

Celebrating International Women's Day – Healthy Eating for Women

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March 8, 2021 is International Women's Day- a day celebrating the achievements of women throughout the world. Following a healthful diet is important for a woman's physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. To achieve that balance, women may need to pay special attention to these nutrients during each unique stage of their life.

Iron-Rich Foods:

Women in pre-menopause and who are pregnant need more iron than women who have reached menopause. Foods containing iron include red meat, poultry, fish, dark leafy greens, legumes and fortified grains. Eating iron with vitamin C rich foods will increase absorption in your body.

Tip: *To get both iron and vitamin C, eat them together. For example, try a spinach salad with strawberries, cooked oatmeal with a side of sliced oranges or crushed tomatoes in a lentil soup.*

Folate (Folic Acid):

Women of child-bearing age, and who are pregnant or breastfeeding need more folate to decrease the risk of birth defects. Folate rich foods include citrus, dark leafy greens, beans and peas, and fortified grains.

Tip: *Try out the "Lentil quinoa kale salad" recipe below for a folate rich entrée!*

Calcium and Vitamin D:

Women are at a higher risk for osteoporosis. To keep bones strong, ensure that you are consuming adequate calcium and vitamin D. Calcium rich foods include cow's milk, yogurt, fortified dairy alternatives (soy, almond), cheese, sardines, and tofu. Higher sources of vitamin D can be found in salmon, egg yolks, and fortified beverages and yogurts (orange juices, plant-based milks).

Tip: *If you're lactose intolerant, drinking 1-2 cups of fortified unsweetened almond milk as a snack can be a great energy boost. Add some cacao powder and sweetener of choice for a chocolaty treat!*

A woman's nutrition needs are unique. Make a telehealth appointment with a Registered Dietitian to discuss the nutrients your body needs to thrive by visiting www.huntingtonhospital.com/nutritioncounseling

Creamy Superfood Kale & Lentil Quinoa Salad (www.simplyquinoa.com)

Ingredients: for the salad:

- 2 heads kale any variety (about 8 – 10 cups raw)
- 1 lb green beans stemmed & chopped into 1" pieces
- 1 cup cooked black lentils
- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- 1 avocado pitted and cubed

For the dressing:

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| • 1 cup unsweetened almond milk or milk of choice | • 2 tablespoons chia seeds |
| • Juice of 1 lime | • 2 tablespoons tahini |
| • ½ cup packed cilantro | • ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes |
| • 3 garlic cloves | • ¾ teaspoon each of salt & pepper |

Directions:

1. Starting with the dressing, add all the ingredients to a blender and blend on high for 1 minute until smooth. Transfer dressing to a jar and set aside to thicken.
2. Tear kale leaves from the stalk and add them to a pan along with the green beans. Steam or saute for 2 – 3 minutes until green beans are slightly tender and kale leaves are just starting to wilt. Transfer the veggies to a large mixing bowl and let cool for 10 minutes.
3. Once cooled, add quinoa, lentils and beans to the bowl. Pour dressing over salad and toss until coated.
4. Either serve immediately (and slightly warm) or place salad in the refrigerator to cool entirely. Upon serving, split evenly between four dishes and top with avocado pieces.