Does “Meatless Monday” make sense for your family?

The new Dietary Guidelines (Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010) recommend that we cut down on our meat consumption as a way to decrease the amount of saturated fat we get in our diet. As you probably know, saturated fat is the type of fat that is solid in room temperature and is found in medium and high fat meats such as bacon, hamburger, bologna, hot dogs, etc. It is also found in large quantity in cheeses, sour cream, cream cheese, butter and even whole milk. As a way to cut down on saturated fats, we could prepare a dish with tofu (soybean product) a bean night, or lentil or split pea soup, vegetarian style, without adding meat. Here are some recipes that your family might really love. It’s a great way to get started on a more healthful lifestyle!

CRISPY TOFU FINGERS

Tofu can be used as the protein part of a dinner, as an appetizer or in sandwiches. When you go out for dinner with a non-vegetarian group and want to take along the ingredients for your “meat alternative,” this simple recipe works well. Some people like tofu soft, others like it crisp, so experiment with the cooking time.

- vegetable oil for coating the baking sheet
- 12 oz. firm tofu
- ½ cup thick sauce (vegetarian oyster style sauce, sweet and sour sauce, BBQ sauce or other favorite thick sauce)
- salt, garlic power or other seasoning to taste.

Coat the cookie sheet with oil. Slice the tofu lengthwise, about ¼ inch thick, and pat dry. Put the sauce in a dish, and dip each piece of tofu into the sauce, coating well. Place the tofu on the cookie sheet in a single layer (pieces can be touching but should not overlap). Sprinkle on the seasoning, and bake at 350°F for 20 to 30 minutes, depending on how crisp you like your tofu. Halfway through the cooking time, flip to brown both sides.

Makes 3 servings (4oz. Each)
Good source: calcium, iron, zinc, folate, thiamin

Analysis was done using firm tofu coated with barbecue sauce.


Contributed by Carol Giesecke, PhD, RD, LDN
Program Leader, Family and Consumer Sciences
Setting Health Goals for the Entire Family

Now that spring is approaching, you might be thinking of ways to spend more time outdoors. This is a great time to think about setting health goals for the entire family. Setting family goals means helping your child set health goals too. This is a great opportunity to help kids learn the importance of healthier food choices and being active by encouraging kids to set health goals! They need to be part of the discussion so that they feel involved and will feel more committed to working on the health goal.

Plan to set healthy goals with children.
• During a family meal, discuss the reason for health goals.
• Talk about how doing healthful activities keeps our body feeling great and growing strong.
• Encourage the kids to talk about their ideas about being healthy.
• Discuss how important each person ideas are to helping the family pick a healthy goal.

Ideas for setting healthy goals for kids and the family
• Start off the each day with breakfast.
• Use small salad plates for the entrée to help with portion control.
• Eat with the entire family at the kitchen table.
• Wash hands and wrists for at least 20 seconds.

Keep your kids motivated to achieve their health goal
• Use a kid-friendly health tracking sheet to track your family and individual goals.
• Post your family tracking sheet on the refrigerator or family bulletin board.
• Have your child color or post a star each time the goal is completed.
• Be excited and enthusiastic! This will help kids stay involved and motivated.

Setting goals can be a rewarding and bonding experience for the whole family. Work together as a family to change habits for a more healthful lifestyle.

Contributed by Stefanie Engram
EFNEP Education Assistant
Most women generally fall into a single body shape classification—the Apple or the Pear shape. These body shapes have significant implications for both health and weight loss. However, recent research has shown that a woman’s figure can be classified in several other ways: hourglass, spoon, rectangle and triangle.

**Hourglass**
The bust and hips are generally the same circumference—though the bust can be up to 1” larger than the hips. The waist is then 9” or smaller than the bust.

**Spoon**
The hips are 2” or larger than the bust. The waist is less than 9.25” smaller than the bust.

**Rectangle**
The bust and hips are generally the same circumference. The waist is less than 9” smaller than the bust.

**Triangle**
The bust is 3.6” larger than the hips and waist is less than 9” smaller than the bust.

**Apples or Pears?**
Apple and pear classifications are useful in determining body fat distribution. It is widely thought that there are more health risks for the apple shape. This can be determined by measuring your waist to hip ratio. A ratio of 0.8 or above indicates that you are an apple shape. A ratio under 0.8 means you are a pear shape. For instance, if you waist measures 31” and your hips are 42”, your ratio is .734, which is less than 0.8, and classified as pear shape.

