August 2014

Wellness Quick Read

From The Solutions Group Wellness Team

Vaccine Safety Websites

These sites have been reviewed by the World Health Organization and meet the content criteria for credibility and good information practices.

Childhood Immunization Support Program (CISP), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

United States Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD)

Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)

2014 CDC Recommended Immunization Schedule from Birth to 18 years old

2014 CDC Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule

National Immunization Awareness Month

In recent years, childhood immunizations have been under fire for the possible side effects associated with these vaccines.

These critiques range from the MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine causing autism to the use of "*dangerous*" preservatives, such as mercury. Many scientists have set out to investigate these concerns, but to date, the scientific evidence shows no cause and effect relationship between childhood vaccines and autism. And while thimerosal (containing small amounts of ethylmercury) had been previously used to preserve vaccines it has now been removed from all vaccines given to infants less than six months, and is rarely found in others. All preservatives and stabilizers are used in trace amounts and none have been proven harmful in animals or humans.

Another common critique is the excessive amount of vaccines recommended in such a short time span at the very beginning of a child's life. The CDC publishes a recommended immunization schedule for children based on recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), which is comprised of medical experts and public health experts. This annual process is then approved by the AAP and the American Academy of Family Physicians. The recommended vaccine schedule is based on the safety and effectiveness of the given vaccine at specific ages, with the goal of protecting babies as soon as the immunization will be effective and is safe for the child. The alternative approach to delay shots or follow an alternative schedule has not been studied extensively.

Parents who choose not to immunize their children must understand the risks associated with this decision. Failure to immunize leaves children at an increased risk of contracting a deadly disease and becoming an infectious disease risk to others. In addition, public schools and child care facilities may exclude unvaccinated children from attending.

Still unsure about what's best for your family? The best thing you can do is become informed. Instead of getting swept up in the media hype, do some credible research for yourself. You have the right to know what is being recommended, why, and the potential risks. The World Health Organization (WHO) has established a Vaccine Safety Net to review and validate reliable information on the internet. Some of these resources are listed to the left. For more information, visit the WHO website and be sure to discuss personal risks and options with your family physician.

The Solutions Group

A division of Presbyterian Healthcare Services

Recipe of the Month: Grilled Veggie Pizza

Serves 4

Ingredients

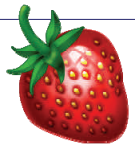
2 Portobello mushroom caps
1Tbsp garlic, chopped
1 bell pepper, cut into strips or diced
1 zucchini, thinly sliced
1 red onion, thinly sliced
5 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
Salt & pepper to taste
Non-stick cooking spray
8 oz. fresh pizza dough (whole wheat is available in some stores)
1 cup shredded fontina cheese
1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced
1/2 tsp crushed red pepper flakes

Directions:

Preheat the grill to high heat. Remove and discard the gills from the mushroom undersides. In a bowl, toss to combine mushrooms, garlic, bell pepper, zucchini, onion, and oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Coat the grill rack (or grill basket) with non-stick cooking spray. Grill veggies in grill basket or aluminum foil for approximately 8 minutes, until tender. Chop mushrooms to desired size. On a lightly floured surface, roll out pizza dough. Place dough directly on grill rack and grill until lightly browned (about 2 minutes each side). Sprinkle with cheese and top with vegetables. Grill another 3 minutes, until cheese is melted. Top with basil and red pepper and enjoy.

2 Slices: *Calories: 344; Total fat: 16.1g; Saturated fat: 6g; Monounsaturated fat: 6.5g; Polyunsaturated fat: 2.2g; Cholesterol: 31mg; Sodium: 693mg; Total carbohydrate: 38g; Dietary fiber: 3.1g; Protein: 14.2g; Iron: 2.6mg; Calcium: 173mg*

Recipe Source: *Cooking Light, August 2013*
Click here for this recipe: http://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/grilled-vegetable-pizza-50400000122500/



Open Your Eyes to Whole Foods

Your eyesight is priceless. That's why it's not only important to protect your eyes from harsh sunlight with sunglasses, but also to nourish them with the food you eat. A balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables will give you the necessary nutrients to keep your whole body healthy. To boost your eye health, reach for these five specific foods regularly.

Kale is a great source of lutein and zeaxanthin, both thought to protect your eyes from sun damage and reduce your risk of cataracts and macular degeneration. Kale is a bitter leafy green, so when eating it raw, be sure to massage the kale to help soften and reduce bitterness. Your body needs fat to absorb these compounds, so find a recipe that uses a bit of healthy fat, such as olive oil, with your kale. Kale also contains vitamin C and beta carotene, which both support eye health.

Sweet Potatoes contain beta carotene which is converted to vitamin A. Both of these nutrients can help prevent dry eyes, night blindness, and slow macular degeneration. If you aren't a fan of sweet potatoes, opt for another deep orange colored food instead.

Strawberries are rich in vitamin C, which can help lower your risk of cataracts. Bell peppers, broccoli and citrus fruits are also good sources of vitamin C.

The omega-3 fatty acids in **salmon** not promote heart health, but can also help alleviate dry eyes. Salmon also contains vitamin D, which most Americans are deficient in. Aim for omega-3 rich fish 2-3 times per week.

Green tea is an antioxidant powerhouse for your body and eyes and may lower your risk of developing cataracts and macular degeneration.

Remember, all nutrients should be consumed in moderation. A balanced, whole food diet is your best option for overall health and well-being. For more information, visit eatright.org.