



# Partners in Prevention

Taking Health & Safety to Higher Ground

December 2017

## YOUR GAMEPLAN TO LIVE

### CHOOSING AND STORING PRODUCE

We've all been disappointed by produce that ended up going bad WAY too fast (or were unknowingly bad to begin with): rubbery broccoli or carrots, mealy apples or peaches, greens that are slimy within 2 days of purchase. They looked OK in the grocery store; what happened? How do you choose the best produce? The following are some suggestions. Buying in season is always best, and in case you don't know what is in season in your area, you can check at [seasonalfoodguide.org](http://seasonalfoodguide.org).

**Carrots** should be smooth and bright orange (or one of the other vibrant colors they come in) and very firm. **In Season:** All year. **Storage:** Remove the greens and store in a bag in the crisper drawer for up to 3 weeks.

**Apples** should be smooth and firm. They should be heavy for their size with no bruises or brown streaks, nicks, or holes. Large is not better. Smaller apples tend to be more flavorful. **In Season:** September – May. **Storage:** Refrigerator's crisper drawer in a brown paper bag away from vegetables.

**Beets** should be firm, deep red (for red beets), unblemished with no soft areas, and with vibrant leaves that are not wilted. **In Season:** June - October. **Storage:** Remove leaves, but leave 4 inches of stems until ready to wash, cut, and cook. Refrigerate in the crisper for up to 2 weeks or in a brown paper bag for up to 2 days. Longer storage and they will become rubbery.

**Broccoli** – Look for firm, deep green with no yellow, tightly packed clusters. Do not purchase rubbery stalks. **In Season:** October to May. **Storage:** Refrigerate in a paper bag for up to 1 week, or mist the unwashed heads, wrap loosely in damp paper towels, and use within 2 to 3 days. Never store in a plastic bag or sealed container.

**Brussels sprouts** should be vibrant green, firm, and compact. Smaller ones are sweetest. Choose sprouts close in size for ease of cooking. **In Season:** October and November. **Storage:** Keep unwashed and untrimmed Brussels sprouts in a perforated plastic bag in the vegetable compartment of the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days, or in a paper bag in the fridge for up to 2 weeks. Cooked Brussels sprouts will keep for 3 days refrigerated.

**Bananas** – whether you like them green tipped or all yellow, avoid purchasing bananas with brown spots or streaks. **In Season:** All year. Bananas are sweetest when there are small speckled spots. **Storage:** Room temperature on the counter. (To speed ripening, put them in a paper bag.)



### No Flour Broccoli Egg Muffins

Grain free, dairy free, soy free, sugar free

**Makes 6 muffins**

#### Ingredients:

- 2 tsp. grass-fed butter, softened
- 1 cup broccoli florets, finely chopped
- 2 cups almond flour
- 2 large pasture-raised eggs
- 1 cup unsweetened, almond milk
- 2 Tbs. nutritional yeast
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. sea salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground pepper

#### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350°F and line a large muffin tin with paper baking cups.
- Stir together all the ingredients in a large mixing bowl until well combined.
- Spoon mixture into muffin cups. Bake 30 minutes or until a toothpick or knife inserted in center comes out clean.

Tip: Coconut flour can be substituted for almond flour(meal), but decrease to 1/2 cup.

Adapted from: <https://blog.paleohacks.com/broccoli-breakfast-muffins/>

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**Berries** should be plump, firm, and richly colored. Do not buy wrinkled or shrunken (old), or a carton that is wet (may be moldy). Gently shake the container. Berries should move easily. Size doesn't matter, but small may be more flavorful. **In Season:** Strawberries: Mid-June to Early-July, Raspberries: Late-June to Early-July, Blackberries: May to September, but peak in June and July, Blueberries: Mid-June to Mid-August. **Storage:** Berries go bad quickly (especially wet), so plan to use within a day or two. Keep them dry by lining an unsealed perforated container with a paper towel change the paper towels once they become damp. Discard any moldy berries.

**Melons:** Cantaloupes and honeydew should be fragrant. Locate the smooth indentation on the stem end, smell it, and then press firmly with your thumb; it should give slightly. Squeeze it. If soft, it's too ripe. **In Season:** Summer. **Storage:** Keep in refrigerator until you're ready to eat them — up to 4 days.

**Avocados** should be medium to dark green and firm with no mushy areas. Shake it up! If you notice a rattle, don't buy. The pit has pulled from the flesh. **In Season:** All year. **Storage:** Refrigerate for up to a week. (If you need to ripen, put them in a paper bag with an apple at room temperature for 24-48 hours.)