**Apples**
The apple shaped woman carries most of her body fat in the abdominal region. She will generally have narrow hips, larger breasts, and a relatively large waist. Apple shaped women have more fat surrounding their internal organs, which is known as visceral fat. This kind of fat presents more risks than fat under the skin or subcutaneous fat. Such fat decreases insulin sensitivity, raises blood pressure, and decreases levels of “good” (HDL) cholesterol. These are all key indicators for heart disease and diabetes. The higher the waist to hip ratio, the higher the risk.

**Pears**
The pear shaped woman carries most of her body fat around the hips, thighs, and buttocks. She will generally have a smaller upper body (smaller breasts) and a heavier lower body. The risks for the overweight pear shaped woman are different than the apple shape. According to some studies, a pear shaped woman may experience limited cognitive function, i.e. memory loss.

Regardless to your body shape, which is genetically determined, these findings strengthen the case for maintaining a healthy weight. The most important message that is being conveyed is that there is little that we can do about our natural body shape; however, we can do something about our weight. Do your level best to choose your meals and snacks wisely and remember to stay fit.

Contributed by Donna Brown Nutrition Agent

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In the last few years, yoga and Pilates have become popular methods for getting more fit. Some of the postures used in each are similar, but there are differences.

Yoga originated in India around 5,000 years ago. Hatha yoga, popular in America, is really just one of the yoga paths meant to transform the body so a person will be more able to grow spiritually. Yoga itself is not a religion or a system of beliefs. Instead it is a set of techniques that can allow anyone to find their own spirituality. That is why people of all religious backgrounds feel comfortable practicing yoga.

Hatha yoga uses controlled breathing exercises called pranayama (pran-e-yama) and postures called asanas to produce deep relaxation. Teachers of yoga believe that through the spiritual quest associated with yoga practice, one will also gain health, happiness, tranquility and knowledge. Yoga is frequently used to enhance the ability to meditate.

There are many schools of yoga, so no two yoga teachers or yoga classes will be alike. It is estimated that there are over 200 different yoga asanas, so the combinations are endless.

In contrast, Joseph Pilates developed his techniques that he called Contrology in the early 20th century. He used controlled breathing and various exercises sometimes based on yoga asanas to bring oxygen to the muscles and to develop core strength in people who needed rehabilitation. The exercises focus on the muscles in the abdomen, lower
School cafeterias would have to hold the fries and give children more whole grains, fruits and vegetables under the government’s first major nutritional overhaul of students’ meals in 15 years.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) proposal applies to lunches subsidized by the federal government. The guidelines would require the schools to cut the sodium in meals by more than half, use more whole grains, and serve low-fat milk. They also would limit kids to only one serving of starch vegetables per week, so schools couldn’t offer french fries every day.

This proposal comes just weeks after President Obama signed into law a child nutrition bill that will help schools pay for the healthier foods, which are often more expensive. The subsidized meals that would fall under the guidelines are served as free and low-cost meals to low income children and have long been subject to government nutrition standards.

The new law, for the first time, will extend nutrition standards to other foods sold in schools that are not subsidized by the federal government, including “a la carte” foods on the lunch line and snacks in vending machines.

The new USDA guidelines would:

• Establish the first calorie limits for school meals.
• Gradually reduce the amount of sodium in school meals over 10 years with the goal of reducing sodium by more than half.
• Ban most trans fats.
• Require more servings of fruits and vegetables.
• Require all milk served to be low fat or nonfat, and require all flavored milk to be nonfat.
• Incrementally increase the amount of whole grains required, eventually requiring that most grains be whole grains.
• Improve school breakfasts by requiring schools to serve a grain and a protein, instead of one or the other.

According to the USDA, about a third of children six to 19 years of age are obese or overweight and the number of obese children had tripled in the past few decades.

**Contributed by Denise Pinkett-Wynn, Nutrition Educator**

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From page 2

back, hips and buttocks. During his lifetime, Mr. Pilates worked frequently with dancers who were prone to injury and pain. Eventually his techniques became popular with others who just wanted to become more fit and attractive. His clients not only exercised on a mat, but also used an apparatus called a Reformer that produced resistance on the muscles with ropes and springs.

Both Pilates and yoga:

• Emphasize the flow of movement to encourage flexibility.
• Improve balance, coordination, strength and posture.
• Can be adapted for individuals who may have physical limitations.

• Have been used with people suffering from chronic diseases including heart disease, fibromyalgia, scoliosis, Parkinson disease and cancer.
• Improve posture and reduce stress in children.

Even though there are good DVDs and books on Pilates and yoga can be purchased, you will learn faster and will have better technique if you attend at least a few live classes. Many local fitness centers now have certified teachers and in larger towns there are studios dedicated to yoga or Pilates.

**Contributed by Donna Brown**