

## ***The Lunchbox Nutritionist*** ***Kathleen Searles MS, RD, LDN***



How are you doing with making good decisions about food? This month's newsletter takes a look at "clean eating," one approach to making decisions about food choices. We all need to prioritize when making decisions about food. Is price the most important? Is local food a must? Does convenience rule over other considerations? Clean eating and its focus on minimal processing and ingredients is one way to move towards an overall healthier diet. (Please note that the food swaps prioritize for simple, natural ingredients. Not every swap will meet your particular needs. For example, Hagen-Daz Five ice cream is "cleaner", but is still a source of cholesterol, saturated fat, and 220 Calories per ½ cup portion!)

Please also enjoy the seasonal article on Halloween candy and this month's recipe using two fall favorites, apples and pumpkin. I hope that you are enjoying all of fall's bounty and will have fun visiting the orchards and farm stands to stock up on squashes, apples, kale and root vegetables. Happy fall eating! - Kathleen Searles, MS, RD, LDN

- **Kathleen**

### **Article of the Month: Clean Eating Basics**



Eating "clean" is the newest buzz word when it comes to food and nutrition and for good reason! This month we will be breaking down simple "clean eating" guidelines as well as help you identify the top 6 "unclean" ingredients. The first step in "clean" eating is to start reading not only food labels but also the INGREDIENT list. What is in the food you are eating?

**When it comes to eating clean there are 2 simple guidelines to follow:**

1. In a world where we want to have it all, when it comes to what we eat less is actually more. The fewer ingredients a food product has on its label, generally speaking, the "cleaner" it is going to be for you.
2. If you cannot say it, then you probably should not eat it. When it comes to reading that ingredient list, whether short or long, if you cannot pronounce the word then it is something your body probably cannot process.

**6 Ingredients to avoid / limit in your diet.**

1. High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS) - Corn syrup that has been treated with enzymes to make it sweeter. It is about one and a half times sweeter than sugar. It does have calories. Used in beverages, candy, bread,

cookies, salad dressings, tomato soup, yogurt, frozen desserts, dairy drinks, canned fruits, processed ham, hamburger, ice cream, luncheon meat, sausage, pickles, ketchup, and syrups. The debate is still out on the health hazards of this one. One side of the fence says that HFCS contributes to weight gain and affects one's appetite control. However, many medical professionals dispute this claim and say that HFCS is very similar to regular table sugar and is not linked to a rise in obesity. From a "clean eating" perspective HFCS is found in packaged and processed foods - not fresh fruits and vegetables or whole grains, therefore I recommend trying to eliminate or at least reduce the amount of high fructose corn syrup in your diet and if you are going to consume sugar do so with more natural sources (these will be listed below).

2. MSG (Mono Sodium Glutamate) - Also known as glutamic acid, free glutamate, and monopotassium glutamate. Naturally occurring in seaweed, soybeans, and sugar beets. However, in our modern world it is most often used as a food additive and labeled as a flavor enhancer. Used in some meat and spice flavorings in meats, condiments, pickles, soups, candy, baked goods, stocks, bouillon cubes, salad dressings, canned, oriental snack foods, mixed nuts, salted nuts, soybeans, yeast extract, maltodextrin, whey protein, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, frozen or dried foods, jerky, flavored potato chips - just to name a few...

3. Bovine Growth Hormone (BGH, also known as rbGH and rbST) - Bovine Growth Hormone is a protein produced by the pituitary gland of all cattle; through technology, scientists have figured out how to convert BGH into another protein called Bovine Somatotropin (BST). Supplementing cattle with additional BST results in an increase in milk production. The hormone was introduced to the marketplace in 1994 - and that is when it started to get into our food supply. There is a lot of controversy on this hormone because of potential side effects on both the cows and humans. The hormone is prohibited to be sold in Canada due to potential negative side effects on the cows, the European Union, Australia, and New Zealand have all banned rBST. However, here in the US the FDA has approved the use of rBST. In pursuit of eating cleaner, I suggest you consume dairy products without rbGH or rbST. The good news is that you can find both organic and non-organic dairy without this hormone.

4. Hydrogenated Oils - If you see the word "hydrogenated" before the name of an oil, then it is one you probably want to steer clear of. Hydrogenated oil is the process of converting a liquid oil to partially solid fat. Food manufacturers like to "hydrogenate" because a higher amount of hydrogenation means the product is less likely to go bad fast. Hydrogenation increases the shelf life of products - plain and simple! Other reasons you want to avoid: hydrogenation has a negative effect on our cholesterol levels and is also linked to colon cancer.

5. Artificial Sweeteners - This includes the yellow, blue, and pink! Saccharin (Sweet n Low), aspartame (Equal and Nutra Sweet), sucralose (Splenda), are all artificial sweeteners that should be eliminated or at least REDUCED from our diet. To date, these artificial sweeteners are approved by the FDA. However, more and more is coming out on the potential side effects and since there are so many GREAT natural sweeteners available on the shelf the switch should be pretty easy. Try substituting with Stevia, Truvia, or Xylitol.

6. Refined Sugar - In our American diet we consume too much sugar. Too much refined sugar is associated with diabetes, heart disease, cancers, weight gain, energy crashes, and cavities...just to name a few. I believe sweet stuff should be allowed and enjoyed in moderation. I also think if you are going to have sugar you want to be able to enjoy it and have the good stuff. Cut out the refined and hidden sugar in your diet. When you are reading your food ingredient list if sugar is one of the first 5 then ditch it!

