



HEALTHY AT 80

www.communityhealthdayton.org

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COOL FACT: FROZEN FOODS CAN BE GOOD FOR YOU

What is processed food? You may be thinking deli meat, fast food, chips and snacks, or sugary soda. Some processed foods are not good for you. But you don't have to avoid them all if you're trying to eat healthy.

Most foods are processed – changed, prepared or packaged – in some way before we eat them. They fall somewhere on a spectrum from minimally processed, like salad mix, bagged dry beans, roasted nuts or frozen fruits and vegetables (still very healthy foods!), to highly or ultra processed like ready-to-eat meals and snack foods (foods we should keep to a minimum).

Some processed foods have ingredients added, like sweeteners, oils, colors and preservatives. Some are fortified to add nutrients like fiber, calcium or vitamin D. Some are prepped for convenience (washed or chopped) or packaged to last longer. Processes such as pasteurizing milk, canning fruits and vegetables, and vacuum packing meats help prevent spoilage and increase food safety. Even foods labeled “natural” or “organic” can be processed.

If you eat a lot of highly processed foods, you risk getting too much sodium, added sugars and unhealthy fats. So what can you do if want to eat healthier? While it's tempting to throw all “processed food” under the bus, the reality is you can't avoid it entirely... nor should you! The key is knowing how to identify healthier processed foods and make smart choices in the grocery store and restaurants. Read on to learn how frozen and canned options make it easy to add fruits and vegetables to meals and boost the nutrition factor.

Healthy at 80 is Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton's informational newsletter on healthy living, created with the goal of helping you stay healthy and thriving through 80 years old and beyond! To read more Healthy at 80 articles, please visit the archives on our website: www.communityhealthdayton.org/healthyat80

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Keep frozen fruits and veggies on hand to add color to any meal.



HEALTHIER PROCESSED FOODS

Tips for choosing healthier processed foods:

- ◇ **Enjoy frozen and canned produce.** Frozen and canned fruits and vegetables are convenient and affordable options that can be just as nutritious as fresh. Look for varieties without salty sauces and sugary syrups. Compare label info and choose items with the lowest amounts of sodium and added sugars.
- ◇ **Make smart choices when eating out.** Choose restaurants where food is cooked to order or there are designated healthier menu options. Ask how food is prepared, which items are made to order in-house vs. prepackaged, and if you can make substitutions. Request sauces, dressings and condiments on the side so you can decide how much is added.
- ◇ **Swap out highly processed foods with less-processed options.** Some examples: Make your own simple olive or canola oil and vinegar vinaigrette instead of buying bottled salad dressing. Add frozen fruit to plain oatmeal, cereal and yogurt instead of buying the sweetened or flavored kind. Choose canned and frozen produce without salty sauces and sugary syrups. Slice up leftover grilled chicken for sandwiches instead of always using packaged lunch meat.
- ◇ **Grow fruits and vegetables.** If space is a challenge, look at container, indoor or community gardening. You'll love the taste of ultra-fresh produce, and kids may be more likely to try fruits and veggies they've helped grow! If you don't have a green thumb, shop the local farmers' market for seasonal produce.
- ◇ **Snack smarter.** Think crunchy nuts and seeds, cut-up veggies for dipping, fruits that hit the sweet spot, and easy homemade popcorn. Package up these healthier snacks in small containers and they're just as convenient as that bag of chips!
- ◇ **Watch out for sneaky sodium.** Processed foods that can contribute a lot of sodium to your diet include breads, pizza, sandwiches, cold cuts and cured meats, soups, burritos and tacos, savory snacks, chicken, and cheese. And don't rely on taste alone. Foods with excess sodium sometimes don't taste salty, like some breads, cereals and pastries.



KNOW WHAT YOU NEED

While adults believe immunization is important, a recent national survey showed that most adults are not aware that they need vaccines throughout their lives to protect against diseases like shingles, pertussis, and hepatitis.

Even if you got all your vaccines as a child, the protection from some vaccines can wear off over time. You may also be at risk for other diseases due to your age, job, lifestyle, travel, or health conditions.

All adults should get: Flu vaccine every year to protect against seasonal flu. Td/Tdap to protect against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough).

Based on your age, health conditions, vaccines you received as a child, and other factors, you may need additional vaccines such as:

- Chickenpox • Hepatitis A • Hepatitis B • Human Papillomavirus (HPV) • MMR • Meningococcal • Pneumococcal • Shingles



<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/adults/downloads/fs-three-reasons.pdf>

READY FOR SCHOOL?

Make sure those vaccine records are up to date!

Getting vaccinated according to the recommended immunization schedule is one of the most important things a parent can do to protect their child's health.

Diseases can quickly spread among groups of children who aren't vaccinated. Whether it's a baby starting at a new child care facility, a toddler heading to preschool, a student going back to elementary, middle or high school – or even a college freshman – parents should check their child's vaccine records.

