

CMMHC WELLNESS BULLETIN

January 2020

New Year, New Me!

January is that official month so many of us choose to set new goals for ourselves and so often improving our health and fitness tends to be a common goal for many.

As a mental health center, we know suicide is prevalent in that every 13 minutes someone dies by suicide. As an agency we are equipped with suicide prevention and ensure our clients have resources, supports, crisis lines, and safety plans within reach. Suicide, according to the CDC, is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S.

With someone dying by suicide every 13 minutes, it may seem as shock that this puts suicide at the 10th leading cause of death...so what takes the number one spot, killing someone every 37 seconds?

Heart Disease. According to the CDC, about 647,000 people die of heart disease in the U.S. every year, that is 1 in every 4 deaths. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women.

So then, how can I reduce my chances of getting heart disease? According to MayoClinic.org, heart disease is a result of plaque buildup that thickens and stiffens artery walls, which can inhibit blood flow through your arteries to your organs and tissues. Heart disease is caused by correctable problems, such as an unhealthy diet, lack of exercise, being overweight, and smoking.

According the American Heart Association, a plant-based diet is the ONLY diet proven to prevent and reverse heart disease; no other diet can make that claim.

What are the benefits of eating a plant-based diet?

A plant-based diet focuses primarily on fruits, vegetables, potatoes, whole grains and legumes (beans and peas) and excludes animal proteins, including meat, dairy and eggs. A plant-based diet also focuses on “whole” foods that are unrefined or minimally refined, and it limits or excludes highly refined foods such as bleached flour, refined sugar and oil.

There's no downside for anyone who wants to follow a plant-based diet, and yes, you will still get enough protein! Vegetables, beans, grains, and nuts are loaded with protein! Even if you don't have heart disease and are not at risk for developing it, a plant-based diet can reduce your risk for developing other health conditions, such as diabetes and cancer. It can even improve the symptoms of autoimmune conditions such as psoriasis and inflammatory bowel diseases like ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease.

When it comes to eating, what's good for your heart is good for the rest of your body, too. In addition to lowering risks and improving symptoms for a number of health conditions, eating a plant-based diet can help you lose weight, lower your blood sugar and help you feel healthier and more energized ([Steven Lederman, MD](#), Cardiologist/Medical Director Virtua Plant-Based Wellness Program).

What is the best way to make the switch to a plant-based diet?

Participate in **"Veganuary"**, that is going plant-based for 30 days in January and see how you feel. The most common complaint with switching to a plant-based diet is increased bloating, this is typically due to an increase of fiber in fruits and vegetables. Bloating is temporary and once your body adjusts away from the standard American diet, your body will embrace fruits and veggies!

If going plant-based for 30 days feels intimidating, try **Meatless Monday's**, another trending movement. This is great way to explore all the possibilities of plants and heart healthy meals. Find more information at meatlessmonday.com

There are several documentaries on Netflix and Amazon that you can watch to get more information about plant-based diets, to name a few:

"Forks Over Knives" looks at the relationship between plant-based diets and managing disease. The [Forks Over Knives](#) website also contains many valuable resources related to plant-based diets.

"What the Health" explores the health benefits of a plant-based diet and exposes the reluctance of health and nutrition organizations to point out the negative effects of consuming animal products.

"The Game Changers" aims to inspire by showing the athletic power of a plant-based diet and challenge *"the world's most dangerous myth: that meat is necessary for protein."*

Find your inner bookworm! There are so many great books with research backing up plant-based living.

Figure out what motivates you! Going plant-based doesn't just benefit your health, it also helps preserve the planet and, my personal favorite, you save animals by reducing supply and demand for factory farming.

Make it fun! You can literally make anything out of a plant-based diet, have fun trying new things and creating your favorite recipes...plant-based pizza and mac and cheese...it does exist and it's delicious!

Get out of your comfort zone! The next time you go to a restaurant, try something new. Most restaurants offer the Beyond Burger or the Impossible Burger, give it a try.

Vegan Zucchini Fudgy Brownies

Make these amazing Vegan Zucchini Fudgy Brownies that are gluten-free and just 7 ingredients! Oil-free, so rich, decadent and fudgy...nobody would ever know there is a hidden veggie!

Prep Time 10 minutes

Cook Time 25 minutes

Total Time 35 minutes

Servings 8 brownies



Ingredients

1 medium zucchini, peeled and sliced, and THEN measured 150g

1/4 cup + 2 tablespoons (120g) pure maple syrup

1/2 cup (128g) creamy roasted almond butter (runny, not stiff or thick)

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/4 cup (32g) superfine oat flour (see Note)

1/4 cup + 2 tablespoons (36g) unsweetened natural cocoa powder (not dutch)

1/2 teaspoon salt

6 heaping tablespoons (95g) dairy-free semi-sweet chocolate chips + 3 tablespoons for top (135g total)

[I topped these with So Delicious Cocowhip](#)

NOTE: As always, I recommend highly to use a scale to prevent room for error. You don't need cups or to compare the weights to cups, just simply follow the weights listed, as this is exactly how the recipes are tested and made. Make sure to zero out before adding each ingredient.

