

Beyond Broccoli Nutrition News

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Mary@beyondbroccoli.com

Mary Ryan, MS, RD
P.O. Box 11274
Jackson, Wyoming 83002
Ph 307.690.5785
Fx 307.734.6003

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"A fruit is a vegetable with looks and money. Plus, if you let fruit rot, it turns into wine, something Brussels sprouts never do."

~ P. J. O'Rourke

Greetings,

We are experiencing a resurgence of winter here in Wyoming following a premature "spring thaw." Though work has interfered with my ability to get out and play in the snow a whole lot, I prefer seeing snow to the constant melting/re-freezing ice and mud. I think hot soup and bread weather will be with us for a while longer.

For the record, this is the February newsletter – I just couldn't fit it into the short month with so much else going on. The emotional eating classes have been great with one finishing this week and the other next week. I continue to be inspired by and learn from all of you who share your stories and your challenges related to eating for reasons other than physical hunger. I look forward to offering another series in May when spring breaks are over and people are once again ready to make changes.

This month I answer your question about what to look for on food labels and the nutrition notes include information about butter substitutes, calories in restaurant entrees, and why salt needs to still be on your nutritional radar. There is also a list of potassium sources, a new blog link in the WorldWIT section, and some of what's new at the Jackson Whole Grocer. In the recipe section you'll find Caribbean-style Snapper, Roasted Beet Spinach Salad and Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Muffins along with the featured food – Mung Beans.

The Beyond Broccoli website is still in progress and in March I'll be teaching a nutrition class at NOLS, speaking to the Bridger Teton National Forest employees, and making healthy snacks with the girls in the GAP! Program. Lots of good stuff.

As always, if you would like to be added to or removed from the Beyond Broccoli mailing list please contact me at mary@beyondbroccoli.com.

Cheers,
Mary

Your Question:

Help! I know I'm supposed to be reading food labels to make sure what I buy is healthy but there is so much information I'm not sure what to look for.

This is a common dilemma for the average shopper. Depending on your motivation for eating well – weight loss, controlling blood sugar, blood pressure or cholesterol, or just general health it is easy to get confused. Even the advice for those situations can vary.

The first thing to look at is the **serving size**. This can tell you a lot just by whether or not it is realistic. If it is an unrealistically small serving size it is likely to have high amounts of something you don't want such as calories, fat, sugar or salt. (During a grocery store tour with a client a few years ago we found a container of 7-layer bean dip roughly the size of an average to go container that boasted 25 servings. The sour cream, cheese, guacamole and probably beans made with lard contributed a lot of fat and calories to what can be an otherwise healthy party option.) You also need to know how much of it you plan to eat – in other words, what is *your serving size*. Some people really only eat 2 cookies for a serving while others think a sleeve of cookies is a serving. If you eat more than the serving on the package you'll need to do some math to figure out what you are really eating.

If you are buying a grain food – crackers, bread, cereal, pasta, etc. look for **dietary fiber** listed below the "carbohydrate" category. Aim for a minimum of 3 grams per serving for most grain foods. Some whole grain crackers may be less and many of the more nutritious breakfast cereals have considerably more. If a product claims to contain "whole grains" but does not have 3 grams of fiber per serving it probably doesn't have whole grains as its primary ingredient. Many whole grain breads for example, use a combination of wheat flour (a.k.a. white flour) and a whole grain cereal mix. This

makes it look healthier than it often is. Remember, whole grains are great but just because a product is made with whole grains doesn't guarantee it is healthy.

Sodium is high in many packaged and processed foods. The recommended total for a healthy adults is no more than 2,300 mg per day (see below). A low sodium food contains less than 140 mg per serving. It is not uncommon for a can of soup to exceed that amount – hence the serving size on many soups is listed as 2.5 even though it is easily one serving for most adults.

