

Get “Dense” with your Food

September 2005



Nutrient Dense Foods Include:

Whole grain breads, cereals, rice or pasta

Vegetables

Fruits

Dairy products

Lean meat, poultry and fish

Beans, legumes and lentils

Busy lifestyles can sometimes short-circuit good intentions to eat healthier. Though it may not always seem easy, a little planning and preparation can make a big difference in what you choose to eat and how you feel throughout the day. Many of us are consuming more calories, but are failing to consume adequate amounts of nutrients for good health.

Your nutritional needs and amount of food you require will vary depending on your age, gender, activity level and health. Choosing foods that are rich in nutrients compared to their calories is a healthy plan for anyone to follow.

Eating Nutrient Dense Foods is a Wise Choice for:

- Individuals following a calorie-restricted diet or a weight loss plan
- Pregnant and nursing women
- Children
- Seniors and older adults
- Athletes (recreational or elite)
- Anyone wanting to get the best value from their foods

What are Nutrient Dense Foods?

Nutrient dense foods are foods that provide the most "bang for your bite". They provide relatively high levels of nutrients such as protein, vitamins, and minerals compared to their calorie content. You get lots of nutrients, and it doesn't cost you much in terms of calories. Nutrient dense foods include fruits, vegetables, whole grain breads and cereals, low-fat dairy products, and lean meats and alternatives.

Not all Calories are Created Equal

Same Calories, Different Nutrients



85 g (3 oz) Roasted Pork Loin

Energy : 100 calories

Minerals : Phosphorus, Magnesium, Iron, Zinc

Vitamins : Thiamin, Riboflavin, Niacin, Vitamin B6, Vitamin B12, Pantothenate

10 Large Jellybeans

Energy : 100 calories

Minerals : None
Vitamins : None

NUTRITION INFORMATION

A 100g average serving of raw, untrimmed pork contains 192 Calories, 21g of Protein, 10g of Fat and 0g of Carbohydrate.

Trimming makes a BIG difference

A 100g average serving of raw, TRIMMED pork contains 139 Calories, 22g of Protein, 5g of Fat and 0g of Carbohydrate.

Health Check...tells you it's a healthy choice



†All trimmed pork cuts with the exception of ribs, are lean. When choosing meats, choosing leaner meats more often is part of healthy eating. Canada Pork financially supports the Health Check™ Program. This is not an endorsement. See www.healthcheck.org

One serving of roasted pork loin and 10 jellybeans both provide 100 calories, but pork also provides vitamins and minerals; the candy does not. If you eat a lot of foods of low nutrient density you will get the calories you need for energy, but you may fail to get the nutrients you need. These are known as “empty calorie foods”.

A little planning and preparation can make a big difference in the foods you choose!

Get nutrient dense with some of these tasty on-line recipes:

- Deep South Orange Glazed Peaches and Pork
- Hearty Pork Chili
- Italian Pork Pot Roast with Vegetables
- Grilled Thai Pork Salad
- Pork Primavera
- Maple Mustard Grilled Pork Tenderloin



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put
pork
on your
fork

Plan Ahead!

The basics of any meal or snack should include choices of vegetables, fruit, dairy products, whole grain products and lean meats and alternatives.

Eat every 3-4 hours to avoid getting so hungry that you raid the nearest vending machine.

Grocery shop with a list and plan your weekly meals and snacks.

Read the label and become familiar with the *Nutrition Facts* label on all packaged foods.

Shop the perimeter of the store first! By sticking to the store's perimeter you will find foods from all four food groups. Fresh fruits and vegetables, fresh meats, poultry and fish, dairy products and whole grains are usually found around the perimeter of the store.

Stock the pantry with staple foods that won't spoil quickly. These pantry staples are fast, nutritious and always there when you need them for a quick and healthy meal or snack.

- Frozen, dried or canned fruits or vegetables
- Low sodium canned soups
- Canned tomatoes or tomato sauce
- Pasta, rice, potatoes
- Frozen tortillas, pita bread or pizza shells
- Canned or dried peas, beans or lentils
- Frozen fresh meat, poultry or fish
- Spices, herbs, chutneys or salsas

Preparation!

Prepare as many meals and snacks as you can to limit added fat and calories.

Choose foods that have been grilled, roasted, broiled or steamed more often.

Balance your meals and snacks to include lean protein sources and healthy fats.

Limit added fats, oils or sauces to meals and snacks to avoid extra calories and fat.

Experiment in the kitchen and discover new flavourful dishes. Don't be limited by a recipe. If you don't have or like what is called for substitute, for example green peppers for red peppers or peaches for mangos.

Don't forget snacks! Everyone enjoys a little boost between meals, so stock the kitchen with nutritious, great tasting options such as fresh fruits, vegetables, low-fat popcorn, nuts and pretzels.