NOTE: If you want to make these with spelt flour, just sub the oat flour with the same amount. If you want to make these with regular all-purpose flour, while I have not tested it, I'm sure it would work fine. All-purpose flour will make them more dry and cook faster, so check them around 20 minutes and cook until the desired cooked center.

Instructions

Spray a nonstick 9x5 loaf pan with nonstick spray well on the bottom and sides. These will stick bad if you don't spray the pan! Preheat the oven to 350 F degrees.

Peel and slice the zucchini. Use a scale so you get the correct amount of moisture for the brownies, as all zucchini sizes are so different.

Add the zucchini and all of the remaining ingredients, except the chocolate chips, to a food processor. Process until smooth. Scrape the sides and process for another minute. It should be very smooth and runny. Taste and you will see the batter is not very sweet, since there is chocolate chips added, but if you want the base sweeter, add 1-2 tbsp of a DRY granulated sugar.

Bake for 22-25 minutes until they have a dry/shiny look on top and have pulled away from the edges. The toothpick can have a tiny bit of sticky crumbs, but not super wet batter. I baked mine for 25 minutes and they were cooked the way I like, but still nice and

Instructions cont.

Stir in the chocolate chips, but do not blend. Pour the batter into the prepared pan, making sure to really scrape out allll of that chocolatey goodness.

Bake for 22-25 minutes until they have a dry/shiny look on top and have pulled away from the edges. The toothpick can have a tiny bit of sticky crumbs, but not super wet batter. I baked mine for 25 minutes and they were cooked the way I like, but still nice and fudgy. If you prefer a cake-ier brownie, cook a few minutes longer until the toothpick comes out CLEAN. Depending on whether you correctly measured your zucchini will affect the baking time, as less water from the zucchini means they will cook faster. Check the brownies at 22 minutes.

Let them cool in the pan 45 minutes to an hour, no exception, or they will fall apart. These firm up a ton while they cool. Slice into desired size and carefully remove. Eat as is or with a delicious scoop of whipped cream or vanilla ice cream. I loved these with SoDelicious CocoWhip cream!

Vegan Meatless Loaf (4.75 stars out 5)

Prep Time: 10 mins

Cook Time: 50 mins Total Time: 1 hr

Servings: 6 servings

Ingredients

Vegetables for Sautéing

- 1-2 tablespoons olive oil OR water for oil free
- 1 small onion, diced small
- 2 small carrots, diced small
- 2 celery stalks, diced small
- 3 garlic cloves, minced

For the Rest

- (2) 15 oz cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed (3 cups)
- 1 1/2 cups panko breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons ground flaxseed
- 3 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons vegan Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 cup ketchup
- 1/2 teaspoon liquid smoke, optional, but good

For the topping

- 1/3 cup ketchup
- 1 teaspoon vegan Worcestershire sauce



Instructions

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees and lightly spray a 9 inch loaf pan with oil, or line the bottom with parchment paper to prevent sticking.

Saute the onion, carrots, celery and garlic in the olive oil or water over medium heat for 5 minutes, until the onions are translucent. Remove from heat and set aside.

Add the chickpeas to a large bowl, and mash with a potato masher (or fork). You do not want them to be completely pasty or mushy, but well broken up. *Alternatively, use a food processor, but be careful not to over blend them and make them totally mushy. Pulse a couple of times if using a food processor.*

Add the cooked veggies and all the remaining ingredients to the chickpeas. Stir with a large wooden spoon until very well combined.

Press the loaf mixture in the prepared pan, pushing down evenly with your hand. Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes.

In a small bowl, stir together the ketchup and Worcestershire sauce for the topping.

After 30 minutes, remove the foil, spread the ketchup topping evenly on top of the loaf and bake for another 15 minutes, uncovered. Remove from the oven.

Allow to sit for at least 15 minutes before slicing if you can, it will hold up better. Sprinkle with fresh parsley if desired before serving.

CMMHC's Wellness Committee Mission Statement:

It is the mission of the CMMHC Wellness Committee to promote the health and wellness of staff through education and initiatives that:

- Encourage habits of Wellness
- Increase awareness of factors and resources contributing to well-being
- Inspire and empower individuals to take responsibility for their own health.
- Support a sense of community

Brought to you by your

Central Minnesota Mental Health Center Wellness Committee

- Brie Frantesl
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HAPPY NEW YEAR