

SIUE Nutrition Newsletter

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Time for Breakfast

By: **Molly Miller**

If your mornings are anything like mine, they start by snoozing my alarm seven times and frantically gathering everything I need for the day while running out the door. Even when my mornings are chaotic, I still find time to eat something for breakfast. Eating breakfast can replenish your body's energy stores, boost energy, and even aid in weight loss.

Our brain's main source of energy is glucose (broken down carbohydrates). We can store some glucose as glycogen in our muscles and liver. We then rely on food sources for additional fuel. When we sleep, our liver must work to supply glucose to our brain, all while keeping blood glucose levels in the body steady. After not eating all night, we need to eat to top off the energy stores used while sleeping so you're ready for the day.

Eating breakfast can also help maintain consistent blood glucose levels throughout the day. This is because eating breakfast can help prevent excess hunger or having low blood sugar. This can lead to overeating or choosing a less healthy option. Eating breakfast can set the day up for success by aiding in optimal blood sugar levels.

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When you eat a balanced breakfast, you may also find your daily movement increasing. This can look like increased fidgeting, cleaning, or even the energy to go on a walk. Choosing to have a balanced breakfast will increase daily activity, which can help with weight loss.

Some tips to help consume breakfast on busy mornings include preparing breakfast the night before. You could also prepare your outfit and materials the night before which will allow time to sit down and eat in the mornings. Another option is to bring your breakfast to work, if allowed of course, and enjoy it once you have woken up a little more. A breakfast should include food sources containing these elements: carbs, protein, and fat. Vegetables can also be included. By including all three of these elements, you will feel fuller and satisfied longer. If you're not a fan of breakfast food, don't worry. You can have any meal as your first meal of the day including "dinner food". Some examples of this can include an egg sandwich, oatmeal, omelets, yogurt parfit, protein smoothie, or a breakfast burrito.

Breakfast provides so many benefits besides a full stomach. Taking the time to eat breakfast is key to a successful day. It's not called "the most important meal of the day" for nothing.

A Better Solution to Meal Plans

By: Haylee Netemeyer

"Can't you just tell me what to eat?" It's one of the most common questions the team at McDaniel Nutrition gets, and it makes sense! Decision fatigue is a real thing. Whether you're feeding yourself or feeding your family; a lot of time and energy is needed to eat! But, handing out meal plans is a short-term fix. That's why McDaniel Nutrition hasn't done it. Instead, they came up with a better solution.



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A Better Solution

The team of dietitians at McDaniel Nutrition created a customized meal planning service that provides clients with weekly meal plans and grocery lists personalized to health goals, food preferences, lifestyle, allergies, and more. This way clients can follow their plan with the confidence they deserve. Clients are more likely to follow a plan when they know it is tailored to their calories, macronutrients, personal preference, cooking skills and time! Plus, the plan offers clients the autonomy to switch out menu items if they have any last-minute changes... (like forgetting to buy chicken!).

Client Empowerment

Receiving a static meal plan is passive and lacks real-life practicality. With their customized meal plan, the client is empowered to take part in their health. Every two weeks, the clients meet with their dietitian to talk and modify their plan. From this, a client can learn about new recipes, healthy products to seek out at the store or how to make a healthy snack swap. This aspect of the service empowers the client to truly take control of their health.

An Intern's Experience

As an intern, I've had the opportunity to intimately work with this customized meal planning service. It's opened my eyes to the vital importance of including the client in the meal planning process. It has shown me how a meal plan helps ease the decision-making process of the clients resulting in meaningful changes. Client testimonials really solidify those results. One of our client's reported his workouts were stronger, he felt less hunger through the day, and he'd lost 7 pounds.

Why Choose MNT's Custom Meal Planning Service?

McDaniel Nutrition Therapy goes above and beyond with their new service to provide the best experience for the client. The education provided with the program empowers the client and allows them to take control of their health. Eating better has never been so simple with the McDaniel Nutrition team.

