

Wellness Wednesday

These Simple Tips Can Trick You Into Eating Healthier

Looking to eat healthier? With a few subtle changes in your kitchen, you might just be able to trick yourself into making it happen. We chatted with dietitians and nutritionists about simple ways you can arrange your fridge, prepare your food and store your snacks to promote a healthier lifestyle. Here are their tips.

Fruits (and other healthy items) to the front

Having healthy snacks like fruits, vegetables, grains, visible and within reach can change your snacking habits, according to the food and health experts we interviewed.



“Put healthy food where you can see it and keep foods you want to cut back on in the fridge drawers,” said Katie Serbinski, the registered dietitian behind Mom to Mom Nutrition. “You can even go a step further and store healthy foods in clear containers or bags, so you can easily see and grab them without having to rinse or wash, assuming that step has been done ahead of time.”

To encourage their employees to eat healthy, Google uses a similar strategy. Scott Giambastiani, the company's global food program chef and operations manager, told HuffPost that the offices offer less healthy options, but they're tucked away in favor of healthier foods. “We focus on making it as easy as possible to make great choices by making the most nutritious foods highly visible, while indulgent options are just a little harder to find,” he said. “Because we know hydration is important, water is the first thing you see in our refrigerators. Seasonal fruits are placed in bowls on open counters while packaged snacks and sweets are relegated to drawers or opaque jars.”

Making this tip effective at home and keeping those better options to the front means you're more likely to grab healthy food to munch on for a snack or add that food to a meal you're already cooking. Plus, since you can have your eye on it, the food is less likely to go bad and you won't be deterred from buying fruits and vegetables in the future (this is a common annoyance for people trying to eat healthy, according to several of our experts). It's a win-win.

If your schedule doesn't leave a lot of extra time to prepare those foods, many stores offer fruits and vegetables that are ideal for on-the-go folks. “There's no shame in buying pre-packed, pre-cut veggies — riced cauliflower, cut-up broccoli florets, pre-made zucchini noodles, pre-chopped and pre-washed kale,” said Andrea Moss, holistic nutrition coach and founder of Moss Wellness. “Same with frozen veggies. Anything that gets you to eat veggies and makes it easier for you to do so is a win.”

Do the dirty work first

Marisa Moore, a registered dietitian nutritionist in Atlanta, encourages her clients to wash the fruits and veggies they buy when they get home from grocery shopping and then chop them up into bite-sized pieces.

"If you have a whole pineapple, you're less likely to eat it than if you go ahead and cut it up into smaller pieces," she said. Bonus points if you can complete this task on a Sunday and get your food ready for the week. Another food prep hack from Moore: If you prep soup for the week, store in the freezer in a clear bag, making sure it's flat so it'll save you space for more goodies.

Divide the fridge into sections (and CLEAN IT.)

Many people keep fruits and vegetables in the crisper drawer of their fridge and fill their pantries with boxed and canned goods, but how many of us really go beyond that? Molly Lee, holistic health coach and founder and director of Energizing Nutrition, said that further organizing your fridge and the rest of your kitchen can make it easier when you're cooking.

"Have different sections for different categories of food," she said. "It prevents cross contamination, but it also is organized so you can make a well-balanced meal." If you have kids who can pack their own lunch or grab their own after-school snack, consider having a drawer in the fridge and/or a section of the pantry just for them, suggests Serbinski. You're establishing both independence and good eating habits.

Also don't forget — seriously, don't forget — to clean your fridge. "A tidy fridge is an inviting fridge! Throw out those leftovers weekly," Moss said.

Consider revamping your dishes (and don't forget about mason jars)

Lee told HuffPost that "organization is the key" when it comes to a kitchen that will help you eat healthier, but having an appealing kitchen can also help. "If you have chipped plates or you don't have the right equipment, it's not going to be pleasurable to make food," she said. "A beautiful bowl, plate and mug that you love can really go a long way for making sort of a ritual."

Don't sleep on mason jars, either. "You just stack your favorite ingredients," Lee said. "You can stack greens, nuts and seeds, chickpeas, tuna or leftover chicken or feta cheese, and it's easy. Plus, it looks beautiful and you won't forget about it because it's clear." For those with a sweet tooth, Lee suggested adding organic Greek or plain yogurt to fresh berries and low-sugar granola (make sure it's naturally sweet, not made with added sugar).

Don't be too hard on yourself when it comes to indulgences

Whether you've got a sweet tooth or are always craving something salty, ridding yourself of all your cravings doesn't always work. For a more realistic balance, Moore suggests having only "one indulgent thing" in your living space at a time and leaving the rest at the store (that midnight snack craving won't be as difficult to overcome if you've only got one option).

Lee sticks to encouraging her clients to eat "the highest quality of your favorite dessert." Think organic dark chocolate or raw honey, perhaps mixed with another healthy snack. "It's more expensive so you really savor it, and it tastes really good because it's using really good ingredients," she said.

However you deal with those cravings, a good rule is to somewhat fool yourself and tuck them away somewhere. "Maybe you have chips or you have cookies in the back of the bottom shelf," Moore said. Out of sight, out of mind, and hopefully out of your healthier lifestyle.

This Week's Exercise

SLAM BALL EXERCISES



Let's Get Started

Make sure it's not bouncy, so it doesn't fly up and hit you in the nose.

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width distant apart with the ball on the floor in front of you.
2. Squat down and pick up the ball, keeping your head up and trying not to round the spine.
3. Stand up, lifting the medicine ball above your head, fully extending the arms straight above you.
4. Forcefully slam the ball down on the floor as hard as you can. If the ball is light enough, catch the ball as it bounces slightly off the floor.

This counts as one rep. Cycle through 15 reps.

Source: <https://bit.ly/2HrGG9q>

Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.

ROASTED ASPARAGUS



Ingredients

1 bunch fresh asparagus, about 18 ounces

olive oil spray

kosher salt, to taste

fresh black pepper

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Wash and trim hard ends off asparagus. Place in a single layer in roasting pan.
3. Spray all over with olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
4. Roast in oven approximately 10 minutes, or until tender crisp.

Nutrition Information

4 servings
Serving Size: 4 ounces

Amount Per Serving:

Freestyle Points: 0
Points +: 1
Calories: 26
Total Fat: 0g
Saturated Fat: 0g
Cholesterol: 0mg
Sodium: 2mg
Carbohydrates: 5g
Fiber: 2.5g
Sugar: 2g
Protein: 2.5g

Recipe source:

<https://bit.ly/2HoTqSp>