



Nutrition News You Can Use

May/June 2009

Number 7

In This Issue

- What's the date mean??
- Nutrition and the athlete – fluid replacement
- Fruits and vegetables – key to balance
- Trans fats update
- Plain language on labels – top 8 allergens
- What's a whole grain pasta?

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What's the date mean??

There are different types of dating on products and knowing what each means will help consumers answer their food safety questions.

Open dating on a food product is a date stamped on the package to assist the store in determining how long to display the product for sale.

An open date can also help the purchaser to know the time limit to purchase or use the product at its best quality. It is not a safety date and after the date passes the product should still be safe if handled properly.

The USDA recommends products should be kept at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below or for the recommended storage time. By federal regulations product dating is not required except for infant formula and some baby food.

Open dating is primarily found on perishable foods such as meat, poultry, eggs and dairy products. Other types of dates include:

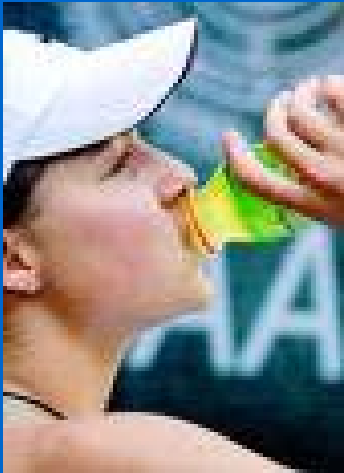
- Sell-by date tells the store how long to display the product for sale. The product should be bought before this date expires.
- Best if used by (or before) date is recommended for best flavor or quality. This is not a purchase or safety date.
- Use-by date is the last date recommended for use of the product while at peak quality. This date is determined by the manufacturer of the product.
- Closed or coded dates are packing numbers used by the manufacturer. These usually appear on shelf-stable products such as cans and boxes of food.

If product dates are not a guide for safe use of a product, how do consumers know how long to store the product and still use it at top quality?

Products should be purchased before the date expires. Also remember if the food is perishable take it home immediately after purchase and refrigerate it promptly or freeze it if you can't use it within the recommended time. Once a perishable item is frozen, it doesn't matter if the date expires because frozen foods are continuously safe.

Nutrition and the athlete - Fluid replacement

Of all nutritional concerns for athletes the most critical is proper fluid hydration. One of the key factors of fluid for the athlete is for body temperature control. Lack of this element above all others has the ability to hinder performance and lead to more serious complications.



A fluid loss of as little as 2 - 3 percent of body weight impairs performance. Fluid losses of 7 - 10 percent of body weight will lead to heat stroke and death. For a 150-pound person, a 2 - 3 percent fluid loss equates to 3 to 4 1/2 pounds of body weight.

Research shows that endurance athletes who are involved in physical activity for more than an hour and a half can produce up to three quarts of sweat per hour. That equals a loss of 6 pounds of body weight.

Fluid replacement is a special concern for children involved in sports. Children have lower sweating capacity and they tolerate temperature extremes less efficiently than adults. Young children also produce more heat during exercise. They typically take 2 to 3 days longer to acclimatize to exercise during warm weather. It is essential to keep the water bottle handy during all sports activities for children.

To best handle your fluid needs, the following simple rules can guide you as you exercise:

Seven Basic Rules for Fluid Replacement

1. Cool fluids are best (40 - 50o F).
2. Plain water adequately replaces fluid for most athletes. Sports drinks or diluted juices that have less than 10 percent carbohydrate concentration may also be fluid replacers. On sports drink labels look for carbohydrate contents of less than 24 grams per 1 cup (8 oz). Dilute fruit juices by mixing one part juice with one part water. Extremely concentrated beverages such as carbonated sodas, undiluted fruit drinks and juices, and high carbohydrate supplements will slow absorption rates and are not useful for immediate fluid replacement.
3. Don't depend on thirst. By the time you feel thirsty, your body has already started to dehydrate.
4. Weigh before and after an athletic event. Replace 2 cups of fluid for every 1 pound lost.
5. Sip water or dilute juices (less than 24 grams of carbohydrate per cup) during competition or training. Athletes involved steadily in competition or training for longer than 90 minutes may benefit by using cool, pleasantly flavored and lightly sweetened beverages such as diluted fruit juices or sports drinks. These beverages provide both a fluid replacement and are a source of carbohydrate fuel.

Suggested protocol for fluid replacement:

Drink 2½ cups fluid 1 to 2 hours before competition or training. Follow this by

drinking about 1¼ cups fluid 15 minutes before the event.

Drink 3 to 6 oz (⅓ to ¾ cup) every 10 to 15 minutes during competition or workout.

After competition or workout, weigh and replace every pound of lost weight with 2 cups fluid.

