

Nutrition Action[®]

CENTER FOR SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST  APRIL 2022 \$2.50

The Planet-Lover's Plate

5 things to know about diet & climate



**An aspirin
a day?**

APRIL FOOLS!
The latest label tricks

**A better
cookie?**

M E M O

Our New Home on the Web



The Center for Science in the Public Interest, *Nutrition Action's* publisher, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021. This year, we're celebrating another milestone.

Head to cspinet.org, and you'll see what I mean. Our new website brings together a revamped [digital version](#) of *Nutrition Action* with all the other great content from CSPI.

In the [Nutrition Action archive](#), the articles and recipes from each issue are available to

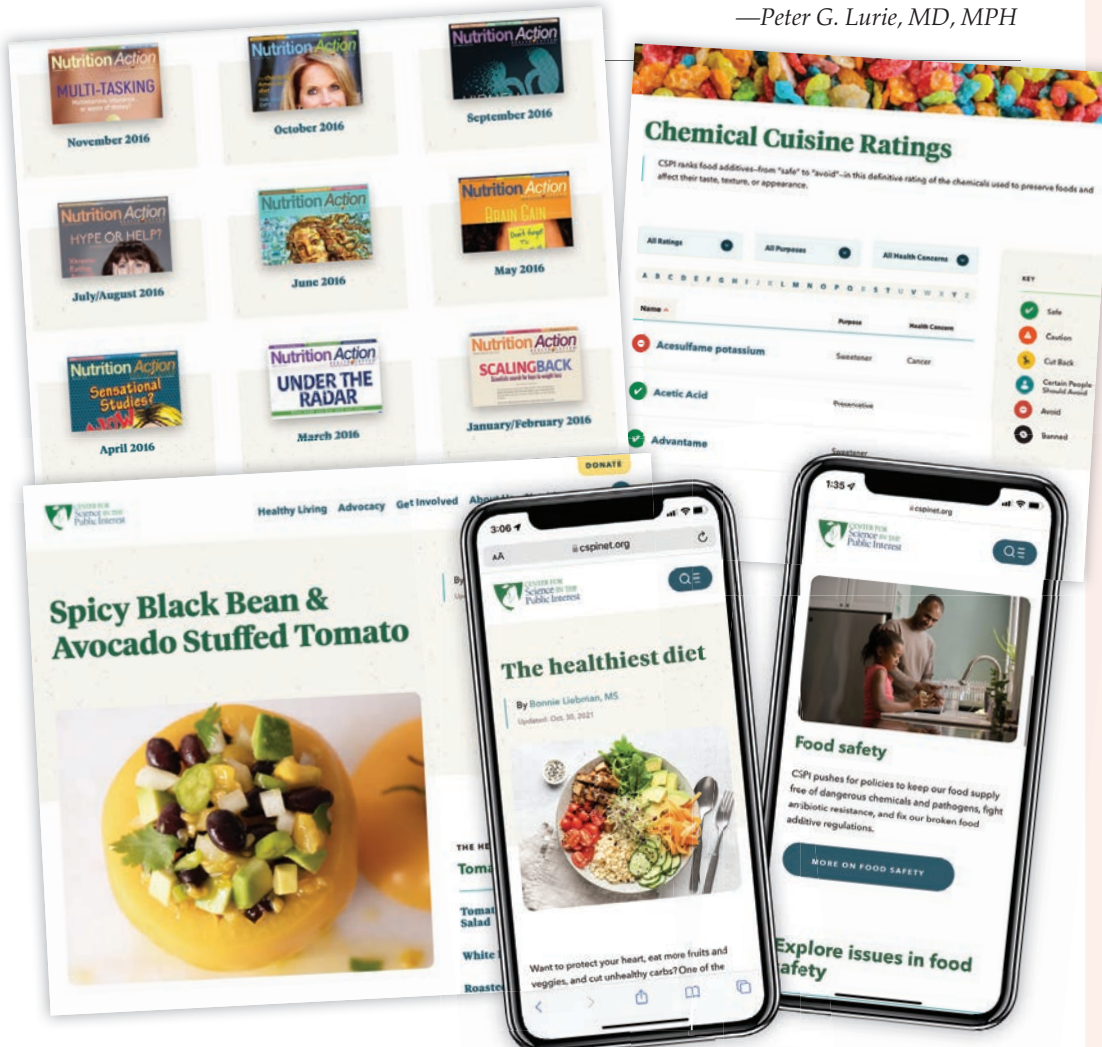
subscribers. But there's more...*much* more. The "[Healthy Living](#)" section helps you dodge risky food [additives](#), prevent [disease](#), spot [misleading claims](#), protect the [planet](#), enjoy The Healthy Cook's [recipes](#), and more.