Sugar can be naturally occurring or added. It is the added sugar that is problematic, particularly in the form of high fructose corn syrup and other highly processed varieties of sweeteners. The World Health Organization recommends no more than 10% of total calories for the day from added sugars. This translates to roughly 12 teaspoons per day or less. Four grams of sugar equals one teaspoon. Remember though, this doesn't work for dairy products or things that include real fruit because the natural sugars are combined with the added sugars. Plain yogurt usually has about 16 grams of natural sugar per cup so you have to subtract that from a flavored yogurt (including vanilla) and then divide by 4 to find out how much sugar is added.

★ **Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous** in Jackson open meetings are held on Mondays at **6:00 p.m.** in the Eagle classroom at St. John's. For more information contact Carrie at 732-6678 or carrie_aba@yahoo.com

★ **Overeater's Anonymous:** meets Thursday 5:30 p.m. at the First Baptist Church 90 W. Kelly.

WorldWIT Beyond Broccoli Nutrition Blog: WorldWIT has a membership of 40,000 professional women worldwide and is an incredible resource for a variety of services, information, and above all just a great way to connect with other professional women. To access the Beyond Broccoli Nutrition Blog go to <http://www.worldwit.org/blogs.aspx>

Some of the topics you will find in the BB Nutrition blog:

- McMarketing Mocks Health Claims <http://blogs.worldwit.org/beyond%2Dbroccoli/>
- Thoughts About Emotional Eating <http://blogs.worldwit.org/beyond-broccoli/?p=37>
- Quick Tips for Fruit and Veggies <http://blogs.worldwit.org/beyond-broccoli/?p=36>
- Nutrition Research and RDs...Can We Trust What We Hear? <http://blogs.worldwit.org/beyond-broccoli/?p=35>
- Approaching the New Year <http://blogs.worldwit.org/beyond-broccoli/?p=34> (Read this on page 5 of BB letter)
- Are There Really No Bad Foods? <http://blogs.worldwit.org/beyond%2Dbroccoli//>

Jackson Whole Grocer

As always there is a lot happening at the Grocer – new floors and an expanded, more “user-friendly” salad bar are among the current projects. On the nutritional front, I am working on recipe idea cards to place in the aisles for quick meals. The produce, seafood and meat counters already provide a variety of recipes but my idea is to point out Beyond Broccoli kitchen staples and how to make great, easy, quick and of course, nutritious meals using these staple foods.

In the mean time, the deli continues to offer new ready-to-take meals and side dishes. One of my new favorites is Mitch’s “Mongolian Carrot Salad.” Made with fresh grated carrots, cilantro, green onions, lime juice, Mongolian Fire Oil (just a touch – this stuff is awesome but you don’t need much!), tamari, brown rice vinegar, extra virgin olive oil, and sea salt. This is an awesome side dish with grilled or broiled fish, chicken or portabello mushrooms for dinner. This is a great way to add a vegetable to lunch alongside some baked tofu or a deli sandwich. I also think it would make an excellent filling for spring rolls – great for that last minute appetizer or refreshing pot luck dish.

I’d love your feedback about the recipe ideas and will keep a list of the Beyond Broccoli pantry staples as I go along for those who don’t live here.

Nutrition Notes:

That Meal Has How Many Calories?

Researchers at the University of Arkansas asked roughly 200 adults to estimate the calories, fat, saturated fat and sodium content of nine restaurant entrees after reading a description of each meal. The group had eaten an average of 14 meals at a restaurant in the past month and the descriptions presented were like typical restaurant menus. The participants underestimated the calorie amounts by nearly half. Estimates of fat, saturated fat and sodium were also well below the actual amounts.

When people think something is unhealthy they often guess it has about 500 calories. The reality is that there are entrees that contain 1,000 – 3,000 calories. Some you may expect like the Ruby Tuesday’s “Colossal Burger” with 1,940 calories (not counting the fries on the side). But would you guess the “Fresh Chicken and Broccoli Pasta” has 2,060 calories and 128 grams of fat? Maybe if you are a dietitian and read carefully that in addition to the Parmesan cream sauce it has a layer of melted cheese. Still, unless you knew the size of the portion even someone adept at guessing calories wouldn’t know in advance.

