

Smart Choices

Nutrition News for Seniors

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Fact Or Fiction?

The world of nutrition and health information is an ever changing one and full of conflicting messages. So how should one go about separating fact from fiction? Here are four steps that can help guide you through the process.

Step 1

Determine the type of source providing the information.

There are three basic types of sources of information. They are primary, secondary and tertiary. A primary source is the original source where the information was written. For example, this would include a paper written by the researchers who conducted the study.

A secondary source is a source that has taken the original work and summarized or re-hashed the information. An example of a secondary source would be an article in a magazine that mentions the study conducted.

A tertiary source of information is a gathering together of primary and secondary sources.

All of these sources may not always be believable so it is best to go to the next step.

Step 2

Determine if the source is credentialed in nutrition.

Look for trustworthy experts who are educated and credentialed. Someone who was not trained in the area of nutrition or health could claim they have the credibility to publish material, but in reality do not. For nutrition information, the following professionals should be your best choices for gathering information.

- Registered Dietitian
- Licensed Nutritionist
- Professionals with a Master's or Doctoral degree
- Medical Doctor
- Professional Organizations such as: The American Dietetic Association, The American Society for Nutrition, The American College of Sports Medicine, etc.



Step 3

Determine if the source is a government source.

There are many federal and international agencies and departments that work together to conduct and report research findings. These agencies can provide you with reliable research-based information. They include: The Centers for Disease Control, The National Institutes of Health, the Department of Health and Human Services and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Step 4

Determine if product or service sounds too good to be true.

Use your common sense and if it sounds too good to be true then it probably is.

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Corn Chowder

(Yield: 4 1 cup servings)

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 tablespoons onion, finely diced
1 package (10 ounces) frozen whole kernel corn
1 cup water
Black pepper to taste
2 cups milk, non-fat, divided
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

2 tablespoons finely diced celery
2 tablespoons finely diced green pepper
1 cup raw diced potatoes, peeled,
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon paprika
2 tablespoons flour

Preparation:

1. In medium saucepan, heat oil over medium high heat.
2. Add celery, onion, and green pepper; sauté for 2 minutes.
3. Add corn, potatoes, water, salt, pepper, and paprika. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium; and cook, covered, about 10 minutes or until potatoes are tender.
4. Pour ½ cup milk into a jar with a tight-fitting lid. Add flour and shake vigorously.
5. Add gradually to cooked vegetables; stir well.
6. Add remaining milk.
7. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture comes to a boil and thickens.
8. Serve garnished with chopped fresh parsley.



Source: "A Healthier You." U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Ways to Spot Nutrition Fraud

There are many different products and services on the market for consumers that promote good nutrition and better health. Here are some things to watch out for when making a wise and informed decision.

- Be wary of a product that is promoted as a "secret recipe," an "ancient formula" or "a miracle."
- A red flag should go up if a particular product says it has "no side effects." Anything that affects how your body works can have some type of side effect.
- Watch out for a salesperson or promoter who claims that physicians and researchers are not any good. Plus, if they advise you not to tell your doctor you are taking the product, don't buy it.
- Don't be fooled by medical jargon. Stay away from a product if you can't understand what a salesperson or promoter is telling you because they are using confusing medical terms. Also be wise if they can't answer any of your questions because that makes them have to go off script.
- Also watch out for products that do not have an ingredient list on the packaging.

What's the Purpose of SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP is about helping people with limited incomes improve their nutrition for better health and disease prevention. The program is available to all eligible persons. Food Stamp coupons have been replaced by an electronic SNAP card that looks and works just like a typical debit or credit card used by any grocery shopper. This program can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact 1-888-LA HELPU or visit www.dss.state.la.us.



In accordance with Federal law and U. S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 225-219-0351 or 1-888-LA HELPU (1-888-524-3578). Visit our website: www.lsuagcenter.com

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References: University of Wisconsin Extension and Center for Obesity Surgery and Treatment