

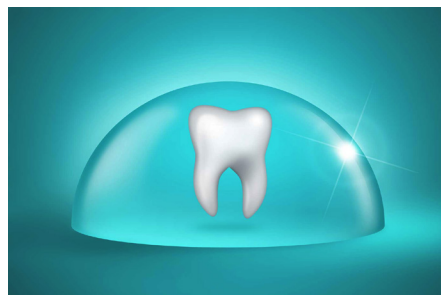
Ask the Expert:

What Is Fluoride?

Written by Emma Araya, Purdue University Nutrition and Dietetics '26

Fluoride is a mineral that is naturally present in many foods and beverages. Fluoride can also be taken as a dietary supplement. Fluoride is mainly used to help prevent cavities in teeth, where it's added to products like toothpaste and mouthwash, and to public water sources, also called water fluoridation. Fluoride has been added to almost 75% of the U.S. public drinking water systems since 1962 as a way to promote dental health and increase the natural amount of fluoride present in drinking water. Fluoridation is the main way that people, especially children, get fluoride. Besides helping prevent cavities, fluoride can also help with overall bone health and preventing breaks and fractures.

Although many nutrients can be toxic at high doses including fluoride, the fluoride levels in U.S water systems are much lower than the amount that could be toxic to people. Fluoride is very important for children because it lowers their risk for cavities in teeth during the time when their adult teeth are forming. Fluoride may also help prevent cavities in all people.



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Food Safety: Is My Meat Done Yet?

Written by Emma Araya, Purdue University Nutrition and Dietetics '26

Americans consume 85% of their daily protein from animal sources like pork, beef, poultry, and fish. But, if these meats are not fully cooked, they can cause illness or even death. Disease causing bacteria may be living in these foods. Cooking meats to proper temperatures will kill these bacteria and stop foodborne illness. Follow these tips to safely prepare meat this summer:

- Do not only rely on how a food looks to tell when it is ready to eat:

Just because the meat looks cooked on the outside, it may not be fully cooked on the inside. Raw beef, pork, lamb, and veal steaks, chops, and roasts should be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 145F, ground meat should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160F and raw poultry to an internal temperature of 165F.

- Properly thaw your frozen meat and poultry:

Raw or cooked meat/poultry should always be kept at a safe temperature, even when being thawed. If the meat reaches a higher temperature than 40F at any point, bacteria can start to grow and multiply. Never thaw the meat on the counter, instead keep it in the refrigerator 24 hours before cooking. If you plan on eating the meat right away, you can thaw it in the microwave and cook it directly afterwards.

- Separate raw and cooked meats:

Cross-contamination is a big concern when cooking meat. Bacteria can spread from raw meat to cooked meat if it is not kept separated. Cooking helps kill most bacteria. So, keep cooked meats safe to eat by not letting them touch or be near raw meat.



Sources: [https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/blog/cooking-meat-it-done-yet#:~:text=Cook%20raw%20beef%2C%20pork%2C%20lamb,minutes%20before%20cutting%20or%20consuming,](https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/blog/cooking-meat-it-done-yet#:~:text=Cook%20raw%20beef%2C%20pork%2C%20lamb,minutes%20before%20cutting%20or%20consuming,https://www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-charts/safe-minimum-internal-temperatures)
<https://www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-charts/safe-minimum-internal-temperatures>
<https://www.menusofchange.org/issue-briefs/protein-consumption#:~:text=On%20average%2C%20Americans%20consume%20approximately,85%20percent%20is%20animal%20protein.>

Greek Salad with Chicken

Directions

1. For the dressing, add plain yogurt, lemon juice, olive oil, garlic, oregano, salt, and pepper to a small bowl. Mix well to combine.
2. Cover dressing and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
3. Wash lettuce and tear into bite-sized pieces. Place in large salad bowl and add tomatoes, cucumbers, red onion, olives, and chicken.
4. Sprinkle with feta cheese and top with yogurt dressing and enjoy.

Ingredients (6 servings)

(For Dressing):

- 1/2 c plain yogurt
- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper

(For Salad):

- 1 head of romaine lettuce
- 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes
- 1 diced cucumber
- 1/4 cup olives
- 1 cup cooked chicken breast*
- 1/4 cup feta cheese
- 1/4 cup red onion



Nutrition Facts (per serving)

Calories: 173

Protein: 18g

Carbs: 12g

Fat: 7g

***foods included in the
TEFAP (The Emergency Food
Assistance Program)**

Sources: <https://www.myplate.gov/recipes/greek-salad-chicken>

Eating Right: Am I Eating Enough Protein?

Written by Emma Araya, Purdue University Nutrition and Dietetics '26

Protein is an important nutrient for growth and development. Proteins are made up of smaller units called amino acids. Amino acids can be found in the protein foods that we eat. Our bodies can use these amino acids to make new proteins that we need for repairing cells and carrying out other functions to help us stay healthy.



There is a recommended daily intake of 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight. For example, that would be about 54 grams a day for a person weighing 150 pounds. The recommended amount also depends on age, activity level, and overall health.

Currently, there has been a surge in marketing towards “high protein” foods like chips, popcorn, and beverages. However, in terms of nutrition, the body can’t store protein, so once needs are met, extra protein is used for energy, or it is stored as fat. Most Americans are getting the protein they need with the exception of adolescent girls who are the only age and sex group not meeting their average protein requirement. This means that protein is less of a concern for most age/sex groups in the U.S. Protein is recommended to be 10-35% of total daily calories. If you eat 2,000 calories, that would be 200-700 calories from protein. Some protein sources include fish, lean meats, beans, peas, lentils, low-fat dairy, and eggs. Protein sources should be accompanied by fruits, vegetables, and whole grains at mealtime.



Sources:

<https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/about-dietary-guidelines/purpose-dietary-guidelines#:~:text=The%20Dietary%20Guidelines%20for%20Americans,promote%20health%2C%20and%20prevent%20disease.>

<https://www.myplate.gov/life-stages/kids>

<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/what-is-myplate>



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This newsletter is edited by Emma Araya and Heather A. Eicher-Miller, PhD and is created by the Eicher-Miller Lab in the Department of Nutrition Science at Purdue University. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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In The News: June 1st Marks National Olive Day!

IN THE NEWS

Written by Emma Araya, Purdue University Nutrition and Dietetics '26

National Olive Day is celebrated June 1st. This day brings attention to the importance of olives in many cultures and traditions around the world.

Olives contain monounsaturated fats, which contribute to lowering a type of cholesterol called LDL cholesterol or "bad" cholesterol. Olives also contain antioxidants that promote health by protecting body cells from damage. There are many olive varieties, some of the most common being kalamata and green olives. Here are some ways to include more olives in your diet:

- Add it as a topping: on pizza, sandwiches, salads.
- As an addition to your snack: dip it in hummus or other sauces with crackers
- Use as a garnish: on casseroles or for special beverages



Sources: <https://oldwayspt.org/blog/ode-olive-day/>