

THE DIETITIAN'S DESK

WELCOME TO THE DIETITIAN'S DESK!

This newsletter is committed to providing insightful nutritional information to promote a healthy lifestyle in school and at home.

This month's newsletter was developed by Sodexo's Carolyn Pancarwicz, MS, RD, CDN from East Hartford Public Schools in Connecticut.

February 2022 Issue

HEART HEALTHY

SEEN IN YOUR SCHOOL LUNCH

School lunches include a variety of heart healthy food options every day. Some of the key components of a heart healthy diet include foods that are low in saturated fat, low in added sugars, low in sodium, and high in fiber. **(1)**

The school lunch program has strict parameters that have to be met by menu planners that keep saturated fat and sodium under certain levels. There are five "components" or food groups that must be offered daily in school lunch including grains, fruits, vegetables, a meat/meat alternate (protein) and milk. The grains served as part of school meals are whole grain rich which means they are a good source of fiber. Additionally, fruits and vegetables are naturally low in fat, low in sodium and high in fiber. All milk served to students must be low fat or fat free.

HEART HEALTHY FACTS

1.) To keep your heart healthy it is important to eat a diet that consists of fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy products, whole grains, poultry, fish, nuts and legumes. **(1)**

2.) Heart disease usually refers to coronary heart disease (CHD) or sometimes called coronary artery disease (CAD). With CHD, a person's coronary arteries that take blood to the heart are narrowed or blocked by fatty material called plaque. Plaque can build up and damage the arteries when a person has too much fat/cholesterol in the blood, has high blood pressure, or has too much sugar in the blood. **(1)**

3.) Physical activity plays an important role in heart health. According to the American Heart Association, individuals should be getting at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity in order to maintain a healthy weight and keep the heart healthy. **(1)**

FROM YOUR FARMER

Eating a variety of colors of fruits and vegetables is important for your heart health! Each color provides different nutrients that contribute to your health - orange/red vegetables are packed with carotenoids, fiber and vitamins for your heart. During the winter months, look for in-season red/orange root vegetables like carrots and winter squash varieties from your local farms! **(2)** Root vegetables taste great when roasted or cooked in a homemade soup on a chilly day. **(2)**

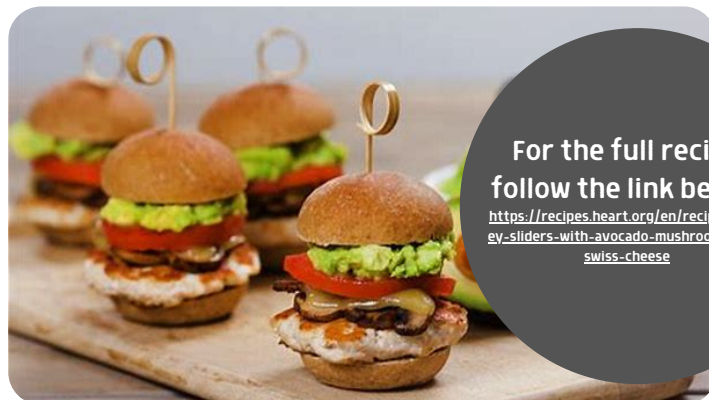
RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Turkey Sliders w/ Avocado, Mushrooms & Swiss Cheese

*From The American Heart Association

Ingredients:

- 8 whole-grain slider buns (lowest sodium available)
- 1 and 1/4 pounds ground skinless turkey breast
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup sliced brown (cremini) mushrooms
- 4 slices low-fat Swiss cheese, cut in half
- 1 medium avocado, peeled, pitted, and mashed with a fork
- 1 tomato, cut into 8 slices (about 1/4-inch thick)



For the full recipe follow the link below:
<https://recipes.heart.org/en/recipes/turkey-sliders-with-avocado-mushrooms-and-swiss-cheese>

(1) The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. What is Heart Disease? Updated July 8, 2021. Accessed January 11, 2022. Available at: <https://health.gov/myhealthfinder/topics/health-conditions/heart-health/keep-your-heart-healthy#panel-3>

(2) Healthy Family Project. What's in Season for February? January 31, 2019. Accessed January 11, 2022. Available at: <https://healthyfamilyproject.com/whats-in-season-for-february>