

**FOOD**

**4 LIFE**

TAHER

## HEALTHY CHOICES "Summer" Tips for Parents

With summer fast approaching, it's an ideal time to search for healthier food alternatives (to those high in sugar, fat and calories). Check out these tips promoting a healthier summer for you and your children!

1. Limit intake of sugary, caffeine-based soda. Instead, serve water, 100% juice drinks - which can be diluted with water or sparkling water for a refreshing spritzer.
2. Try turkey or chicken burgers instead of fatty beef hamburgers. When choosing hot dogs opt for nitrate and nitrite-free chicken or turkey hot dogs and forgo the extra fat, calories and harmful additives found in traditional hot dogs.
3. Replace milkshakes with homemade fruit and yogurt smoothies, frozen or fresh strawberries, peaches, bananas or watermelon and cantaloupe.
4. For a potato alternative, serve baked potatoes instead of salty, greasy french fries. Just 20 french fries pack the same amount of calories as a baked potato with cheddar cheese & broccoli. Or even better, try a baked sweet potato loaded with carotene, vitamin C, potassium and fiber.
5. Select pizzas with more veggies and less cheese rather than ordering them smothered with cheese and meats. For variety, try burritos and wraps.
6. In lieu of a candy bar, offer almonds or a protein bar.
7. For snacks, offer whole-wheat animal crackers, fruit juice-sweetened whole grain crackers, fig bars or graham crackers. Reserve cookies for treats.
8. Limit total "screen" time of watching TV, playing video and computer games, and surfing the Internet. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than 1-2 hours per day of TV and videos for children over age 2. Enjoy the great outdoors!

## WONDERFUL SPRING RECIPE Baked Asparagus Risotto

Makes 6 servings, about 1 c each

### INGREDIENTS:

1 Tbsp	extra-virgin olive oil
2 medium	onions, chopped (about 1 ½ c)
1 c	short- or medium-grain brown rice
3 cloves	garlic, minced
½ c	dry white wine
2	14 ½-oz cans reduced-sodium chicken broth <b>OR</b> 3 ½ c vegetable broth
12 oz	asparagus, cut into 1" pieces (3 c)
1 c	diced red bell pepper (1 medium)
1 ½ c	freshly grated Parmesan cheese (3 ½ oz)
¼ c	chopped fresh parsley
¼ c	chopped fresh chives
1-2 tsp	freshly grated lemon zest freshly ground pepper to taste



### INSTRUCTIONS:

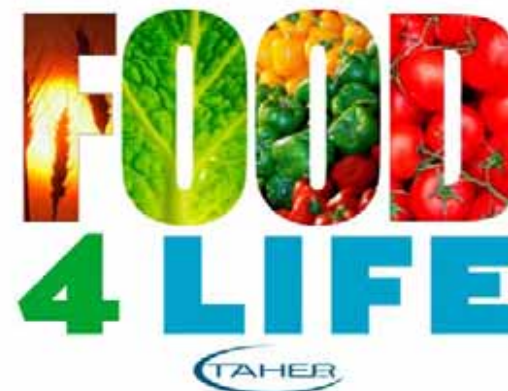
1. Preheat oven to 425° F. Heat oil in a Dutch oven or ovenproof high-sided skillet over medium heat.
2. Add onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in rice and garlic; cook, stirring, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in wine and simmer until it has mostly evaporated. Add broth and bring to a boil. Cover the pan and transfer to the oven. Bake until the rice is just tender, 50 minutes to 1 hour.
3. Shortly before the risotto is done, steam asparagus and bell pepper until crisp-tender, about 4 minutes.
4. Fold the steamed vegetables, Parmesan, parsley, chives, lemon zest and pepper into the risotto. Serve immediately.

### NUTRITION INFORMATION:

Per serving: 267 calories; 8 g fat (3 g sat, 3 g mono); 11 mg cholesterol; 35 g carbohydrate; 12 g protein; 3 g fiber; 607 mg sodium. Nutrition bonus: Vitamin C (110% daily value), Vitamin A (30% dv), Calcium (25% dv).

**RICE TIP:** Use short- or medium-grain brown rice to achieve the characteristic creamy risotto texture. Lundberg Family Farms ([www.lundberg.com](http://www.lundberg.com)) sells an excellent short-grain brown rice. Another source is [dannysorganic.com](http://dannysorganic.com).

Spring 2007



Living Healthy  
TIPS 4 YOU!

