

Food Preparation Tips: Saves you Time, Stress and Money

Healing Foundations Naturopathic Clinic

Cleaning Lettuce: A lettuce spinner is a great way to clean your lettuce and store it in the fridge for longer crispy, freshness. Tear lettuce into large chunks and place leaves into the strainer. Place the strainer in the bowl and fill to the top with cold water, mixing with your hands to get the dirt off the lettuce leaves. Drain the water. Repeat. Place the lid on top. Push the lever in (like spinning a top – kids love it) to spin off the excess water on the leaves. Repeat this a few times to make sure the leaves are dry, each time draining the excess water from the bottom of the bowl. Keep the lettuce in the spinner and put it in the fridge (make sure the bowl is dry). This makes for easy and quick access to clean, fresh lettuce for salads and sandwiches during the week.

- **Time:** 5minutes.
- **Cost:** 40.00\$ or less for a good spinner. Well worth it. Keeps lettuce fresh and clean for 4-5days.
- **Nutrition Tip:** Buy dark green leafy lettuce, such as romaine, spinach or red-leaf lettuce. They are packed with more vitamins, minerals and fiber than regular iceberg lettuce.

Preparing Veggies: Clean vegetables by running them under cold water and washing them with a cloth. Use a strainer to pile them in if it is easier. Chop bell peppers in half, taking out the core-seeded part. Chop off the stems of broccoli and wash the flowered heads rinsing under cold water for 15 to 30 seconds. Chop off the leaves and hard parts of cauliflower and wash it by allowing the water to fill the underside of the head. The water will flow into the crevices and overflow back out the bottom end (kids like this one too). Store clean veggies in the fridge in plastic bags, zip-locks or glass Tupperware containers. Carrots, celery and green/yellow beans can be chopped into ‘stick’ sizes and kept in a container filled to the top with water for freshness and crunch.

- **Time:** 15minutes
- **Cost:** Local farmers markets are often cheaper for fresher and better produce than regular grocery stores. Shopping at your local farmers market also helps to support the local economy and agriculture, and conserves precious environmental resources such as gas and oil.
- **Nutrition Tip:** Fill your fridge with brightly coloured fresh vegetables. Red, Yellow, Green and Oranges are the rule of thumb.

Preparing Fruit: Wash fruit under cold water for 10-15 seconds. Dry with a tea towel. Place in a bowl on the counter top for easy access (snacks, lunches and after school).

- **Time:** 5minutes.
- **Cost:** Same as for vegetables.
- **Nutrition Tip:** Buy fresh colourful local fruit that is in season. Frozen is OK too. Avoid canned fruit.

Fruit Smoothie:

In a blender combine: ½ cup, organic plain yogurt, ½ cup rice, almond, soy, goats or dairy milk, ¼ cup of fresh or frozen berries, ½ banana (frozen or ripe ones are nice and sweet and add thickness to the shake), ice cubes are optional. For extra protein and essential fatty acids add: 1 tsp of almond butter or natural peanut butter and 1 tsp of flax oil or hemp oil. Blend well and serve in a chilled glass. A smoothie is great for breakfast, or as an after school or bedtime snack.

Protein and Carbohydrate:

- Rice Cracker (plain) topped with almond butter and natural apple butter (alternatively honey).
- Sliced apples and pears with almond butter or natural peanut butter for dipping.
- Chopped raw veggies and hummus for dipping (PC organic hummus is very good, without preservatives).
- Blue corn chips, salsa and guacamole (2 ripe avocado, sliced in cubes, salt and pepper, ½ lemon, 1 clove garlic, pinch of cumin, mix until smooth) – Guacamole is also very good as a dip for sliced red and orange peppers and cauliflower.
- Mixed almonds and dry cranberries or any nut/seed mix with dry fruit (e.g. raisins, apricots).

Dr. Heidi McGill (B.Sc, N.D.) holds a nutrition degree from the University of Guelph (1996) and graduated from the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine in 2004. She is the founder of Healing Foundations Naturopathic Clinic. Dr. McGill specializes in the treatment of chronic stress-related illness, including anxiety, depression and hormonal imbalance. She dedicates her passion for teaching healthy living through the use of articles and seminars related to topics that concern you. She believes that diet sets the foundation for health and its power cannot be underestimated. Heidi has treated dozens of children and adults using the “food as medicine” principal, in order to safely and effectively establish better health and wellness in the body and mind.