The book *Restaurant Confidential* published by the Center for Science in the Public Interest is a good resource for those interested in knowing what’s really in many types of restaurant foods. For those who eat out a lot for whatever reason (work, travel, don’t cook, etc.) this is very enlightening reading.

I think even those who intend to “splurge” at a restaurant may pause at a 2,000+-calorie entrée (and that doesn’t include an appetizer, beverage or dessert – yikes!).

Alternatives to Butter – Are They Better?

I am often asked about various spreads designed to replace butter. The truth is, since I don’t care for butter substitutes I have not really kept up with which ones are truly trans fat-free now and what various products are using in place of the partially hydrogenated oils. The February issue of Dr. Andrew Weil’s *Self Healing* newsletter includes his answer to a question about Smart Balance spread in place of butter.

Dr. Weil points out the trans fat in Smart Balance has been replaced by the highly saturated palm oil combined with a blend of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated oils. According to company-sponsored studies this blend is “healthier” than butter since butter is completely saturated and SB has a blend of oils. Weil recommends drizzling extra virgin olive oil on bread or using Spectrum Naturals for a spread. Spectrum Naturals is made with expeller pressed canola oil – similar to olive oil in that it is primarily monounsaturated.

My recommendation is to think about when you use butter or margarine. Do you really need it or do you use it out of habit? If you don’t use butter very much and keep it to small amounts using the “real thing” is probably fine. I like to make “super butter” – half butter and half extra virgin olive oil blended in a food processor. It is a liquid when you blend it then in the refrigerator it solidifies and makes a nice spread. I use olive oil to saute, canola oil to replace some of the butter in baking (apple sauce or pureed beans also work to replace fat in baking), and I drizzle salad dressing on steamed veggies. When I’m eating bread with soup or toast for breakfast I use the “super butter.” Find what works best for you.

Concerns About Salt Lost in the Shuffle

While the nutritional spotlight switched from carbohydrates to trans fats (a.k.a. partially hydrogenated oils) this past year, nutrition and health experts fear that concerns about sodium are lost in the melee. Our collective short attention span for nutrition information has a hard time with too many things to think about.

Plus, industry groups have done a good job of reassuring the general public that salt doesn't really matter for those without high blood pressure (hypertension) and even those with high blood pressure may not be "salt sensitive." While it is true that some people appear not to be as affected by salt intake as others, and we really don't know a lot about how excessive salt intake affects those with normal blood pressure, we do know that blood pressure creeps up over time.

We also know that population studies show countries with the highest salt intake also have high rates of hypertension and stroke (high blood pressure is a major risk factor for stroke). The March issue of the *UC Berkeley Wellness Letter* points to the efforts in Finland to decrease salt consumption over the past thirty years. In the same time that Finland decreased its salt intake by one-third they saw a large decrease in average blood pressure and a 75 to 80% decrease in deaths from stroke and heart disease.

So, even though these large studies don't prove salt is entirely to blame, we know Americans eat a lot of salt mainly due to the amount of processed, packaged and restaurant foods we eat. We also don't get enough potassium – a mineral that can help mitigate the negative health effects of too much salt. There are many good health reasons to cut back on the major sources of sodium (salt is 40% sodium and 60% chloride) and eat more foods rich in potassium (see side bar). **Note:** potassium supplements can be dangerous so you should not take them without consulting your health care practitioner.

Sodium recommendations:

- Max of 2,300 mg/day
- Max of 1,500 mg/day for those with hypertension (140/90) or pre-hypertension (120/80 to 139/89) or are middle-aged or older (blood pressure rises with age) or black (high risk population for high blood pressure)