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Changes to the CDC Development Milestones

By: Skye Odelehr

Nutrition and healthcare professionals should be familiar with the developmental milestones for children, or the “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” campaign created in 2004 by the Centers for Disease and Control Center (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). However, in February of 2022, changes were made to the developmental milestones by 13 pediatricians. The update to the milestones are intended to provide clearer markers for what stage children typically develop stages of learning such as making an “ooo” or “ahh” sound (4 months), wave bye-bye (1 year), or point towards something interesting (18 months) just to name a few. (CDC, 2022) (Bernhard, 2022).

The developmental milestones were developed for parents, doctors, and caregivers as a means to catch developmental delays in children early. Each milestone age, ranging from 2 months to 5 years, has a different marker for that age that determines if the child is growing and developing adequately (CDC, 2022). For instance, if the child is sitting without support, then they have successfully reached the mark without setback. If not, then special attention would be given to the child in regards to a developmental delay and autism (CDC, 2022). If the child was premature, then parents and providers will need to use the child’s adjusted age to track developmental milestones, which can easily be calculated online.

However, the updated milestones caused uproar for some pediatricians. The revision changes the rate from the previous 50% of children to 75% of all children at the same age capable of achieving the same developmental outcomes (Spinner, 2022). Other pediatricians argue this change pushes each milestone back for the children at the same age and therefore, delay early intervention (Bernhard, 2022). One author highlights the importance of the concern because “children who have not started to talk by 12 months (the age in the previous milestone checklist) now wouldn’t trigger concern until 15 months, the age when 75% of children have reached the milestone” (Bernhard, 2022). With this, pediatricians are afraid parents won’t catch developmental marks as early due to the push back. Additionally, the revisions include development markers at 15 and 30 months, which was not previously included in the milestones. Whether the revisions improve the milestones or not, the milestones have not been revised since their release and account for societal adjustments and provide clearer benchmarks for pediatricians (Spinner, 2022).

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Despite the concern, it is important for nutrition and healthcare professionals to stay updated on the revised milestones that reflects the current research. These milestones are important for understanding a child's development and progression, to therefore refer them to specialists to keep them on track. Overall, the CDC's developmental milestones are a good resource for parents and professionals to track their child's development.

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Why Dietitian?

By: **Angie Loriso**



My dietetics journey started at the University of Dayton in Ohio, where I earned a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics. During this time, I fought through chemistry, biology, medical nutrition therapy, and many other courses that challenged me in and out of the classroom. Like most registered dietitians to be, I planned to complete a 1200-hour dietetic internship. However, with the change in required credentialing scheduled for January 1, 2024, all dietitians sitting for the registration exam will be required to have a Master's Degree. Due to this significant change, I decided to apply to coordinated graduate programs to earn a Master's degree while simultaneously completing a 1200-hour internship. I am currently a student in the Accredited Coordinated Program in Nutrition and Dietetics at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, where I am doing just that. Upon graduating in May of 2024, I will apply to take the national RDN exam, pass the exam, complete licensure requirements for whichever state I plan to work in and comply with continuing education requirements (CEUs) to maintain licensure and the "RD" credential. Seventy-five CEUs are needed every five years to remain compliant.

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On the other hand, aspiring nutritionists can forgo the degree and sign up for a sixteen-week certification course. Upon completion of all coursework and passing a 100-150 question exam, one can earn their nutrition certification and decide to title themselves a nutritionist. These individuals can then counsel people however they see fit. Basically, anyone and anything can be a nutritionist. All one must do is self-add this title to their name. While all dietitians can be identified as a nutritionist, all nutritionists cannot be labeled as a dietitian due to their lack of formal education, credentialing, licensure, and experience.

While becoming a nutritionist would have been the cheaper, easier, and faster option, I began my RDN journey because I love cooking and eating food. I wanted to dive deeper into the science of growing, cooking, and digesting food. I believe that when food is present, memories are being made. I want to share my passion for food and create memories with others. The reason I have continued the path RDN despite the stressful courses, abundant case studies, and credentialing guideline changes is because I believe everything happens for a reason. All of the planned and unplanned educational experiences I have had, and will continue to have, will empower me to better serve any community as a future dietitian.

