixed together and the dressing is creamy.

This dressing will keep for a week in a jar in your fridge. The oil will solidify a little; run the jar under warm water and give it a shake before using it.

Adapted from
www.endlessmeal.com

How to Wear Your Greens

Q: Why did the pirate wear a lettuce leaf over his eye?

A: He wanted to have a vegetable patch.

www.tomemoffatt.com

For that matter, that extra leaf can make a mask in a pinch! 😊



What do the Dates on Food Mean?



Food packages often list a "sell by," "best by," "enjoy by," or "expiration" date. But if you don't "enjoy by" that date, does it mean you'll get "sick after"?

Nope.

Dates on food labels are the manufacturers' best guess about how long a food will taste freshest. After that date, the quality gradually declines.

"Most foods would become quite unpalatable before they would be unsafe to eat," says Roni Neff, director of the food system sustainability & public health program at the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future.

It's not time that makes most foods unsafe, notes Neff. It's that they become contaminated with bacteria from raw meat or poultry and aren't kept cold enough or cooked thoroughly.

Part of the confusion is that many people think that the government regulates expiration dates. (Other than for infant formula, it doesn't.)

That can also lead to waste.

"People who believe that date labels are federally regulated are more likely to throw out food on a precautionary basis," says Neff. Ditto for those who think that "outdated" foods are unsafe.

Most "best by" dates refer to a food's quality, not safety. If it smells and looks fine, no need to toss it. Exceptions: refrigerated foods like deli meats, smoked fish, and prepared foods, where *Listeria* typically grows.

(*Listeria* is responsible for listeriosis, the hard-to-diagnose infection that can cause miscarriage in pregnant women and symptoms like fever, diarrhea, headache, and stiff neck.)

Bottom Line: Most date labels tell you about a food's quality, not safety.

From January/February 2020 issue of Nutrition Action Healthletter

Have Type 2 Diabetes or Prediabetes?

Join BEATDiabetes to improve your health and earn chances to win \$1000!

Charlottesville area residents with Type 2 Diabetes and Prediabetes can join BEATDiabetes for FREE, receive diabetes care and prevention tips by text, and earn chances to win the \$1000 BEATDiabetes Drawing. To learn more or to sign up, go to www.beatT2diabetes.com or call 434-234-7676.



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Ask Monica

Q: My potatoes have sprouted. Can I still eat them?

A: Yes, if the potatoes are still hard, but have begun to sprout, you may cut the sprout out. If the potato is soft or green, it is best to discard, or plant!