

News in Your School

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-RD Corner-

My name is Marissa Thorsen and I am your school Registered Dietitian.

My main goals are to teach students lifelong healthy eating habits and to keep you up to date on food and nutrition news.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me at:

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Healthy Eating on a Budget

Does it ever seem like foods that are considered "healthy" tend to be much more expensive than foods that are not? Are you having trouble eating a healthy diet because you are on a budget? A large percentage of our spending goes towards the food we eat and serve to our families. Here are some tips to eating healthy without going over budget.

Buy produce that is in season: Sure, the grocery store has all types of fruits and vegetables available all year round, however, they will be priced much higher during times when it is not their normal local growing season. Pay attention to which fruits and vegetables are in season and buy those. Buying in season will also ensure the produce is at its peak in both nutrients and flavor.

Plan your weekly meals: Planning your meals in advance is a great way to save time and money. Start out by choosing a healthy meal to make each day of the week. Plan to eat leftovers on days that are particularly busy. Create a shopping list based on your planned meals and then stick to the list! By planning ahead of time it will help prevent impulse buying when you are at the store.

Cook at home: Eating out is much more expensive than cooking food at home. Cooking your own meals and snacks also ensures that you can control exactly what is being put in your food. If you are too busy to cook every day, consider preparing meals and snack in advance as you have the time.

Buy in bulk: Many food items are priced lower when they are packaged in bulk. If there are certain items that you and your family eat frequently, consider buying them in bulk to save money and ensure the item is always on hand. For perishable item such as meat, buy in bulk and separate into freezer bags to store in the freezer for longer.



let's get cooking...

With Winter Squash!

There are many types of squash that are in season during the fall and winter months. All are packed full of nutrients and can be used in a variety of recipes. Consider serving one of these recipes at your holiday meal!

Roasted Spaghetti Squash

(Recipe from MarthaStewart.com)

Ingredients:

1 spaghetti squash, cut in half and seeded
3 Tbsp olive oil, divided
Course salt and freshly ground pepper
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated parmesan cheese, for serving (optional)

Directions:

- 1.) Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Drizzle squash flesh with 2 Tbsp olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Place cut side down on a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet. Roast until squash is tender when pierced with a knife, about 1 hour.
- 2.) When cool enough to handle, gently scrape squash with a fork to remove flesh in long strands and transfer to a medium bowl. Toss with remaining 1 Tbsp olive oil, salt and pepper and serve sprinkled with parmesan cheese, if desired.



Mac & Cheese with Butternut Squash

(Recipe from DoctorOz.com)

Ingredients:

4 cups butternut squash cubes (frozen or fresh)
1 cup milk
1 cup chicken stock
2 Tbsp butter
1 lb elbow macaroni
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shredded cheddar cheese
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

- 1.) Fill a large pot with salted water and bring to boil.
- 2.) In a medium saucepan, add the butternut squash, milk and chicken stock and place over medium-high heat. Season with salt and pepper. Bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook until squash is fork tender, about 8-10 minutes.
- 3.) Add squash mixture into a blender and puree until smooth.
- 4.) Meanwhile, place a large saucepan over medium heat and melt butter. Add the squash puree. Bring to a simmer and cook until thickened, about 5 minutes. Add the cheese, stir to combine, and set aside.
- 5.) Add the macaroni to the boiling water and cook until al dente.
- 6.) Add the pasta to the pan with the puree and mix well.