Potassium Sources

Recommendation: 4,700 mg/day

Potassium	mg
Potato, baked w/skin	1080
White beans, ckd (1 cup)	1000
Lima beans, ckd (1 cup)	950
*Pasta sauce, tomato (1 cup)	940
Winter squash, ckd (1 cup)	900
Spinach, ckd (1 cup)	840
Lentils, ckd (1 cup)	730
Sweet potato, baked w/skin	690
Yogurt, plain, nonfat (1 cup)	600
Halibut, ckd (4 oz.)	600
Brussel sprouts, ckd (1 cup)	500
Orange juice (1 cup)	500
Edamame, boiled (1 cup)	490
Tuna, ckd (3 oz.)	480
Banana, medium	470
Broccoli, ckd (1 cup)	460
Avocado, half medium	440
Cantaloupe (1 cup)	430
Artichoke, one medium	425
Apricots, dried (5)	410
Grapefruit juice (1 cup)	400
Pork or beef, ckd (4 oz.)	400
Corn (1 cup)	390
Milk (1 cup)	380
Split peas, ckd (half cup)	360
Salmon, ckd (3 oz.)	350

Sodium Overload

Sodium	mg
Chinese Beef & Broccoli	3150
Taco salad, sour crm, guac	1850
Pizza Hut Veg Lovers(3 slices)	1420
McDonald's Grld Chx Sand	1240
Chicken soup, cnd (1 cup)	1050
Soy sauce (1tbsp)	1020
McDonald's Big Mac	1010
Turkey pot pie, frozen	1000

2007 Beyond Broccoli Nutrition Services & Rates

Individual Nutrition Counseling

- ◇ **Individual Consult** – Individuals, couples, families, friends - \$120/hour
- ◇ **Online Nutrition Coaching** – Typically follows either an individual office or phone consult. Rates vary.
- ◇ **Phone Consultation** - \$125/hour
- ◇ **Kitchen Consult (or "pantry makeover")** - \$150+ (depends upon location and amount of time required)
- ◇ **Private Cooking/Food Demonstration Class** - \$250+ (depends upon location, amount of time required and food used)

Beyond Broccoli Classes

Small Group Classes – your choice of 20 different nutrition topics. Prices start at \$250 for 1½ hours, up to 6 people (rates vary with food demonstration or meal). Beyond Broccoli classes are a fun way to celebrate a birthday or to get friends who enjoy learning and eating together for a nutritious meal. Topics range from clinical information such as improving cholesterol, blood pressure, or blood sugar with nutrition to classes that teach you what to do with soy foods, how to eat healthful foods in a hurry and the links between food and mood. Feel free to contact me for a list of topics or suggest your own topic.

Beyond Broccoli Recipe Selection:

Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Muffins

This is one of my favorite Beyond Broccoli recipes. I usually double it so I can use more pumpkin and the muffins freeze well. Pumpkin is an excellent source of the antioxidant beta-carotene (our body converts this to vitamin A as needed), as well as a good source of dietary fiber and several other nutrients including potassium, magnesium, iron, vitamins C and K. All of this for less than 80 calories per cup! Mini muffins make great snacks or a nutritious dessert.

Preheat oven to 350°.

Yield: 8-9 large muffins, 12 mini muffins or 1 medium loaf of bread

In a large bowl combine:

1 cup whole wheat flour

1 / 4 teaspoon salt

1 / 4 teaspoon baking soda

1 / 2 teaspoon baking powder

1 / 4 teaspoon each of ground cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg

1 / 4 cup semi sweet chocolate chips (you can use nuts instead of chips for healthier muffins or add more chocolate chips for more dessert-like muffins)

2 tablespoons chopped walnuts (optional)

In a smaller bowl combine:

1 / 2 cup pureed fresh or canned pumpkin

1 / 4 cup brown sugar

1 tablespoon canola oil

1 egg, beaten

¼ cup pureed beans (use *Bush's Best* vegetarian baked beans or puree ¼ cup of any kind of beans with

1 / 2 tsp of molasses and 1 / 2 tsp pure maple syrup)

Mix wet & dry ingredients – batter will be stiff. Spoon batter into lightly oiled muffin tin or loaf pan.

Bake for 15-20 minutes or until knife inserted into the center comes out clean.