## MORNING SETS THE TONE FOR THE DAY

Having an early morning routine is a commitment to improvement. It means you will have time to yourself in a quiet atmosphere and gives you the opportunity to be more organized for the rest of your day, which cuts down on stress and anxiety. Beginning your day with a positive routine can make your whole day more successful. Here are some ways to make the morning count for YOU.

- Start your day with something that makes you feel good. This might be exercising, spending some spiritual alone time, meditating, journaling ... whatever you will look forward to doing on a regular basis.
- Make your routine fit your personality and your life. As long as you feel uplifted, it doesn't matter what or how long. Choose what works for YOU *at that time of day*.
- Adjust your bedtime to go with your wake time. If you are planning to rise a half hour earlier, go to bed a half hour earlier. Sleep is important and affects how you feel and perform during the day.
- Write down your schedule for the next day before you go to bed. Then you don't need to worry about what you need to do, or what you might forget during the night.
- Don't go too gung-ho out of the gate. Begin with something that doesn't take too much time or too much energy.
- You don't need to commit long-term right away; give it a "trial run" for a week or two to see how this works out for you. Give yourself permission to change it up if you want to try something else.

Remember, a morning routine is an investment in yourself. If you don't take some time in the morning, you may find you've put your personal wellbeing on the back burner for the whole day.



## Bacon Egg Breakfast Bites with Chives

Serves 8-10

### Ingredients:

- 8 whole eggs—pasture raised or organic
- 6 slices bacon
- 1/2 tsp. paprika
- 1/2 tsp. onion powder
- 1/2 tsp. fine grain sea salt
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh chives

### Directions:

1. Cook bacon in a cast iron skillet over med-hi heat until crisp, drain on paper towels and set aside.
2. Preheat oven to 375 degrees and grease a muffin pan or line with baking cups.
3. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together eggs, salt, paprika and onion powder. Crumble the cooled bacon and add to the egg mixture. Last, add the chopped chives and stir to combine.
4. Fill the muffin cups 3/4 of the way up to make 8-10 egg bites. Bake in the preheated oven 10-15 minutes, or until the eggs have JUST set. Remove from oven and let cool before removing and serving.
5. Store leftovers in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze them for later use. Enjoy!

Source: <https://www.paleorunningmomma.com/bacon-egg-breakfast-bites-with-chives-paleo/>

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## CONNECTING FOOD AND MOOD

There is definitely a connection between the food you eat and your moods. Consider the facts. According to the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health, 11 percent of Americans over the age of 12 are on antidepressant drugs. Among women in their 40s and 50s, 1 in 4 is on antidepressants.

Can we be proactive in helping ourselves to feel better? Are there foods that help us feel good as well as foods that contribute to feeling anxious and depressed? The following is a quick overview.

### How food can affect your mood negatively:

- **You are skipping meals.** Not consuming enough calories can make you feel unfocused, tired, and anxious.
- **You're not getting enough vitamins and minerals.** By not eating from all the essential food groups, it is difficult to get enough essential nutrients. This can cause physical problems as well as depression, inability to concentrate, and fatigue.
- **You're not consuming omega-3 fatty acids,** which have been linked to a lower incidence of cognitive decline, depression, joint and muscle pain, and more (when consumed in adequate amounts).
- **You're eating a lot of processed foods,** which may contribute to weight gain, feeling sluggish, and inflammation when over-consumed. In fact, processed foods with added sugar can cause insulin levels to spike and drop quickly, which will make you hungry and anxious. Inflammation can cause physical problems as well as depression. Cookies, cakes, candy, snack foods... they may taste good, but they are not doing anything positive for your body or mind.

### Improving your mood through foods:

- **Fruits and vegetables** are mood-supporting foods. Think - *eat the rainbow*: green, red, yellow, orange, purple, red fruits and vegetables.
- **Eat foods as close as possible to how they look in nature.** WHOLE, NATURAL foods.
- **Eat plenty of dopamine-building foods:** leafy green vegetables, poultry, fish, eggs, legumes.
- **Increase omega-3 fatty acids:** Salmon and other fatty fish, flaxseed, chia seeds and walnuts to help fight off feelings of depression.
- **Magnesium-rich foods help** to support sleep and aid in feeling calmer. Foods high in magnesium include dark chocolate (70-85% cacao), quinoa, almonds, spinach, and pumpkin seeds.
- **Limit added sugars and avoid artificial sweeteners.** Sugar tastes good, but is just not healthy. Choose no-sugar-added varieties of foods when possible. Fruit is your best bet. If you must have a sweetener, best choices are real maple syrup, organic honey, and stevia.
- **How is your vitamin D level?** Low levels of vitamin D are associated with depression and mood disorders as well as physical ailments. Vitamin D can be found in fatty fish, egg yolks, liver and sunshine. If your levels are low, you will likely be instructed to supplement.



