

Family Nutrition In Action

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July is National Ice Cream Month

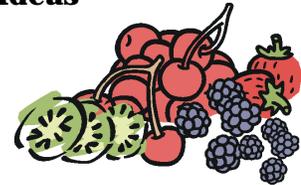
Ice cream is everyone's favorite summer treat for snacks or desserts, but you need to read labels and choose carefully to avoid going over your fat and calorie budget.

Here are three tips to help you enjoy your favorite treat without the guilt:

1. Choose fat-free ice cream or frozen yogurt over regular ice cream and save 100 calories per $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.
2. Light ice creams have about half the fat as their regular counterparts.
3. Go easy on toppings or see our suggestions for fresh fruit combinations below. Toppings can add a significant amount of calories to ice cream. Two tablespoons of most toppings contain around 100 calories.

Healthy Topping Ideas

Fresh fruit is always your best bet for a delicious, healthy ice cream topping. Pick from the following:



- Fresh strawberries
- Peaches mixed with fresh raspberries
- Kiwi and mango slices
- Fresh cherries
- Blueberries and blackberries
- Sliced apricots

Ice Cream Label Terms:

- Low-fat: 3 grams or less fat per serving
- Light: 50% less fat than the brand's regular ice cream
- Ice Milk: Can mean low-fat or light
- Nonfat: Less than 0.5 grams of fat per serving
- No sugar added: Neither ice cream nor add-ins can be sweetened with sugar; can use artificial sweeteners. This does not mean sugar free or calorie free.

These tips are from the July/August 2000 issue of Communicating Food for Health Newsletter.



Preserving your Summer Harvest

Don't let your surplus of summer produce go to waste.

By freezing fresh fruits and vegetables in their peak, you can enjoy the taste of summer all year long.

Blanching Vegetables and Fruits

Blanching produce before freezing helps keep the texture and color of fresh fruits and vegetables by stopping the active enzymes that promote ripening.

How to blanch . . .

- Boil water and immerse fruit or vegetable in the water for roughly one to three minutes.
- Remove from boiling water and immediately plunge into ice water to stop the cooking process.
- Dry the blanched produce completely before freezing.



Vegetables that can be frozen: asparagus, corn, green beans, lima beans, peas and summer squash.

- Add still-frozen vegetables to soups and stews in the last few minutes of cooking.



Fruits that can be frozen: blueberries, cherries, melons, peaches and raspberries. Bananas and pears do not freeze too well because they'll lose texture.

- Thawed, frozen fruits are softer than fresh, so they work well in sauces, chutneys, pies, crisps and quick breads

Tips for Flawless Freezing

1. Wash produce thoroughly. Be gentle with fragile fruits like berries.
2. Dry completely on several layers of paper towels.
3. Slice whole fruits and vegetables into wedges. Toss sliced or chopped peaches, apples and pears with ascorbic acid powder (available at most grocery stores) before freezing to keep them from discoloring. Sprinkle blackberries, cherries and peaches with a little granulated sugar before freezing to help maintain their texture.
4. Spread produce out on baking sheets and freeze until firm.
5. Once frozen, transfer fruits and vegetables to zip-top bags or sealed containers.
6. Store frozen produce up to nine months.
7. Thaw in the refrigerator for six hours, or at room temperature for three hours.

From: American Institute for Cancer Research NEWSLETTER, Summer 2001, Issue 72.



NATIONAL LEAD POISONING PREVENTION WEEK

Lead poisoning is a health problem that can be completely prevented. However, nearly one million children living in the United States have lead levels in their blood that are high enough to cause irreversible damage to their health.

FACT: Lead exposure can harm young children and babies, even before they are born.

FACT: Even children that seem healthy can have high levels of lead in their bodies.

FACT: People can get lead in their bodies by breathing or swallowing lead dust, or by eating soil or paint chips with lead in them.

Babies and young children are at a greater risk for lead poisoning because they often put their hands and other objects in their mouths and these objects can have lead dust on them. Also, their growing bodies absorb more lead.



Children's developing brains and nervous systems are very sensitive to the damaging effects of lead. Some of the effects of lead poisoning include:

- slow growth and short stature
- learning disabilities
- behavioral problems
- mental retardation

Very high blood lead levels can lead to seizures, coma and even death.

What every parent could do to protect their children from lead poisoning:

- Visit the health department or pediatrician to have your children tested for lead.

- Wash children's hands, bottles, pacifiers, and toys often.
- Get your home checked for lead hazards (paint, plumbing).
- Regularly clean floors, window sills, and other surfaces.



Encourage healthy eating habits.

Eating nutrient-rich foods at meal time and snack time could make it harder for lead to hurt your child. Lead is easily absorbed in an empty stomach, and regular meals are important to prevent the child from having an empty stomach. In addition to healthy grains, fruits, and vegetables, meals should include calcium-rich foods (milk, cheese, yogurt, corn tortillas, or tofu) and iron-rich foods (meat, chicken, iron-fortified cereals, legumes, and raisins).



Back to School in August

Vacation time is almost over. It's time to get the kids ready for school. Ask the principal or the teacher to see if your children could qualify for free or reduced price school lunches at school. The USDA National School Lunch Program provides nutritious lunches. Participating schools offer: meat or meat alternate, bread or bread alternate, milk and two fruits and/or vegetables.



Did you know that children who buy a hot lunch at school generally have a more nutritious lunch than those who take their lunch?

If you choose to pack a school lunch box, here are some suggestions:

- Your child can help you buy the food and prepare his/her lunch.
- Keep sandwiches simple— sliced turkey rather than turkey salad—if your child doesn't like mixtures.
- Select and prepare foods that are appropriate for your child's age (slices of fresh fruits for younger children, whole fruits for older children).
- To add variety, offer foods in different shapes and textures of food.
- It will not hurt to include **one** of your child's favorite foods even if it has more sugars, salt or fat.



Brown Bag Lunches

Grownups going to work also need to plan their lunches. Here are some ideas of breads and fillings that will add variety to your sandwiches:



Breads: whole-wheat bread, multi-grain, potato, cinnamon, onion, oatmeal, raisin, herb-bread

Fillings (mayonnaise-type fillings must be kept refrigerated):

Water-packed tuna or leftover cooked fish, flaked mixed with:

- T a thickened herb-seasoned tomato sauce
- T chopped raw vegetables and plain low-fat yogurt or lite mayonnaise

Chopped cooked lean meat or poultry mixed with:

- T shredded cabbage, minced onion, and plain low-fat yogurt, seasoned with cayenne pepper
- T cottage cheese and chopped raw vegetables seasoned with chili powder and dry mustard

Mashed cooked dry beans flavored with:

- T chopped garlic and onions, parsley, rosemary, thyme and pepper
- T chopped cooked lean pork, celery, onions, and plain low-fat yogurt

Sandwich Safety

- Use an insulated lunch box or bag to keep chilled foods cold.
- Use chilled ingredients for making sandwiches.
- Put your sandwich in the refrigerator until lunchtime.

Local Family Nutrition Program:



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