

DID YOU KNOW THAT MARCH IS BOTH NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH AND NATIONAL FROZEN FOODS MONTH?

By Dr. Cathy

I am often out of the loop with what and why a month is named for any particular thing. However, I wanted take this opportunity to elaborate on how frozen foods can contribute to a balanced and healthy diet.

To have a truly healthy and nutritious diet a variety of foods must be eaten. Our bodies are designed to adapt to most anything in moderation, although it is vital to have a basic understanding of nutrition and what nourishes our cells, organs, muscles and brain.

The human body is in a state of continuous flux. It is not static, stagnate or fixed rather it is dynamic, ever changing and a perfect working machine.

The body has a metabolism internally maintained to constantly break down and build up cells. These cells are the matrix of our systems: Glands, Eliminative organs, Central, peripheral and autonomic nervous systems, Digestive organs, Muscles; ligaments and tendons and Circulatory organs; heart, lungs, arteries, veins and lymph.

All these systems, or **Zones**, have specific functions to carry out which are controlled and coordinated by the centers in the brain and the autonomic (automatic) nervous system. In other words the subconscious mind manages all these functions without our conscious mind or intellect being directly involved.

After we choose a food, bite into it, chew and then swallow the autonomic (automatic) nerve system then directs the body and it's organs to digest and assimilate what it can use to nourish the body by delivering the necessary life giving molecules of food to build blood, oxygen, cell renewal, lymph, and chemicals, all to assist the body in it's constant regeneration.

This same digestive system works with the elimination system to rid the body of toxins, mucous, bacteria, and viruses.

Did you know you have a completely new body in 7 years? The rate of turnover of cells is a completed cycle within that time. You might be interested to know that the entire digestive tract from mouth to colon is one long tube with organs attached and will renew itself in as little as 5 days!

So is proper nutrition important? You bet it is! A good balanced diet will always recommend a large portion of vegetables, preferably 50% raw and about 20% cooked. Most Americans eat a larger portion of cooked, fried, sautéed, baked, broiled, etc. Cooking food breaks it down to less nourishing constituents and denatures necessary enzymes that would be replenished to assist us in so many functions.



Frozen foods of the natural type are a good source of nutrients and can be extremely convenient in preparing snacks and meals. The rule of thumb goes like this: Fresh is best when available. Organic is highly recommended, but be sure of sources and it is often overpriced! Locally grown is also an excellent choice, and conventional can be used; be sure to scrub them with a vegetable brush or peel as most toxins store there.

Frozen vegetables and fruits are a good source of vitamins, minerals and enzymes and freezing doesn't kill these necessary nutrients like heat does. Frozen fish and shellfish are also good sources of protein and can be thawed quickly for a nutritious meal.

Also available are frozen breads and waffles, especially the multi-grain or alternate grains; rice, millet, amaranth, oat and sprouted grains, which have fewer allergens. Peas, beans, spinach and combinations of frozen veggies are great to enhance soups, stews, and stir-fries or defrost and use in salads.

So take a tip this month and become aware of how you are choosing foods. Remember a variety of foods is best, as eating the same foods over and over can develop sensitivities and allergies over time. Many people are enslaved to their likes and dislikes when it comes to foods but just remember when you were a baby and the adults around you taught you to eat, they taught you what they knew.

Each one of us is capable of learning new things and making new choices, so eat to live, don't live to eat! Try incorporating fresh raw foods into your diet and what could be easier, just wash and eat. Also enhance your freezer with healthy choices of frozen vegetables, building proteins and fruits.