## Paleo Christmas Cookies

**Author: My Natural Family**

These Paleo Christmas cookies are soft with the perfect texture. You really can't even tell they are Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free and Vegan!

**Serves 16, 183 kcal**

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups almond flour
- 1/2 cup arrowroot powder
- 1/4 cup coconut oil melted
- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- 1/2 cup coconut milk full fat
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips
- Course sea salt optional

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Mix the almond flour, arrowroot powder, coconut oil, and maple syrup in a large bowl.
3. Roll the dough into 16 small round balls.
4. Place the dough on a cookie sheet and make an indent in the middle with your thumb.
5. Bake the cookies for 10-12 minutes until lightly browned.
6. While the cookies are baking, melt the coconut milk and chocolate together.
7. When the cookies are done baking and still warm, reinforce the thumb indent if needed.
8. Pour a small amount of the chocolate mixture into each cookie indent (you may have some chocolate left over).
9. Once the cookies have cooled completely, sprinkle them with course sea salt (a little bit of salt goes a long way).



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## Enjoy a Happy and SAFE Holiday Season!

We all want to have a smooth-flowing holiday season with our loved ones with no accidents, injuries, or emergencies! Here are a few tips to stay safe.

Unfortunately, automobile travel statistically has the highest fatality rate of any major form of transportation and alcohol-impaired fatalities represent about one-third of the totals.

- Use a designated driver to ensure guests make it home safely after a holiday party; alcohol, over-the-counter or illegal drugs all can cause impairment
- Make sure every person in the vehicle is properly buckled up no matter how long or short the distance traveled
- Put cell phones away; many distractions can occur while driving, but cell phones are the main culprit
- Properly maintain the vehicle and keep an emergency kit with you
- Be prepared for heavy traffic, and possibly heavy snow and icy conditions

### Candles and Fireplaces

Increased use of candles and fireplaces, combined with an increase in the amount of combustible, seasonal decorations present in many homes means more risk for fire.

- Never leave burning candles unattended or sleep in a room with a lit candle
- Keep candles out of reach of children
- Make sure candles are on stable surfaces
- Don't burn candles near trees, curtains or any other flammable items
- Don't burn trees, wreaths or wrapping paper in the fireplace
- Check and clean the chimney and fireplace area at least once a year
- Always turn off holiday lights when you leave the house unattended or when going to bed

### Don't Give the Gift of Food Poisoning!

- Do not rinse raw meat and poultry before cooking
- Use a food thermometer to make sure meat is cooked to a safe temperature
- Refrigerate food within two hours
- Thanksgiving leftovers are safe for four days in the refrigerator
- Bring sauces, soups and gravies to a rolling boil when reheating
- When storing turkey, cut the leftovers in small pieces so they will chill quickly
- Wash your hands frequently when handling food

Source: The National Safety Council

**At Occupational Athletics, we know that the future of healthcare is in the *prevention* of illness and injuries.**

**It is our mission to provide preventative care utilizing sports medicine principles and lifestyle modification training to create an atmosphere of health, safety, and performance to allow employees to enjoy an enhanced quality of life and reach their retirement—and beyond—SUCCESSFULLY!**



## Healthy Cauliflower Mashed Potatoes

*A creamy, delicious, gluten-free, low carb, vegan alternative to mashed potatoes.*

**Serves 4, 96 kcal**

### Ingredients:

- 1 medium head cauliflower trimmed and cut into florets
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- For garnish: chopped fresh thyme, extra virgin olive oil, freshly ground black pepper

### Directions:

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to boil, add the cauliflower and garlic and cook for about 10 minutes or until the cauliflower is fork tender. Drain, return it back to the hot pan and let it stand for 2 to 3 minutes with the lid on.
2. Transfer the cauliflower and garlic to a food processor, add the olive oil, salt and pepper and puree until smooth. (You can also use a potato masher or hand blender.)
3. Adjust the salt and pepper to taste.
4. Garnish with chopped fresh thyme, salt, pepper, and a drizzle of olive oil.
5. Serve immediately.
6. \*You can store the cauliflower mashed potatoes in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.



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