

Words on Wellness

The Link between Sleep and Obesity



It's obvious that sleep is important to everyday health, but did you know that it also plays a role in managing weight? Sleep deprivation has long been linked to an increased risk of becoming overweight. Researchers have found that getting less than seven hours of sleep results in weight changes and may lead to weight gain, either by increasing food intake or decreasing energy burned. The effects of lack of sleep can be a hormone imbalance in your body that promotes overeating and weight gain. Leptin and ghrelin are hormones that regulate appetite. When you are not getting enough sleep, the production of these hormones is altered to create increased feelings of hunger. Researchers suggest that obesity may change metabolism and/or sleep-wake cycles in such a way that causes sleep quality to deteriorate.

How to get a good night of sleep:

1. Stick to a sleep schedule to always get the sleep you need.
2. Create a restful environment—a cool, dark, quiet setting is best.
3. Limit daytime naps to 30 minutes or less.
4. Include physical activity in your day—regular activity can promote better sleep.
5. Manage worries and stress by jotting down concerns before bed.
6. Avoid things that stimulate your brain, such as screen time, at least 30 minutes before bed.

Mushroom Quinoa

Serving Size: 1/2 cup | Serves: 6

Ingredients:

- 1 cup uncooked quinoa
- 1 tablespoon oil (canola, olive, or vegetable)
- 1 package (8 ounces) fresh sliced mushrooms
- 1 onion, diced (about one cup)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon dried herb (basil, oregano, thyme)
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Optional: shredded cheese (mozzarella, parmesan, Swiss)

Directions:

1. Cook quinoa according to package directions. Reserve 1 1/2 cups for this recipe. Store remaining quinoa for use in another recipe.
2. Heat oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, onion, garlic, dried herb, ground black pepper, and salt. Cook 6 minutes, until mushrooms and onions are tender, stirring often.
3. Stir reserved 1 1/2 cups quinoa into a skillet of cooked vegetables.
4. Top with shredded cheese, if desired.

Nutrition information per serving:

100 calories, 3.5g total fat, 0g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 105mg sodium, 14g total carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 2g sugar, 4g protein

This recipe is courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach's Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website. For more information, recipes, and videos, visit [Spend Smart. Eat Smart.](https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu), spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu.

Update on Food Allergies

The number of people with food allergies is increasing, and the number of foods to which people are allergic is also growing. In the United States, nearly 4% of people have a food allergy. In 2021, the FASTER (Food, Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education, and Research) Act was signed into law, making sesame the ninth major food allergen in the United States. The most common food allergies in children are allergies to peanuts, milk, shellfish, and tree nuts. The most common food allergies in adults are allergies to shellfish, milk, peanuts, and tree nuts. An antibody drug, Xolair, is a drug that can help reduce allergic reactions to multiple foods. Also, Peanut Allergen Powder is the first oral immunotherapy drug for treating children ages 4–17 with a confirmed peanut allergy.



Handle with Care: Fruits and Vegetables

Excess moisture can cause most fruits and veggies to spoil prematurely. Avoid prewashing leafy greens and berries, but if you must, make sure the produce is dried thoroughly before storing. Wrap dried leaves in a clean towel to absorb excess moisture and store in a plastic bag in the fridge. Make sure berries are dried thoroughly before storing in the fridge in an air-tight container. It's helpful to give berries space by using flat containers with abundant surface area. Storing cut vegetables, like carrots, celery, and potatoes, in water can help prolong their freshness.



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If you or someone you know is skipping meals, going hungry, or choosing between food and medicine, call 1-855-944-3663 to apply for assistance today.

Call Iowa 2-1-1 or Iowa Lifelong Links, 1-866-468-7887, for additional resources.



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