And check out the "[Advocacy](#)" and "[Get Involved](#)" sections. You'll find updates on CSPI's work to transform the food supply and push government and industry to make science-based decisions to protect our health.

You'll also find out what else *you* can do to help us create an equitable system that makes healthy, sustainable food accessible to all.

Thanks, as always, for your support.

—Peter G. Lurie, MD, MPH



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The Planet-Lover's Plate

5 things to know about diet & climate

BY BONNIE LIEBMAN

Climate change is here, declare the news reports after the latest hurricane, heat wave, out-of-control wildfire, or flood. True enough. But what's coming will be [far worse](#) if we don't slash greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. And food accounts for nearly [a third](#) of our global emissions, so what we eat matters.

1 A planet in peril.

Things aren't looking good for Planet Earth.

"If you look at average temperatures around the world going back to 1850, what's most worrisome is the acceleration in climate change," says Walter Willett, professor of epidemiology and nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

The last five years were the hottest years in [centuries](#), according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

"If we have just two degrees Celsius warming globally by 2100, that will have disastrous effects on many earth systems," warns Willett.

"Yet we're now on track to go well beyond two degrees."

One reason the planet is heating up more quickly: "Increases in temperature lead to vicious circles," explains Willett.

For example, as temperatures rise, they start to thaw the permafrost—ground (mostly near the North and South Poles) that remains frozen year round—and microbes begin decomposing the plant matter in the soil.

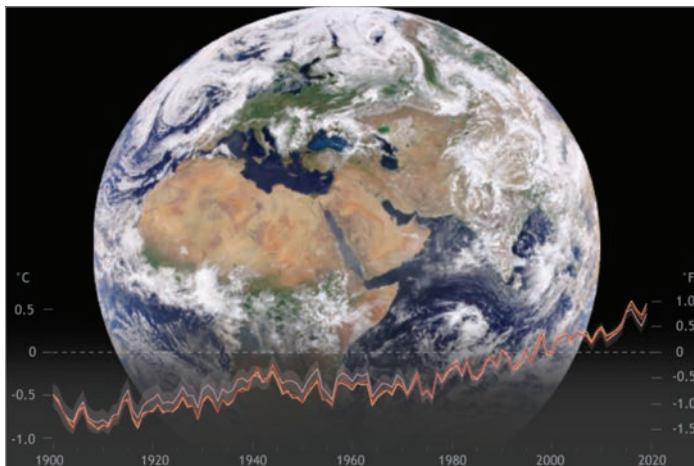
"That releases more methane and carbon dioxide, which further increases global temperatures," says Willett.

By 2050, sea levels are expected to rise by 4 to 8 inches on the West Coast, 10 to 14 inches on the East Coast, and 14 to 18

inches on the Gulf Coast, causing even "moderate" flooding ten times more often than today.¹ And drought is gripping much of the West (see p. 4 map).

The bottom line: "The climate is starting to spin out of control," says Willett, "and is probably already reaching some irreversible changes."

Willett co-chaired the [EAT-Lancet Commission](#), which assembled 37 leading scientists from 16 countries with



Records from [NOAA](#), NASA, and the University of East Anglia all show average global surface temperatures climbing since 1900, with no end in sight.

expertise in human health, agriculture, planetary sciences, political science, and other disciplines.²

"Our challenge was to answer the question: How can we feed the 10 billion people who will inhabit our planet by 2050 with a diet that is both healthy and sustainable," he notes. "This was a huge challenge from the nutrition side."

Yet the commission's 2019 [report](#) managed to come up with a realistic diet

that's not too different from a traditional Mediterranean diet (see Mar. 2019, p. 3).

"You can boil it down to a plate that's about half fruits and vegetables, with no more than one serving of dairy per day and no more than one other serving of animal food per day," explains Willett.

But that doesn't mean a daily burger. "Red meat—beef, pork, and lamb—would be quite low, at no more than one serving a week," says Willett. "Seafood, eggs, and poultry could each go to two servings a week." (See "Going Flexitarian," p. 4.)