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*For more information regarding  
Taher's Food 4 Life wellness program,  
contact your Food Service Director.*

## Good Fat vs. Bad Fat in Food

*Reprinted from Henry Ford Health Systems*

By now most people are aware that high-fat diets have been linked to an increased risk of heart disease, certain types of cancer and obesity. Most major health organizations recommend limiting total fat intake to no more than 30 to 35 percent of your daily calories. Not only is the amount of fat an important, but understanding the type is also important.

Understanding the differences between the three types of fat (saturated, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated) will allow you to make Heart Smart eating choices.

**Saturated fats** are usually solid at room temperature and are largely found in meats and dairy foods such as whole milk, cream, full-fat ice cream, cheese and butter. A few vegetable fats are very high in saturated fat; palm, palm kernel, and coconut oils. Consuming foods high in saturated fat can raise blood cholesterol levels, especially the bad LDL cholesterol, more than anything else you eat.

**Trans-fats** act like saturated fat and raise LDL cholesterol. They may also lower HDL cholesterol. Most of the trans-fat we eat comes from vegetable shortening, some margarines, french fries. Snack products and baked goods commercially made with hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated shortening.

**Monounsaturated fat** in your diet may lower harmful LDL cholesterol, leaving the beneficial HDL cholesterol unchanged. Olive oil, peanut oil, canola oil and most nuts are high in monounsaturated fat.

**Polyunsaturated fat** may also help lower blood cholesterol, foods rich in polyunsaturated fat include vegetable oils like corn, safflower, soybean, and sunflower seed, one downside to this type of fat is that while it lowers the bad LDL cholesterol, it may also lower the good HDL cholesterol.

**Omega-3 fatty acids** may help decrease heart disease by lowering triglyceride levels, increasing HDL levels and decreasing blood clotting and inflammation. Omega-3

fatty acids are found in most fish, especially salmon, other sources include flaxseed, soybeans and walnuts.

The most important thing to remember is that eating too much fat of any kind increases your risk for obesity. So, use all types of fat in moderation and choose monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats over saturated fat.

## Trans Fats 101

### What are trans fatty acids?

They are man-made or processed fats, which are made from a liquid oil. When you add hydrogen to liquid vegetable oil and then add pressure, the result is a stiffer fat, like the fat found in a can of Crisco®. Trans fats are also called hydrogenated fats.

### Why are they bad for you?

Trans fats pose a higher risk of heart disease than saturated fats. While it is true that saturated fats -- found in butter, cheese and beef, for example -- raise total cholesterol levels, trans fats go a step further. Trans fats not only raise total cholesterol levels, they also deplete good cholesterol (HDL), which helps protect against heart disease.

### What harm do they do to the body?

The stiffer and harder fats are, the more they clog up your arteries. Trans fats do the same thing in our bodies that bacon grease does to kitchen sinks. Over time, they can "clog the pipes" that feed the heart and brain, which can lead to heart attack or stroke risk.

### Are trans fats bad for kids?

Trans fats increase the risk for heart disease. Therefore, children who start at age 3 or 4 eating a steady diet of fast food, pop tarts, commercially prepared fish sticks, stick margarine, cake, candy, cookies and microwave popcorn can be expected to get heart disease earlier than kids who are eating foods without trans fats.



## Fat-Free Salad Dressing Myth

Fat-free salad dressings aren't all they're "cracked up" to be. According to research published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, it turns out that you need fat to absorb key nutrients in vegetables, such as beta-carotene and lutein.

Researchers from Iowa State University and Ohio State University-Columbus tested blood samples after people ate salads with 3 different salad dressings, containing 0, 6 or 28 grams of canola oil. The dressing with the most fat produced the highest degree of nutrient absorption.

### Bottled Dressings: The Good and The Bad

Although you need fat for nutrient absorption, you don't need unhealthy fat which is often found in bottled dressings. Also, avoid sky-high levels of sodium, unhealthy sweeteners such as high fructose corn syrup, or additives such as artificial flavors, colors, texture enhancers and preservatives. **Look for olive-oil based dressings without artificial ingredients.** Real seasonings and herbs taste better.



As an alternative, making your own dressing doesn't have to be complicated. Extra virgin olive oil and balsamic vinegar are always a good bet. Or, use avocado combined with lemon or lime juice.

Adding too much dressing -- even if it's healthy -- also isn't good. To avoid the pitfall, try this:

- ☆ Buy flavorful dark greens. Tasteless greens are an invitation to overdo the dressing.
- ☆ Don't just pour dressing onto your salad plate. Put the greens, alone, in a big bowl and drizzle the dressing over them, gently -- they can't swim. Toss lightly but thoroughly until the leaves are evenly coated, then add the rest of your salad vegetables and toss a couple more times. This way, your salad will have more flavor.