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Add a Little *DASH* to Your Diet:

New Dietary Guidelines Endorse a Healthy Eating Plan

DASH stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension. It's a meal plan based on scientific research that shows eating a variety of foods from certain food groups can reduce high blood pressure. The benefits of DASH don't stop at controlling blood pressure; it is an all around, heart-healthy meal plan that many have adopted as part of a health-conscious lifestyle. The new Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 encourages following an eating plan, such as DASH as a simple way to follow the new recommendations.

DASH at a Glance:

Good dietary habits can promote health and reduce risk for major chronic disease. The DASH meal pattern is:

- Rich in fruits and vegetables
- Rich in low-fat dairy products
- Low in saturated fat, total fat & cholesterol
- Rich in heart-healthy minerals, like magnesium, potassium, and calcium

How does DASH measure up to the new Dietary Guidelines?

The new guidelines encourage eating a *variety* of nutrient-dense foods from each food group and there is a call to eat *more* of the "healthy stuff." The "healthy stuff" includes eating 4 servings of fruits and 5 servings of vegetables. That's right in line with the DASH eating plan. The dairy group has been upgraded to 3 *cups* of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products. This mirrors the dairy-rich DASH plan. The new Guidelines and DASH both go lean on the meat group, emphasizing low saturated fat and cholesterol. Finally, both plans emphasize eating whole-grains, which could be called the "wise carbs", since they are packed with fiber.

DASH is the right way to go for a simple eating plan for heart health and it delivers the nutrition recommended by the *new* Dietary Guidelines.



A Sample Day on the DASH:

<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Dinner</i>
2/3 cup bran cereal 1 cup fat free milk 1 slice whole wheat bread 2 tsp jelly 1 medium Banana 1 cup fruit yogurt, non-fat, no sugar added	3/4 cup Chicken Salad 2 slices whole wheat bread 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard Green Salad: 1 cup lettuce 1/2 cup fresh cucumber slices 1/2 cup tomato wedges 2 Tbsp ranch dressing, fat-free 1/2 cup fruit cocktail, juice pack	3 oz Lean Beef 2 Tbsp beef gravy, low-fat 1 cup green beans 1 small baked potato 2 Tbsp sour cream, fat-free 2 Tbsp grated cheddar cheese natural, reduced-fat 1 Tbsp chopped scallions 1 small, whole wheat roll 1 tsp soft margarine 1 small apple 1 cup fat-free milk <hr/> <i>Snack:</i> 1/3 cup almonds 1/4 cup raisins 1 cup orange juice

Tips for starting the DASH eating plan:

- Make just a few changes at a time. For example, if you eat vegetables only at dinner, try cutting up carrot sticks and packing some in your lunch.
- Sneak milk into meals by adding milk instead of water to your soups and hot cereals. Choose milk-based desserts such as low-fat puddings.
- Snack on fruits and vegetables. Mix nuts with raisins and other dried fruit for a tasty treat.
- Start your day with whole grain cereal, fat-free milk, and sliced bananas.
- Make a chocolate milk mustache: grab a glass of low-fat chocolate milk instead of a candy bar.
- If you are taking blood pressure medication, don't stop using it. Follow the DASH plan and talk to your doctor about your current drug treatment.

For more DASH menus and recipes visit the DASH website, created by Nutrition Education Services/Oregon Dairy Council and General Clinical Research Center at Oregon Health & Science University:

http://www.oregondairycouncil.org/dash_diet/