

March 2023

3/6/23: Singing Salads

Are you in a salad slump? Salads aren't meant to be boring and monotonous- they can be so much more than that! I'm Clarissa Moon here with some tips on making your salads sing.

- 1) Try different greens. Mix and match or go crazy and try some edible flowers! Yes, you heard me right- edible flowers.
- 2) Herbs can add a lot of flavor! Both dried and fresh will be effective, but start in small doses so you don't overpower other flavors.
- 3) Try adding some different foods in for texture and flavor- such as avocado and beans.
- 4) Add some texture. Nuts and seeds don't just provide flavor, but they add some much needed crunch to break up the chewy fibers of your greens. Croutons and cheese are also provide some varying textures that you could implement.
- 5) Make it sweet- add fruit! Break through the bitterness of greens with some sweet relief in your fruits and/or dressings.
- 6) Speaking of dressings- look for ingredients that provide healthy fats and a feeling of fullness. Always watch your portion size.
- 7) Variety is key- try an assortment of textures, flavors and colors to really make those taste buds happy.

There are salad snippits for you! For more info visit [eatright.org](https://www.eatright.org) or panola.agrilife.org

<https://www.eatright.org/food/planning-and-prep/snack-and-meal-ideas/healthy-salads>

3/13/23: National Nutrition Month

From the Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics

<https://www.eatright.org/national-nutrition-month-2023/resources>

3/20/23: Take Your Eating Style to the Mediterranean

Fish instead of fried chicken, brown rice instead of a white bread roll, olive oil instead of butter. Easy food swaps like this put the heart-healthy power of the Mediterranean diet on your plate. One study showed that the Mediterranean eating pattern can reduce heart disease by 28-30%! Combine it with other lifestyle changes and you can reduce your risk of premature death by a whopping 80%. And that's just one study.

I'm Clarissa Moon here with some more info.

First of all, the Mediterranean diet (or eating pattern) doesn't restrict you to fish, olives, and hummus (thank goodness!). It's all about incorporating *concepts* from that eating pattern into your own current style. For example, getting more whole grains, omega-3 fatty acids, and lean protein.

So, how does it work? There are 4 ways that Med-style eating can help your heart.

- 1) Helps promote healthy cholesterol levels.
- 2) Enhances your body's ability to process and absorb blood sugar
- 3) Lowers inflammation which can lead to chronic conditions
- 4) Helps arteries stay flexible and resist plaque buildups.

Take your eating pattern to the Mediterranean and reap the benefits! Learn more at panola.agrilife.org or hopkinsmedicine.org.

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/take-your-diet-to-the-mediterranean>

3/27/23: Change your Fattitude

You may or may not know that fat is actually a very important part of our human diet. Fat is needed to give your body energy and support cell function. It can also help you digest certain vitamins. However, fat also gets a bad rap, but that's for good reason. Not to confuse you, but there are both good and bad fats. I'm Clarissa Moon here to break it down for you.

Let's start with the bad news- the bad news being saturated fat. This stuff raises your LDL (bad cholesterol) and reduces cognition. Saturated fat is easy to find in the diet because it's in so many of our favorite foods like bacon, burgers, tacos and pizza. It's even in bread!

Now for the good news- that's unsaturated fat. This healthier fat is found in seafood, avocados, nuts and some oils. In order to tell the difference between saturated and unsaturated fats, think about its state at room temperature. Saturated fats like butter will be solid, while unsaturated fats like olive oil will be liquid.

Here are some ideas for swapping your fats!

- Choose seafood instead of fatty meats
- Snack on nuts instead of full-fat cheese
- Buy low-fat dairy products
- Switch to grilled meats instead of fried ones.

Now that you know, change your fattitude! For more information, visit dietaryguidelines.gov or panola.agrilife.org.

https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/DGA_FactSheet_SaturatedFats-07-09_508c_0.pdf

<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/resources/healthier-fats-and-oils>