



News You Can Use

Nutrition Education
with Seniors

September 2020

Let's Talk Cholesterol

September is cholesterol education month. More than 95 million US adults 20 years or older have high cholesterol levels.

High cholesterol doesn't have any symptoms, so many people don't know their cholesterol level is too high, but a simple blood test at the doctors' office can check your levels for you. Making sure your cholesterol is within the healthy range is important to reduce your risk for heart disease.

Know your numbers:

- HDL cholesterol ("good" cholesterol) protects against heart disease. Aim for HDL levels higher than 60mg/dL.
- LDL cholesterol ("bad" cholesterol) can lead to many heart-related conditions like heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure. Aim to keep your LDL levels under 130 mg/dl.
- Triglycerides (TG) are another type of fat found in the blood. A healthy TG level is 150mg/dl or lower. High TG increases heart disease risk.



Blood cholesterol levels are affected by: being overweight/obese, eating saturated fats, smoking, and drinking alcohol. However, cholesterol levels can be improved through diet and exercise.

To keep your cholesterol levels within a health range:

- Eat a MyPlate friendly meal plan rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and low-fat milk.
- Replace saturated fats (solid at room temperature) with unsaturated fats (e.g. oils) to lower LDL levels.
- Be active. Aim for 150 minutes of physical activity weekly. Exercise helps to prevent heart disease and obesity, while lowering LDL cholesterol and increasing HDL cholesterol!

Adapted from: https://food.unl.edu/documents/Sept_Cholesterol_9-1_11_Web_correx.pdf



Dehydrated Potatoes

Selection:

- Choose boxes or bags without tears, which could mean the **potatoes** are unsafe to eat.
- Check the "Best by" or "Best if used by" date on the box.

Storage:

- Store unopened boxes in a cool, clean, dry place.
- After opening, seal **potatoes** in an air-tight container.

Nutrition:

- 1/3 cup of **dry potatoes**:
- Provides 110 calories and 1 gram of fiber.
- Counts as 1/2 cup equivalent from the MyPlate starchy vegetable group.

Uses:

- Add **dehydrated potatoes** in casseroles, soups or serve as a side.
- Eat **dehydrated potatoes** with a salad, lean protein, fruit, and a cup of milk for a complete MyPlate meal.

Use-By, Sell-By, and Best-By Dates

Use-By Date: Found on refrigerated goods. Indicates that a food is at its peak quality on or before this date. Food items are likely safe to eat for up to a week after the “use-by” date.

Sell-By Date: Found on bread, dairy, and meat items. Helps grocery stores know when to take unsold items off the shelves. Food items are still safe to eat one to two weeks past their “sell-by” date if they have not yet been open.

Best-By Date: Found on shelf-stable items and packaged dry goods. With proper storage, these foods can be good for up to 3 to 5 months past their “best-by” date.

For more information about food packaging dates visit Spend Smart. Eat Smart.™ <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/shop/food-labels/> or <https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/foodkeeper-app>

QUICK TIPS

Bagged Produce: Good 3-5 days after date on the bag if unopened or 2 days past the date if opened.

Meat: Ground beef: use 1-2 days from purchase. Pork Chop: 3-5 days from purchase. Chicken Breast: 1-2 days from purchase. Ground turkey: 1-2 days from purchase.

Eggs: 3-5 weeks from purchase.

Condiments: Salad dressing: 10-12 months from purchase or 1-3 months after opening. Salsa: 1 month after opening. Spaghetti sauce: 3-5 days after opening. Mayonnaise: 2 months after opening. Ketchup: 6 months after opening.

Check Your Storage Temperatures!

It is important to check the temperatures of your freezer, refrigerator, and pantry often to maximize food safety and minimize food waste!

Make sure your food storage areas are at the proper temperatures listed below.

Freezer: 0°F or below

Refrigerator: 40°F or below

Pantry: 70°F or below

Visit “[Keep Food Safe! Food Safety Basics](#)” for more helpful tips!

Helpful Resources

**Polk County
Congregate Meals**
(515) 286-3679

**Commodity and
Supplemental Foods**
(515) 286-3655

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

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Loaded Potato Soup

Serves: 6 | Serving Size: 1 cup

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups instant
mashed potatoes (dry)
1 T soft margarine
1 medium onion (1 cup)
1/2 cup green pepper
1 can (14.5oz) low
sodium chicken broth
1 cup nonfat milk
1 cup frozen peas,
thawed
1/2 tsp ground black
pepper
4 slices American
cheese

INSTRUCTIONS AND TIPS

1. Follow package instructions to prepare instant mashed potatoes and set aside.
2. Melt margarine in a large saucepan over medium heat. Stir in onion and green pepper, if desired. Cook until the vegetables begin to soften (about 5 minutes).
3. Stir in the broth and heat to a boil. Stir in milk, potatoes, peas, and pepper. Heat through, stirring occasionally.
4. Add the cheese slices. Cook and stir about 2 minutes until cheese melts. Add more milk if soup is thicker than you prefer.
5. Garnish with sliced green onion, bacon bits, and shredded cheese if desired.

Storage

Store in an airtight container in refrigerator for 1 week, or in the freezer for several weeks.

Nutritional analysis (1 cup): 230 calories, 6g fat, 2.5g saturated, 270mg sodium, 35g carbohydrates, 5g fiber, 6g sugar, 10g protein. This recipe is adapted from <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/loaded-potato-soup/>