Fueling the Combat Athlete

By: Andrew Youck

When you hear the words “combat athlete”, what do you initially think of? Is it college wrestlers? Or maybe it’s the professional Mixed Martial Artists on television? Both are correct but there are far more sports included like Jiu-Jitsu, Taekwondo, Boxing, Muay Thai, and Judo. If you’ve ever worked with these athletes, you know they are an intense, hard- working group who will do anything to gain the edge in competition. Knowing this information, how would you help these athletes fuel for their sport?

Protein

Protein is the foundation of building muscle and other new tissues in the body. Combat athletes spend hours in the gym and weight room to get an edge on their competition, so it is essential that they have increased protein intake. To help enhance recovery, it is recommended that these athletes take in about 1.6 to 2 grams of protein per kilogram of bodyweight. This number may stretch even higher as many of these athletes continue to compete with injuries. This recommendation will typically fall within the middle to higher end of the AMDR (10-35%).



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Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are what will help fuel athletes to successfully perform under the pressure of combat sports. The AMDR for carbohydrates is 45-65% of total calories. Given the high degree of energy expenditure within these sports, it is recommended for 50-60% of total calories to come from carbohydrates depending on the athletes individual training schedule. For example, some athletes train as much as 6 days a week for 4-5 hours at a time. This level of training increases the need for carbohydrates to not only fuel the body but also the brain. Some athletes are hesitant to increase carbohydrate intake due to the idea that they are not healthy. Be prepared to provide education and dismantle any myths that may tag along with recommendations.

Fats

Fat is a nutrient not often considered in sports performance but it is vital in hormone production, as well as fueling low to moderate intensity exercise. The AMDR for fat is 20-35% of total calories but due to the increased protein and carbohydrate demands, athletes will most likely be in the lower end of this range. It is important athletes understand the role of fat in the body and don't overlook them in the diet.

Combat athletes make up a very small population in the sports world and sometimes can be overshadowed by sports such as football, basketball, and baseball. However, that does not mean they don't take their nutrition just as serious. As nutrition professionals, we should strive to educate individuals in hopes to improve nutrition understanding and performance, in addition to revealing the struggles these athletes face with their diet.



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Navigating the Differences Between Milk and Milk Alternatives

By: Sarah McConnel

Whether it is for taste, an allergy, intolerance, or lifestyle choice, there are many options for people who seek a dairy milk alternative. No matter the reason, do these alternatives provide the same nutrient benefits as dairy milk? And what are the instances in which it is recommended that someone should seek an alternative to dairy milk?

Regular 2% dairy milk is a great source of calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, and protein. One cup, or about 8 fluid ounces, provides 25% of the daily value of calcium, 15% vitamin D, 15% vitamin A, and 8 grams of protein for about 120 calories. These days, the number of milk alternatives are abundant, but for our purposes, we will only discuss three: unsweetened original almond milk, unsweetened original oat, and unsweetened coconut milk. The amounts of calcium, vitamin D, and vitamin A for all three alternatives are about the same as 2% dairy milk. Unsweetened original almond milk contains about 10% vitamin D, 15% vitamin A, and 30% calcium yet is only about 30 calories per one cup. Unsweetened original oat comes in at 20% Vitamin D, 20% vitamin A, 25% calcium, and is around 45 calories per one cup. Unsweetened coconut provides 10% vitamin D, 20% vitamin A, 35% calcium, and is around 40 calories per one cup. The biggest difference between these milk alternatives is the amount of protein per serving. Almond milk and oat milk provide roughly 1 gram of protein per serving. Coconut milk contains 0 grams of protein. Reminder, the same amount of 2% milk provides 8 grams of protein. The Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for protein for adults with minimal physical activity is 0.8 g/kg of body weight. If a person weighs 150 pounds, their recommended protein intake would be about 54 grams per day. It might be difficult for someone to meet their protein needs with these milk alternatives.



When is it recommended that a person choose dairy milk alternatives? For those who are lactose intolerant, meaning they cannot break down milk sugar (lactose), it can be beneficial to limit the amount of lactose in the diet (Gordon, 2022). Those with lactose intolerance may be able to handle small amounts, whereas those with a milk allergy cannot. In the case of an allergy, it is recommended to avoid all products that contain cow's milk and look for an alternative.