Fruits and vegetables - key to balance

Nutrition from fruits and vegetables helps families live healthier and eat better. Although many people know they should eat more fruits and vegetables to maintain a healthy diet, chances are they aren't eating enough. Families should look at their dinner plate and see an amount of fruits and vegetables that equals half the plate. Add fruits and vegetables into lunch and breakfast.



Not eating enough fruits and vegetables means missing out on their benefits. Research shows that fruits and vegetables are critical to promoting good health. People who add a small amount of fruits and vegetables into their diet are likely to have reduced risk of many health problems, including heart disease, blood pressure, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers.

Fruits and veggies also provide fiber that helps fill you up and keep your digestive system happy while adding color, texture, and appeal to you plate.

So how much is enough? That depends. Based on a 2,000-calorie diet, a person should have 2 cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables each day. More specific data factoring in age and physical activity can be found at the Center for Disease Control's website, www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.com.

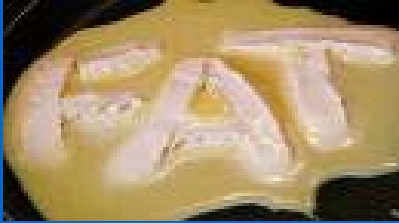
Here are a few suggestions to put more fruits and vegetables on the plate:

- Add strawberries, blueberries or bananas to your waffles, pancakes, cereal or toast.
- Eat fruit as a mid-morning or afternoon snack.
- Layer yogurt, low-fat granola and fruit in varying proportions to make a tasty parfait any time of day.
- Omelets are made for creativity. Try adding in green peppers, spinach, mushrooms or tomatoes for a healthier kick.
- Sandwiches are equally customizable. Cucumbers, lettuce, tomatoes, green peppers, and spinach go great with the usual meat and cheese.
- Be daring – have no sandwich at all. Instead, serve tuna or chicken salad over sliced tomatoes, or in a pretty tomato cup.
- Jazz up pasta dishes with tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, or peas.
- Canned, dried and frozen fruits and vegetables are also good options. Look for fruits without added sugar or syrups, and vegetables without added salt, butter or cream sauces.

These and other tasty options will keep meals colorful, creative, and healthy.

Trans fat update

Trans fats created through the industrial process of partial hydrogenation of oils tend to increase LDL cholesterol (the bad cholesterol) while decreasing HDL cholesterol (the good cholesterol). Both conditions, increasing LDLs and decreasing HDLs, are known to raise the risk for cardiovascular disease and



possibly other chronic diseases. On the other hand, CLA, or conjugated linoleic acid, a "natural" trans fat found in meat, milk, butter and eggs, seemed to have escaped this indictment. In fact, some studies have shown beneficial properties of CLA supplements in the area of weight management and even anticancer properties. Yet others have found an increase in adverse effects such as an increase in C-reactive protein levels (a marker of inflammation that may lead to heart disease or insulin resistance). Additional studies are now underway to understand the physiological impact of the different forms of trans fats.

Researchers reported at the 2008 American Heart Association Meeting that it is not only partially hydrogenated oils that are problematic; natural trans fats such as CLA also contribute to the risk of coronary heart disease when ingested in *high* amounts. Dr. Ingeborg Brouwer and colleagues conducted a nine-week crossover study comparing the lipid profiles of subjects consuming 18.9g/day of either CLA partially hydrogenated trans fats or a cholesterol-neutral oleic acid (a primary fatty acid found in olive oil as well as animal sources). Results revealed that both types of trans fats—those created through partial hydrogenation as well as CLA from natural sources—raised the LDLs of the human test subjects when compared to oleic acid's effects. The HDL, or good cholesterol, was lowered by both types of trans fats. Last, the subjects' triglycerides were increased slightly by both types of trans fats when compared with oleic acid.

What do these findings mean for us?

First of all, natural trans fats occur typically at a much lower concentration than in processed foods. Second, consumers who are following the recommendations of the *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* need not be unduly concerned as these guidelines already call for reducing the amount of fat, including trans fats, in our diets by choosing:

- lean meats and poultry low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol and
- low-fat or fat-free milk—or an equivalent amount of low-fat yogurt and/or low-fat cheese—every day.

There will be many more studies on the health impact of trans fats. While we wait for the results, it is reassuring to know that a low-fat choice is almost always the healthiest choice.

Plain language on labels - top 8 allergens

If you or someone in your family suffers from a food allergy, you know how difficult it can be to decipher the food label if the product contains an offending substance. Food manufacturers must disclose in plain language whether products contain any of the top eight food allergens.

While more than 160 foods have been identified as sources of allergic reactions, 90 percent of the allergic reactions associated with foods are caused by one of eight foods: milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, peanuts, tree nuts, wheat, and soy.

