



SPRING CLEAN YOUR GROCERY CUPBOARD

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Regardless of the season, it's always a good idea to get rid of the clutter, the things that take up space and don't make you feel good. When you think about spring cleaning, household junk or those items in your wardrobe that you haven't worn for five years may pop to mind, but what about your grocery cupboard? What you put in to your body, has a direct influence on what you get out, so let's take a look at 5 foods that you can boot from your cupboard (and if you're worried your cupboard will be left bare, what to replace it with).

WHITE FLOUR AND OTHER HIGHLY REFINED GRAINS

It's no secret that carbohydrates are a major source of energy for our bodies. Grains like wheat flour, rice, pasta and maize contribute a large percentage of our daily carbohydrate intake. The problem with the highly refined versions of these foods is that they lose much of their naturally occurring fibre and nutrients during processing. So, make the change to less processed grains and say goodbye to white flours (and foods produced with them), white rice, white pastas and highly refined mealie meal. The next time you buy these items rather look for the wholegrain or brown versions.

DID YOU KNOW: The maize used in FUTURELIFE® undergoes a unique patented cooking process that protects the nutritional ingredients in the maize, we call it SMARTMAIZE™. You can also replace about half of the flour in many recipes with FUTURELIFE® Smart food™ and get a delicious result! Visit www.futurelife.co.za for an array of delicious recipes.

FIZZY COOLDRINKS AND OTHER SUGAR SWEETENED BEVERAGES

Sugary drinks are loaded with calories (energy) but provide little to no nutritional value with these calories. It shouldn't come as a huge surprise that they are directly linked to Metabolic Syndrome including obesity, diabetes, gout etc. These risk factors all contribute to your risk of heart disease¹.

Fortunately, you don't have to dehydrate without your favourite fizzy cooldrink or cordial. Quite the opposite, water is readily available to most of us and essential for good health. If you struggle to drink sufficient amounts of water, try these tips to "spice it up".

- If you crave that fizzy sensation in your mouth, order a sparkling water. Remember to choose plain sparkling water and avoid flavoured waters. These can contain about 6-7 teaspoons of sugar per bottle.
- Give your water a natural flavour instead by adding slices of your favourite fruit and/or herbs and refrigerating overnight.



- Carry a water bottle with you wherever you go. This will ensure that you increase your fluid intake and avoid the temptation of buying a cooldrink when you are thirsty.
- Craving something sweet? Freeze your favourite fruit or berry and use these as ice cubes. Sweet cravings can also be a sign of dehydration, so make sure that you are consuming enough water throughout the day.

HIGH SALT FOODS LIKE PACKET SOUPS, STOCK CUBES AND CERTAIN TINNED FOODS.

While we need minimal amounts of salt (or sodium) in our diets, excessive amounts pose various health risks including high blood pressure, strokes, heart disease and certain cancers². Salt adds a much-loved taste to many foods, but it is also used as a preservative in many grocery items. Items such as packet soups, stock cubes, many tinned foods (check the ingredients list) and many “spices” in your grocery cupboard are loaded with sodium and can quickly make your daily intake sky-rocket to well above the recommended intake.

Here are some suggested swaps:

- Rather make your own soups instead of using packet soups. They taste much better, are far more nutritious and can be much lower in salt. If you use these soups for thickening, rather use unsalted options like cornflour.
- Instead of stock cubes make your own bone or vegetable stock at home and pack it into small bags or blocks. You get to fully control what goes in and they are far more nutritious.
- As mentioned earlier not all tinned foods are necessarily high in salt, but read labels and avoid foods that are canned in salt (look out for tomato sauces, brine etc.), rather choose options without all the salt or where possible opt for the fresh version of the food.
- Instead of using salt and spices with a high salt content, rather get creative and season with alternative flavours like garlic, ginger, herbs, curry, cinnamon etc.

CHIPS, SWEETS, PRE-PACKAGED BAKED GOODS AND BISCUITS

I don't think it would come as a surprise to anyone that the above items are not ones that we should be eating daily. They usually contain a combination of trans fats, preservatives, salt or sugar. But...lets face it, if you're hungry and spot them in your grocery cupboard, they can be very hard to resist. These foods are considered “treats” by many, so rather keep them as that and keep them out of your grocery cupboard. Replace these with things like popcorn (air popped and unsalted), dried fruit, unsalted nuts and seeds or FUTURELIFE® Crunch, Whole Grain Granola or Smart bars.

INSTANT (OR CLOSE TO INSTANT) NOODLES

Instant noodles made the list because they are oh so popular and often take the place of a healthy meal in many people's diets. Given, they may be super convenient and come in a range of appealing flavours, but when it comes to providing a healthy meal they aren't quite there. If you read the ingredients list of your favourite instant noodles you will



find a whole lot of salt, calories, artificial colourants, flavourants and preservatives. Rather set aside a few more minutes to cook up some wholewheat spaghetti or, if you just don't have those minutes in the week, use your weekend to prepare some healthy meals that you can just keep in the fridge for the week.

CONCLUSION

Make a new healthier start today and seize the opportunity to break bad habits and replace some of the less healthy items in your grocery cupboard with better options for the whole family. It's what we put in our body today that affects our health tomorrow.

WHERE DOES FUTURELIFE® FIT IN?

FUTURELIFE® provides a range of delicious products which have been scientifically formulated to provide you with good nutrition and functional benefits, in formats that offer convenience and versatility. Visit www.futurelife.co.za to find the products best suited to your family and include these in your grocery cupboard.

REFERENCES

1. <https://futurelife.co.za/have-a-think-about-your-drink/>
2. <http://www.health.ric.gov/healthrisks/salt/>