

Nutrition News for Seniors



Provided by the Nutrition Division of the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services

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Spring is finally here, and eggs have been the symbols of spring and rebirth for centuries. These household staples provide a powerhouse of nutrition in a low-cost package. But many still ask....

Are eggs good or bad for my cholesterol?

Eggs from chickens are high in cholesterol. A diet high in cholesterol can contribute to high cholesterol levels in the blood. However, how much the cholesterol in your diet increases your blood cholesterol varies from person to person. Even though eating too many eggs can increase your cholesterol, eating as many as four egg yolks a week has not been found to increase your risk of heart disease.

So, when deciding whether to include eggs in your diet, consider the recommended daily limits on cholesterol in your food:

- If you are healthy, limit yourself to less than 300 milligrams (mg) a day.
- If you have cardiovascular disease, diabetes or a high low-density lipoprotein (LDL, or "bad") blood cholesterol level, you should limit yourself to less than 200 mg a day.

One large egg has about 186 mg of cholesterol — all found in the yolk. Therefore, if you eat an egg on a given day, limit other sources of cholesterol for the rest of that day. Consider substituting vegetables for meat, or avoid high-fat dairy products instead.

If you like eggs but don't want the extra cholesterol, use only the egg whites, which contain no cholesterol. You may also use cholesterol-free egg substitutes, which are made with egg whites.

Source: www.mayoclinic.org, "Are chicken eggs good or bad for my cholesterol?" Thomas Behrenbeck, MD, Ph.D., January 12, 2012.

Egg Essentials

Are you up to speed on your egg expertise? Here are answers to some common egg questions.

Are Eggs OK to Use After the "Sell By" Date?

Eggs should be used within three weeks of the "sell by" date. Store eggs in the refrigerator at less than 40°F. When purchasing eggs, make sure they are sold in a refrigerator case and that none of the eggs are cracked. When you get home, put the eggs in the refrigerator as soon as possible and keep them in their original carton displaying the expiration date. The egg rack on the refrigerator door is not the best place to store eggs because the temperature is warmer there than on the interior shelves.





How Do I Hard Boil an Egg?

Hard-boiled eggs should be cooked until the white and yolk are completely set. To do this, place eggs in a saucepan and cover with water. Bring water to a boil, cover the saucepan, then turn off the heat. Let eggs stand in water for 15 minutes. Remove eggs and place in a bowl of ice cold water to cool.

Do Hard-Boiled Eggs Spoil Faster than Fresh Eggs?

Yes. When eggs are hard boiled, the protective coating is washed away, making it easier for bacteria to permeate the shell and contaminate the egg. Hard-boiled eggs should be refrigerated within two hours of cooking and used within a week.

What Makes Hard-Boiled Eggs Hard to Peel?

The fresher the egg, the more difficult it is to peel after hard boiling. That's because the air cell, found at the large end of the shell between the shell membranes, increases in size the longer the raw egg is stored. As the egg's contents contract and the air cell enlarges, the shell becomes easier to peel. That's why older eggs are better candidates for hard boiling.



Why Is the Inside of a Hard-Boiled Egg Sometimes Green?

A green ring on a hard-boiled yolk comes from overcooking. It's caused by sulfur and iron compounds in the egg reacting on the yolk's surface or by a high amount of iron in the cooking water. The green-colored yolk is safe to eat.

Source: www.eatright.org, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Adapted from *Eggs Essentials*. Reviewed March 2013.

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Food Trivia: What is the first fruit of spring to ripen?

Strawberries

Nutrition Facts

Strawberries are packed with vitamins, fiber and high antioxidant levels. They have been shown in scientific studies to lower cholesterol, blood pressure and guard against cancer. Approximately eight strawberries will provide 3 grams of fiber and more vitamin C than a whole orange. Strawberries complement a bowl of oatmeal, add sweetness to a green salad, enhance any dessert or satisfy just simply as they are!



Enjoy now in the peak season of April through June.

Source: Nutrition info adapted from *Nutritional Benefits of a Strawberry*, www.webmd.com, Reviewed March 31, 2008.

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