Manufacturers have two options for declaring the presence of these food substances in foods. One is to add a "contains" statement next to the ingredient list that identifies the types of allergenic foods contained in the product; for example, "contains milk and wheat." The other option is to place the food source in parentheses next to ingredients derived from one of the eight potential offending foods classes, such as sodium caseinate (milk), albumin (egg).

The name of the allergen only needs to appear once in the ingredient statement. For example, if a product contains both milk and a milk-derived ingredient such as whey, the manufacture is not required to define whey as also being a milk product.

In the case of nuts and seafood, the specific type of nut (e.g., peanuts, almonds, cashews) or species of fish (e.g., cod, bass) or shellfish (shrimp, lobster) must be specified. Also, the presence of such ingredients must be listed even if they are contained only in colorings, flavoring agents, or spice blends used in the product.

The labeling law applies to all foods regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) except raw agricultural commodities, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, and highly refined oils that have been bleached and deodorized. What this means is that you may not be able to tell from the label that "vegetable oil" really means "soybean oil." The protein level is so low in highly refined oils that the FDA does not have good evidence for including them in the list of ingredients that need allergen labeling.

The law applies to pre-packaged foods sold in retail and food-service establishments, but not to products or meals ordered in restaurants or delis. It's up to the consumer to ask questions about ingredients and preparation methods when eating at restaurants, delis or any place outside the consumer's home.

Products free from gluten were identified on food products beginning in August 2008. Gluten describes a group of proteins found in certain grains such as wheat, barley and rye. It is of concern because people with celiac disease cannot tolerate gluten. An estimated one in every 133 people in the United States currently has celiac disease, and there is some concern that the numbers are rising.

What's a whole grain pasta?

Interest in eating whole grains is increasing among consumers. There is now a wide variety of whole grain pasta shapes (both flat and tubular) and many brands from which to choose, while several years ago they were virtually impossible to find in grocery stores.

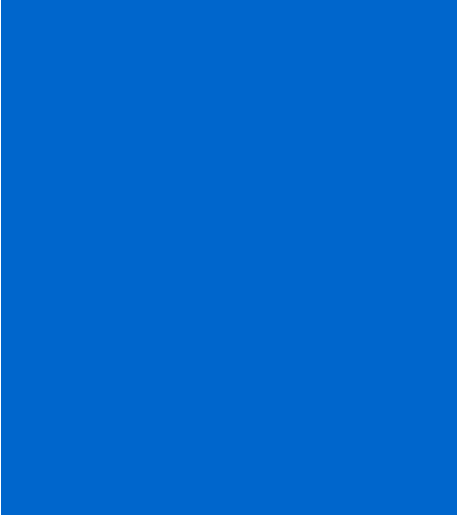


Whole grains include all three portions of a grain kernel: bran, endosperm and germ. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend "making half your grains whole" or eating 3 or more servings of whole grain foods daily.

Whole grains are healthful. Because whole wheat pastas contain whole grain, they have more vitamins, minerals, protein (7 to 10 grams per 2 ounce dry serving) and phytonutrients than refined grain pastas have. They are an excellent source of fiber, with two or three times the fiber (5 to 7 grams per 2 ounces) compared to refined-wheat pasta (with about 2 grams per 2 ounces). Some brands of whole-wheat pasta, and all white pasta, are made with flour enriched with certain vitamins and minerals.

Manufacturers often blend whole durum with refined semolina flours to make pasta. In order to state that they are whole grain, pastas must contain at least 51 percent whole wheat or another whole grain flour. If they contain less than 51 percent whole grain flour, the package may read "made *with* whole grain." While some whole grain pastas are made with 51 percent whole grain flour, the minimum amount, other pasta brands contain 100% of their grain ingredients as whole grains. Pastas made with a blend of whole and refined grains may be less coarse and heavy, and have a less gummy texture than 100 percent whole grain pastas. These blended whole wheat/refined wheat pastas offer superior nutrition compared with refined-semolina-only pasta, plus have a smooth texture and an appealing flavor.

Some companies describe their whole-wheat pasta as made from "whole durum wheat" while others list "whole semolina." Both terms describe coarsely ground



whole durum wheat. Whether refined white durum wheat or whole durum wheat, durum wheat is the preferred wheat for use in pasta and is high in protein, especially gluten.

Multi-grain pasta may or may not be whole-grain. Some multigrain pasta brands contain whole durum wheat flour blended with other whole grains such as oat barley and spelt. Pastas made from whole grain kamut, farro, brown rice, quinoa, corn and soba/buckwheat are also sold. Some pastas have non-grain ingredients, too, such as soy or other legumes.

While all brands of whole wheat or whole wheat/multi-grain pastas offer better nutrition than refined pastas, not all of them taste good. Some are excellent, however. Price is not an indicator of taste. Do your own price and taste test comparisons to find the right brand for you and your family.