Al's Caribbean-style Red Snapper

One of the things I love about shopping at our local Jackson Whole Grocer is getting great ideas for preparing fish. I love fish but I tend to stick to salmon and tuna both at home and when I go out. I recently bought some delicious red snapper and asked Al at the Jackson Whole Grocer meat counter what to do with it. Al was the head chef at *Off Broadway Restaurant* for many years and is an excellent resource for ideas. This is the recipe he gave me off the top of his head. It is simple and delicious.

For 1 pound of Red Snapper:

2 tablespoons dark rum

2 tablespoons fresh squeezed lime juice

2 tablespoons brown sugar (could cut this down a bit if desired)

2 tablespoons soy sauce (the reduced sodium version is fine)

~ 1 teaspoon fresh grated gingerroot

Dash nutmeg

Dash allspice

- Mix ingredients and pour over fish. Marinate for 1 hour (or more).
- Place fish in a baking dish and pour marinade over the fish. Bake at 350°F for 15 minutes (may need a few more minutes for a very thick fillet).

(Serve atop whole grain pilaf or other whole grain rice with assortment of steamed vegetables – if there is a little of the marinade left it makes a delicious sauce to drizzle over the veggies.)

Roasted Beet Spinach Salad

This is one of my favorite winter salads. The fresh spinach leaves wilt slightly under the roasted beets and the orange maple vinaigrette dressing (recipe below) adds a fresh zing. Beets are naturally sweet and roasting brings out their rich flavor. If you have time to roast them at a lower temperature for a longer period of time that works well too. You could easily add cooked chicken or white beans to make this an entrée salad.

Beets:

Preheat oven to 400°.

Wash the beets well (no need to peel them yet – if you want to peel after cooking it is easier then but usually not necessary) then slice or cut into evenly sized pieces. Place in a baking pan that has a light coating of olive oil and add a drizzle/spray of olive oil to the top. Add either whole peeled garlic cloves, sliced or crushed garlic. Fresh is definitely best.

Bake for at least 45 minutes (if you cut the pieces smaller it may take less time and you can also increase the heat to speed things up). **Remember** ~ the beets will be greatly reduced in size at the end so don't be afraid to use the whole bunch!

Salad:

Fresh spinach is one of the dark leafy greens rich in folic acid, iron, and other vitamins and minerals important for health. The best part is that spinach is available year round and if you are having trouble eating it before it wilts you can always cook it! Add the roasted beets, a small amount of crumbled feta or goat cheese and some walnuts.

Drizzle with Maple Vinaigrette (recipe below).

Orange Maple Vinaigrette:

In a bowl whisk:

- 1 / 4 cup pure maple syrup
- 1 / 2 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 / 4 cup rice wine vinegar
- 2 cloves crushed or minced garlic
- 1 pinch dry mustard (optional)*
- Juice from one fresh orange

Slowly add: 1 / 2 cup extra virgin olive oil.

*Fresh basil or cilantro are great flavorings in season.

Featured Food: Mung Beans

There are over 2,000 varieties of mung beans used in a variety of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Indian cuisine. This is one of the most cherished foods in ayurveda since it is tridoshic – it can be eaten to balance all three doshas, especially when combined with spices appropriate for each dosha. Khichari is a rice and mung bean combination recommended in ayurveda for recuperation. The mung bean is easier to digest than other beans and contains few of the oligosaccharides that cause flatulence.

Mung beans are eaten whole – with or without their skin, or as sprouts. The starch of the mung bean is used to make jellies and noodles including the transparent cellophane or bean thread noodles used to make spring rolls.

Like all beans mung are high in dietary fiber and plant protein. They contain iron, magnesium, thiamine (B1), phosphorus, potassium, copper, calcium, and folate.

Mung beans do not need pre-soaking.

Combine 1 part mung beans to 3 parts water, bring to a boil then reduce heat and simmer for 1 hour or until soft.

What to do with Mung beans:

- ★ Add cooked beans to salads, soups, stir-fry, or rice pilaf
- ★ Use bean thread noodles to make steamed spring rolls