

My doctor suggested that I increase my fiber intake. What foods are high in fiber?

- A.** Fiber is found in the indigestible portion of plant foods. Eating foods that are high in fiber can help you to maintain your weight, lower your cholesterol, and lower your risk for heart disease. Good sources of fiber include
- whole grains such as brown rice and 100% whole wheat bread
 - fruit such as apples, oranges, bananas, pears, figs, dried apricots and prunes
 - vegetables such as broccoli, carrots, peas, corn, spinach, collard greens and potato with the skin
 - nuts and seeds
 - legumes such as kidney beans, garbanzo beans, soybeans and lentils

Q. What are probiotics?

A. Probiotics are live micro-organisms that reside in your digestive tract. They help to maintain a healthy digestive system by decreasing the growth of harmful bacteria. Probiotics are often called “good bacteria” because of their health benefits.

Q. What is the difference between fat free, low-fat and reduced fat?

A. Fat free refers to a food that contains 0.5 grams of fat per serving and no added fat or oil. These foods may also be labeled as “non-fat” or “zero fat”.

Low-fat refers to a food that contains 3 grams of fat or less per serving or per 100 grams.

Reduced fat indicates that the product contains 50% or less of the fat in the product’s regular version. Reduced fat does not always mean reduced calorie.

Q. What are the signs and symptoms of dehydration?

A. Our body is made up of 75% to 80% water. Dehydration occurs when the amount of water that is lost from the body exceeds the amount that is consumed. The signs and symptoms of dehydration include:

- nausea and vomiting
- dry mouth or skin
- decreased urine output or the inability to sweat
- heart palpitations
- fatigue, lightheadedness and dizziness

Q. What foods are good sources of Vitamin D?

A. Although milk is fortified with Vitamin D, other sources of calcium such as cheese and ice cream are not. The following foods are good sources of Vitamin D:

- Salmon: 3 ½ ounces cooked contains 360 I.U.
- Mackerel: 3 ½ ounces cooked contains 345 I.U.
- Sardines: 1 ¾ ounces canned in oil contains 250 I.U.
- Tuna fish: 3 ounces canned in oil contains 200 I.U.
- Milk fortified with Vitamin D: ½ cup contains 98 I.U.
- Margarine fortified with Vitamin D: 1 Tbsp contains 60 I.U.
- Cereals fortified with Vitamin D: ¾ cup to 1 cup contains 40 I.U.
- Egg: 1 whole egg (vitamin D is found in the egg yolk) contains 20 I.U.
- Beef liver: 3 ½ ounces cooked contains 15 I.U.

Q. I was diagnosed with gout. Are there certain foods that I should avoid?

A. Gout is caused by too much uric acid in the blood. If diagnosed with gout, you should limit your intake of anchovies, sardines, liver, caviar, cod fish, herring, beef, pork and lamb since these foods contain high levels of purine. It is also recommended that you reduce your intake of peas, beans, lentils, mushrooms, cauliflower and spinach since they contain higher levels of purine than other vegetables.

Q. What are good food sources of Vitamin B12?

A. Good food sources of Vitamin B12 include liver, clams, trout, salmon, fortified breakfast cereals, beef, plain yogurt, milk, swiss cheese, eggs, chicken, cod, sardines, herring, lamb and mozzarella cheese

Q. How should I properly defrost frozen foods that are stored in the freezer?

A. To prevent contamination, or possible foodborne illness, perishable foods should *not* be thawed on the counter or under hot water. The following are 3 ways you can safely thaw frozen foods:

- *In the refrigerator:* advance planning is necessary, since one day is required for thawing. Thaw on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator to prevent cross contamination.
- *Under cold water:* submerge food packed in a plastic bag or leak-proof container into cold water. Change the water every 30 minutes until the food is thawed.
- *In the microwave:* use the defrost setting on the microwave after removing food from any wrapping.