Child care facilities, pre-school programs, schools and colleges are prone to outbreaks of infectious diseases. Children in these settings can easily spread illnesses to one another due to poor hand washing, not covering their coughs, and interacting in crowded environments. When children are not vaccinated, they are at increased risk for disease and can spread disease to others. Parents should check with their child's doctor to make sure their vaccines are up to date.

NUTRITION BITES!

Stretch your produce and your dollars by knowing how to store fresh fruits and vegetables.

- ⇒ Fruits like apples, bananas and pears give off ethylene gas, which can make other produce ripen and rot faster. To maximize freshness, store vegetables and fruits separately.
- ⇒ Some vegetables don't even need to go in the fridge! Onions, Garlic, Hard Squash (Winter, Acorn, Spaghetti, Butternut), Sweet Potatoes, and Potatoes can all be stored in any cool, dark place.
- ⇒ Don't wash, cut or peel fruits or veggies until you're ready to eat them (except lettuce and greens, which can be pre-washed).

Get Fresh WITH FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Stretch your produce and your dollars by knowing how to store fresh fruits and vegetables.

1 Pantry: Don't wash, cut or peel until you're ready to eat (except lettuce and greens).

2 Countertop: Don't wash, cut or peel until you're ready to eat (except lettuce and greens).

3 Refrigerator: Always refrigerate cut or peeled produce.

Fridge temperature should be at 40° F or below.

THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDS
4-5 SERVINGS of fruits and vegetables each per day.

PANTRY
Pack away in a cool, dark place like your pantry or cellar:
ONIONS, GARLIC & SHALLOTS **SWEET POTATOES, POTATOES, & YAMS**
HARD SQUASH **WATERMELON**
(Winter, Acorn, Spaghetti, Butternut)

COUNTERTOP
Store loose and away from sunlight, heat and moisture:
BANANAS **STONE FRUIT**
CITRUS FRUIT Ripen avocados, apricots, nectarines, peaches and plums in a paper bag, then move to the fridge where they'll last a few more days.
Store lemons, limes, oranges and grapefruit loose or in a mesh bag. Refrigerate for longer storage. **TOMATOES**

REFRIGERATOR
Store in plastic bags with holes, in your produce drawer, unless noted:
APPLES & PEARS
BEETS & TURNIPS Remove greens and keep loose in the crisper drawer.
BERRIES, CHERRIES & GRAPES Keep dry in covered containers or plastic bags.
BROCCOLI & CAULIFLOWER
CARROTS & PARSNIPS Remove greens.
CELERY
CORN Store inside their husks.
CUCUMBERS, EGGPLANT & PEPPERS Store on the upper shelf, which is the warmer part of the fridge.
FRESH HERBS Except basil. Keep stems moist and wrap loosely in plastic.
GREEN BEANS
LETTUCE & LEAFY GREENS Wash, spin or pat dry, wrap loosely in a dishtowel or paper towels and place in a plastic bag in vegetable drawer. Keep stems moist.
MELONS
MUSHROOMS Keep dry and unwashed in store container or paper bag.
PEARS
ZUCCHINI & SUMMER/ YELLOW SQUASH

Delicious & Nutritious

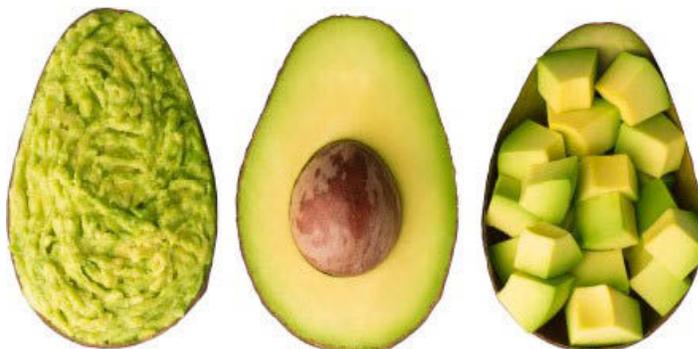
CHOCOLATE CHIA PUDDING

This healthy take on creamy chocolate pudding will be your new go-to comfort food. Creamy avocado and chia seeds add a healthy boost to this delicious pudding dessert.



- 2 medium ripe avocados (peeled, pitted)
- 1/2 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/4 cup fat-free, plain Greek yogurt
- 3 Medjool dates (pitted)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 Tbsp chia seeds
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons unsalted chopped almonds or walnuts (optional)

- ⇒ In a food processor or blender, process all the ingredients except the almonds until smooth.
- ⇒ Transfer the pudding to serving dishes. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour to allow the chia seeds to thicken.
- ⇒ Just before serving, sprinkle with the almonds if desired.



<https://recipes.heart.org/recipes/2124/chocolate-avocado-chia-pudding>

Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton

Give us a call to discuss your health with our caring doctors and nurse practitioners!

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