

NEWS

You Can Use

July 2014

NUTRITION EDUCATION WITH SENIORS



Appetite typically decreases with age, which leads to reduced food intake. Therefore, it's important to choose foods with a lot of nutrients so that each food item provides a "nutritional punch." Foods from the MyPlate food groups are filled with the nutrients that fuel our bodies. These foods include vegetables, fruits, grains, lean protein, and low-fat dairy.

Protein intake, in the form of meat, often decreases with age. This is likely due to challenges related to cooking and preparing, chewing difficulties, and cost. Canned meat, such as **canned chicken**, is a great alternative. It provides the same nutrients as unprocessed chicken, but without the hassle.

Canned chicken is not only a good source of protein but also vitamins, and minerals such as:

- **Zinc:** Promotes a healthy immune system and aids in healing.
- **Vitamin B-12:** Helps the body make energy and keeps the brain and blood cells healthy.
- **Potassium:** Regulates blood pressure and helps your muscles to move including your heart
- **Magnesium:** Helps the body produce energy, build bones, and keep blood sugar and blood pressure levels within a healthy range.

Pop Open a Can of Canned Chicken!

Canned chicken makes preparing a chicken dish a lot easier! Canned chicken, packaged in water, is skinless, fully cooked, and contains white meat, dark meat, or a combination of both. It requires little preparation (simply drain) and is packaged in smaller quantities so leftovers aren't as common.

Storage:

- ◆ Store unopened canned chicken in a cool, dry place such as a kitchen cabinet or pantry.
- ◆ Unopened cans can be kept for up to 5 years, but the quality will likely decrease. For the best quality, eat by the "Best if used by" or "Use by" date.
- ◆ Once opened, DO NOT store chicken in the original can. Instead, place it in an airtight container or tightly sealed plastic bag and store in the refrigerator for up to four days.



Nutrition: One ounce of canned chicken:

- ◆ Is a one ounce equivalent from the MyPlate protein group (goal: 5 to 5½ ounce equivalents daily)
- ◆ Provides 37 calories and 6.25 grams of lean protein

Uses:

- ◆ Chicken salad, casseroles, chicken noodle soup, dips, and sandwiches

Focus on Food Safety: Raw vs. Canned Chicken

RAW CHICKEN

- Store raw chicken on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator for up to two days.
- Place it on a plate or in a pan to prevent the juices from dripping onto other foods.
- Cooked chicken can be refrigerated for up to four days or frozen for up to four months.
- Wash any utensils that have come in contact with raw chicken to avoid spreading harmful bacteria to other foods or cooking surfaces.
- Cook to a minimal internal temperature of 165°F.



CANNED CHICKEN

- Do not buy cans that are cracked, dented, or have a bulging lid. These are signs that harmful bacteria may be present and can lead to foodborne illness.
- Use by the “Best if used by” or “Use by” date printed on the can for the best quality.
- Since canned chicken is cooked prior to packaging, it can be eaten right after opening the can.
- Wash your hands after touching canned chicken or any other canned meat.



Chicken Club Salad

Serves: 4

Serving size: 3 cups

Ingredients:

- 1 cup uncooked whole wheat small pasta (e.g., macaroni)
- 6 cups romaine lettuce or spinach, washed and torn
- 2 cups fresh vegetables, chopped
- 2 cups tomatoes, chopped
- 1½ cups **canned chicken**, drained
- ½ cup low-fat Italian dressing
- 1 egg, hard-cooked (optional)
- 1/4 cup shredded cheese or cheese crumbles

Instructions:

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and cool.
2. Place 1½ cups of the romaine in each of four large bowls or plates.
3. Combine vegetables (withhold the tomatoes), chicken, and pasta.
4. Add dressing to the mixture; toss lightly to coat. Divide evenly among the four bowls.
5. Top each serving with a few egg slices (if desired) and 1 Tablespoon of cheese.
6. Store (covered) and refrigerate for up to 24 hours. Before serving, top with tomatoes.

Nutritional analysis (3 cups): 270 calories, 10g fat, 2.5g saturated, 0g trans, 420mg sodium, 22g carbohydrates, 6g fiber, 7g sugar, 24g protein

Adapted from: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/recipes/chicken-club-salad>



Helpful Resources

Polk County Congregate Meals
(515) 286-2062

Commodity and Supplemental Foods
(515) 286-3679

Nutrition, Food Preparation and Food Safety
ISU AnswerLine
1-800-262-3804

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