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While 2% dairy milk contains more protein and calories than the three alternatives discussed, all four options have about the same amount of calcium, Vitamin A, and Vitamin D. With this in mind, milk alternative seekers can choose which alternative is best for them based on their preferences and needs without sacrificing the nutritional benefits provided by regular dairy milk.

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My Journey to Graduate School

By: **Abbey Roberts**

When thinking about my personal journey to pursuing a Master's degree in Nutrition and Dietetics, I find myself expressing gratitude. The college experience, in general, is filled with many challenging yet rewarding experiences. My journey specifically involves a level of indecisiveness and experiences that lead me to this program, which is exactly where I believe I am meant to be.

I began my undergraduate career pursuing a degree in psychology. I decided that wasn't for me and transferred to SIUE my sophomore. While looking over the majors that were offered, my mom actually pointed out the nutrition major and we discussed why that would be an amazing option for me. I was raised with healthy habits especially those involving foods because my parents instilled those habits throughout my life. Food was always an important topic for me as I grew up dancing and had many friends who struggled with disordered eating. This had a negative impact on me as those were people I cared deeply for. This was a huge reason I participated in philanthropy for the Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders organization. These factors made pursuing a degree in nutrition feel right.

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At first, the thought of going to school for any longer than four years was not appealing to me. However, there were two classes that swayed my mind about furthering my education. The first was medical nutrition therapy. Learning about the clinical side of dietetics, specifically TPN and tube feedings, made me excited about a possible career as a dietitian. Nutrition counseling was another class that helped me rally picture myself as a dietitian. I always envisioned myself counseling in my future career, even in high school. These classes gave a glimpse of what my future career could be filled with. The excitement and drive I had surrounding these topics pushed me to apply for a Master's Degree.

Looking back on my life so far, it feels as though many moments lead to my future career as a dietitian. I know that my younger self would be pleased to know that I found a topic I am excited to learn about and will go on to help others. I am grateful that I experienced classes that fueled my desire to apply for graduate school. I am excited and lucky that I will be able to learn more from my experiences throughout the program and apply that knowledge in the near future.

My Culinary Nutritionist: A Spotlight on this Growing Career in Dietetics

By: **Olivia Decker**

As the world changes, and consumers are becoming more health conscious, they are looking for enticing ways to eat healthy foods that are often seen as unappetizing and complicated to prepare. To provide quality care, dietitians need to utilize skills that encourage clients to make healthy eating an enjoyable activity. However, culinary training is not a required area of the RD, and many dietitians do not have extensive knowledge in this area.

The Culinary Nutritionist is a popular term gaining traction within the nutrition community. But who are these people and why are they important to the growth of the field of dietetics? A Culinary Nutritionist is someone who can take the scientific knowledge behind nutrition and combine it with culinary knowledge to develop enjoyable and healthful meals. These people often have degrees in culinary arts, but don't necessarily have to as you can gain culinary knowledge through continuing education, or job training. Dietetian360.com provides a list of continuing education opportunities in the field of culinary science. Two examples include a course pack on food facts, and the book "The Flavor Matrix" by James Briscione. The Culinary Institute of America offers various continuing education courses as well.

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The ability to provide innovative ways to eat healthful foods is crucial to patient counseling as eating healthy is often seen as a chore and healthful food has a bland stigma surrounding it. Having a culinary background in flavor profiling and food preparation allows the dietitian to educate the client on creative ways to meet their nutrient needs. This knowledge is beneficial in all areas as it allows dietitians to modify patient menus or client recipes due to allergies, conditions, or preferences with ease. Being able to show fun, delicious meals that fit a client's nutritional needs encourages the nutrition changes to become lifelong habits rather than a short-lived intervention.

While obtaining a culinary degree on top of completing a bachelors, masters, and internship is not only unnecessary but unrealistic, professionals in all areas of dietetics should consider taking culinary classes as part of their continuing education to promote better counseling and overall outcomes. Even a class or two on cultural meals or cooking basics can go a long way in patient care.

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