## Taming Your Candy Monster



### News and Events:

#### *Do you need a pre-holiday tune-up?*

Call for an appointment to be sure you are eating as well as possible as we head into the busy holiday season. We can work on tips to help you negotiate your family's celebrations so that you enjoy tradition without sabotaging your goals. I look forward to seeing you soon!

### Simple "Cleaner" Swaps...

Nutri-Grain Bar

Cleaner Swap: Kashi TLC Cereal Bar

Non - Dairy Liquid Creamer

Cleaner Swap: Coconut Milk Creamer

Instant rice (brown or white)

Cleaner Swap: Brown rice cooked in the

Halloween is quickly approaching and for some, when the candy monster comes out there is no stopping him from chowing down on all candy treats. For others, the candy monster is easily tamed with a few favorite goodies. Regardless, almost every household is sure to have at least one candy monster appear on or even before Halloween day. Whether your candy monster is your son, daughter, spouse, parent, or even yourself here are a few tips to help tame him and keep things from getting to scary!

#### **Tips on Taming Your Monster:**

1. Avoid going trick or treating on an empty stomach. There is no better way to tame the candy monster than to feed him before heading out the door (just make sure to fill his belly with a nutrient packed meal). With a filled belly there will be less room to gorge on fun sized candy goodies and the monster will automatically become choosier in deciding what treats he or she really wants.
2. Buy Halloween candy the day before (or better yet, make your purchase on Halloween day). In this particular case a little procrastination could certainly help prevent overindulging.
3. If there is a candy that you particularly like to distribute and cannot abstain from making the "day of purchase", then go ahead and buy the candy for distribution. After making the purchase hide the candy in a hard to get place and avoid opening the bag.
4. If you, as the adult, find your inner candy monster is too hard to tame, then buy the candy you like the least. This will give you less temptation to resist.
5. After trick or treating and everyone has had a chance to enjoy their favorite treats, store the Halloween candy out of site and set a daily allowance for the rest.
6. Throw out candy that you just don't love. Save the favorite treats and get rid of the rest.

Alternate ideas for trick or treaters:

- \* Individual packs of raisins, trail mix or popcorn
- \* 100 calorie packs
- \* Mini dark chocolate candy with nuts
- \* Cheese and cracker packages
- \* Stickers
- \* Sugar free bubble gum
- \* Canned fruit or applesauce. While this is not the most economical item, it is a great way to a healthy choice in their goody bag.
- \* Granola bars
- \* Packets of oatmeal or single servings of cereal
- \* Hot chocolate packets
- \* Fun pencils, pens, or colors
- \* Small cans of Play-Doh

There are tons of ideas on helping to tame your monster. Just decide what is going to work best for you and your family. Halloween is meant to be fun and enable our creative side to come out with fun costumes, spooky decorations, and parties and games. Candy and sweet are also a part of Halloween, so be sensible and enjoy yourself, just practice moderation.

**Quote of the Month**  
"Our attitudes control our lives.  
Attitudes are a secret power

rice cooker  
Roasted Nuts  
Cleaner Swap: Raw Nuts  
Traditional Peanut Butter  
Cleaner Swap: Natural Peanut Butter  
Lean Cuisine or Weight Watchers Frozen Meals  
Cleaner Swap: Amy's frozen food line  
Traditional ice cream  
Cleaner Swap: Hagen Daze Five  
EAS Energy Bar  
Cleaner Swap: Lara Bar  
Egg Beaters  
Cleaner Swap: Egg Whites  
Wheat Bread  
Cleaner Swap: Sprouted Bread (i.e. Ezekiel)  
Traditional Oatmeal  
Cleaner Swap: Steel Cut Oatmeal  
Steel Cut Oatmeal  
Cleaner Swap: Groats (yes - believe it or not there is even a CLEANER alternative to steel cut oats!)  
Splenda vs. Truvia  
Traditional Bacon  
Cleaner Swap: Nitrate free bacon

## **Recipe of the Month: Billy's Pumpkin Dip for Apples**

This fun snack or party dish for fall takes advantage of the season's crisp apples. I have served it at parties and group meetings and love taking the leftovers (there usually aren't many!) in my lunch. I first tasted this recipe at my cousin's wedding a few years ago - it was made by his then 8 year old step-son with a little help from grandma!

6 ounces Neufchatel Cheese (1/3 reduced fat cream cheese)

½ c. brown sugar

½ c. canned pumpkin

2 tsp. maple syrup

½ tsp. cinnamon

Assorted apples - I like to use all different colors

Soften cream cheese. Blend all ingredients (except apples) and stir until smooth. Place in serving dish.

Slice apples into thin wedges. If you are not serving immediately, put apples in a bowl with water to which a little lemon juice or orange juice has been added so that they don't turn brown. Arrange apple slices on a plate and serve with dip.

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working twenty-four hours a day,  
for good or bad. It is of paramount  
importance that we know how to  
harness and control this great  
force."  
- Tom Blandi

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### **About Kathleen Searles, MS, RD, LDN**

I am a Registered Dietitian and am licensed to practice in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. The exciting field of nutrition has been my passion ever since I took a foods class with my friends in high school. Through my work in different states and different settings I have developed my philosophy of helping people improve their diets by finding foods that fit into their particular routines, budgets, and preferences. I look forward to helping you solve your nutrition challenges with tasty and satisfying foods.