

... June 2011 ...

QUICK TAKES

Plan Your Safe Vacation

This summer, don't take a vacation from common sense. Plan an escape that will refresh your body and renew your spirit. Maintain your family's active lifestyle by taking the time to plan physical activities that everyone can enjoy. Whether you're going to the shore or the mountains, visiting a busy city or sleepy town, consider these suggestions for a healthy, safe and fun time.

- Drive safely -- and don't drive drowsy. After a long day in the sun, you're likely to be dehydrated and fatigued. Take a break if you feel tired or share the drive with your partner.
- Ride and climb safely. Insist that everyone in your party wear a helmet when biking, horseback riding, skateboarding, riding scooters or rock climbing.
- Play it safe near or in the water. Wear a lifejacket when you're on the water. Swim with a buddy at lifeguarded beaches. Always supervise children in or around water.

Pick Up Healthy On-the-Go Snacks

Whether you're at a rest area on the highway or waiting in line at a theme park, you're likely to be surrounded by stacks of not-so-healthy snacks. Despite the temptation, don't let your vacation be an excuse to indulge in foods you wouldn't eat back home.

It's easier than it once was, but you still have to look for healthy snack choices. With all snacks, it's important to keep an eye on calories. A healthy snack should be no more than 200 calories.

Crackers, pretzels, chips and popcorn can be part of a healthy diet as long as you keep an eye on portion size. Be sure to read the label to determine how many servings are in an individual package. Look for whole-grain crackers and pretzels, air-popped popcorn and baked (not fried) chips.



Snack bars are often high in sugar and empty calories. Try to choose bars made with real fruit and whole grains. It's possible you won't find them at tourist destinations, so consider stocking up on your favorite brand before leaving home.

Milk, cheese and yogurt are excellent snacking options for people on the move -- as long as you keep them chilled. Pack plastic spoons and pick up low-fat yogurts at a convenience store. Keep reduced-fat string cheese in your cooler. Look for bottles of low-fat milk in vending machines at rest stops.



Nuts -- almonds, walnuts, pecans, pistachios and peanuts -- offer protein and good fats. Look for unsalted or dry-roasted varieties. Keep tabs on how many you eat, though. Nut calories add up fast. For instance, 15 walnut halves total about 200 calories.

Fruits and veggies that you can eat out of hand are nature's ideal snack food. When driving to your vacation destination, keep an eye open for fresh local produce at roadside stands and farmer's markets.



Pace Yourself in the Heat

Warm summer days feel especially good after such a long, harsh winter, but high heat can take a toll on even the most physically fit vacationer. If you are not accustomed to recreation in high heat and humidity, you must pace yourself.



Prevent heat-related illness and review these tips before engaging in physical activity on very warm days:

- Dress for the heat. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy. It is also a good idea to wear a hat.
- Avoid strenuous activity during the warmest part of the day, generally between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Take regular time-outs and try to find a cool, shaded place to rest.
- Eat small meals and eat more often. Your body has to spend a great deal of energy keeping you cool in the heat.
- Stay hydrated. Carry water or juice with you when hiking and drink even if you do not feel thirsty. Drink two to four glasses of cool fluids each hour.
- If exertion in the heat makes your heart pound and leaves you gasping for breath, **stop all activity**. Get into a cool area and rest, especially if you become lightheaded, confused, weak or faint.

Outfit the Whole Family with Sunglasses

Sunglasses aren't just a vacationer's fashion statement. They greatly reduce the risk of cataracts and other eye damage. Adults and children should protect their eyes with lenses that provide 99 percent to 100 percent protection for both UVA and UVB rays. Check the label before buying.

All children should be taught to wear sunglasses, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Ultraviolet exposure is greatest at high altitudes, on bright sandy beaches and near reflective bodies of water.

Oatmeal Bars Makes: 20 bars

Bake a batch or two of these rich and chewy bars well in advance of your vacation departure date and freeze them for healthy snacking while on the road.

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups white whole-wheat flour (or a mixture of all-purpose and traditional whole-wheat flours)
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1/3 cup brown sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon salt
2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
1/2 cup toasted wheat germ
3/4 cup nonfat milk
1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
1 large egg
1/4 cup canola or safflower oil
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
3/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips
1/2 cup raisins

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 9x13-inch baking pan with cooking spray. Line the bottom with parchment or wax paper and spray again.
2. In a mixing bowl, whisk together flour, sugars, baking powder, cinnamon and salt. Stir in oats and wheat germ.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together milk, applesauce, egg, oil and vanilla.
4. Add milk mixture to the dry ingredients. Stir to blend. Mix in chocolate chips and raisins. Spread batter in the prepared pan.
5. Bake until the edges are brown and firm, about 20 minutes.



Nutritional info per bar

168 Calories
5 g Fat
1 g Saturated fat
0 g Trans fat
4 g Protein
28 g Carbohydrate
2 g Fiber
41 mg Sodium

Source: Alere Kitchens