

August Nutrition Notes

Sesame - The 9th Major Food Allergy: On April 23rd sesame became part of a list of 9 foods that, because of the major known health implications for millions of Americans, is now required to be listed on food labels beginning January 1, 2023. Sesame seeds, along with milk, wheat, soybean, eggs, fish, shellfish, peanuts, and tree nuts are thought to be responsible for over 90% of all food allergies. Research also indicates that many individuals suffering from one food allergy may also have additional food allergies and/or sensitivities which makes going from diagnosing a food allergy to learning how to manage your risk daily through diet and lifestyle changes a challenge. While some companies will choose to begin adding food label warnings for sesame now, many will ultimately hold off. Working with a registered dietitian is pivotal in ensuring that patients and families have the tools and resources they need to navigate this area of health safely, effectively, affordably, and most importantly, enjoyably!

Depression, Food Insecurity, and How Nutrition Can Help: Through the lens of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are now more aware than ever of the food insecurity that plagues Americans daily. It is estimated that 10.5 percent of U.S. households were food insecure at least sometime during the year in 2019 with a potential increase in 2020 as a result of the pandemic. Poor diet quality by way of nutrient deficiencies, specifically omega-3 fatty acids, B-vitamins, and minerals such as magnesium and zinc, places individuals at higher risk for depressive symptoms in addition to several other chronic diseases. The challenge: including nutrient-dense food sources with food access and budget in mind. While this is no simple task, research continues to support the need to include education and support from an RDN in one's treatment plan to ensure a comprehensive approach that considers all factors impacting health beyond the standard scope of care.

Oncology Nutrition Case Study: JP is an 81-year-old Asian male referred to Banister Nutrition for weight management with consideration for chemotherapy secondary to prostate cancer and a long-standing history of T2DM. In addition, JP recently underwent surgery for a right hemicolectomy with colostomy placement which resulted in changes to eating habits thereby leading to a weight loss of greater than 10lbs in less than 3 months. A thorough nutrition assessment revealed that JP had recently increased his fruit, vegetable, and grain intake to include more fresh items as well as chia and flax seeds to help support his immune system during cancer treatment. By doing so, the amount of fiber he was receiving in his diet was exceeding the amount comfortably digested and tolerated by his body at this point while the calories were lower than estimated for what his body needed for weight maintenance. In addition, it was discovered that JP had mistakenly stopped taking his appetite stimulant that had previously been prescribed. By providing information on various types of fiber as well as appropriate serving sizes and amounts to support metabolic and nutrient needs, JP was able to restart his appetite stimulant through his provider and achieve weight maintenance within the first two weeks of nutrient therapy. JP continues to explore foods with greater confidence and has been able to achieve weight maintenance to date.