Other protein would come from plants like beans, soy foods, and nuts. "And the range for animal proteins includes zero, so one could be a vegan and still have a very healthy diet," adds Willett.

"The diet would also emphasize whole—not refined—grains and unsaturated plant oils and would keep sugar intake quite low."

Of course, food is just part of the planet's problem.

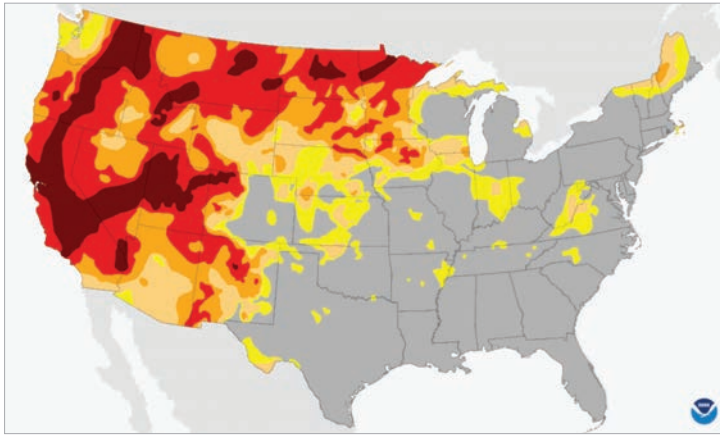
"It's critical to get to virtually zero fossil fuel consumption by 2050 if we're going to stay under two degrees Celsius of warming," says Willett.

"But if we stay on our present business-as-usual model for food, we won't be able to stay within planetary boundaries even if we do get to zero fossil fuel by 2050."³

That's because by then, the planet will have another 2 billion people, and worldwide, diets are shifting to more meat and dairy.

"But if we adopt the EAT-Lancet targets and cut fossil fuels, we could squeak by and feed 10 billion people a healthy and sustainable diet," says Willett.

"That won't be easy, but it could allow us to pass on to our children a viable planet."



In August, much of the West was experiencing moderate, severe, extreme, or exceptional drought, according to NOAA.

2 Small swaps matter.

When it comes to greenhouse gas emissions and diet, some changes pack a bigger punch than others.

“We looked at the thousands and thousands of different food items that individuals reported eating in the previous 24 hours, and ranked them,” says Diego Rose, professor of nutrition and food security at Tulane University.

Using that data—on 16,800 participants in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey—Rose estimated their individual carbon footprints.⁴

“The 20 percent of diets with the highest carbon footprints accounted for well over 40 percent of the impact,” says Rose. “So our first question was: What’s going on with those top 20 percent?”

The answer was hard to miss.

“Over and over again, we saw that one food item could turn one person’s diet from an average diet to a really high-impact diet,” says Rose.

That food: beef.

Rose looked at specific foods, not categories like “beef” or “pork.”

“The top 10 were all beef items,” he explains. “I’m talking about a hamburger or a beef steak or a beef roast.”

What makes beef so harmful?

“Cattle are ruminants, so they expel a lot of methane as burps as they digest food,” says Willett. More comes from their manure.

As a heat-trapping gas, methane is about 30 times more potent than carbon dioxide. And cattle live longer than other livestock.

“Chickens come to market in about six weeks, and pigs come to market in about six months,” says Willett.

“In contrast, cattle take about 1 to 1½ years to come to market if they’re grain fed and 2 to 2½ years if they’re grass fed. And

every day, they’re burping out methane and breathing out carbon dioxide.”

What’s more, the fertilizers used to grow cattle feed release nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas that’s 300 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

And it takes enormous quantities of fossil fuels to process and transport that feed.

So it’s no surprise that Rose’s top 10 emitters were all beef dishes.

His main takeaway: “For people who eat beef—and that is about 20 percent of the U.S. population on any given day—they could cut their dietary carbon footprint in half by replacing beef with chicken or pork.”

They could switch from beef ribs to pork ribs, for example, or go from a hamburger to a turkey or chicken or, better yet, plant-based burger.

“Substituting soy milk for dairy milk also has a good-sized impact,” notes Rose. But it still falls short of a beef swap.

“You don’t have to become a vegetarian to lower your impact,” he adds. “But replacing beef is the biggest bang for your buck.”

What’s more, beef is also a big loser when it comes to water.

“We characterized water usage by where the product was grown,” explains Rose. “So a tomato grown in a drought-stricken area like California would have more of a footprint than a tomato grown in, say, Louisiana.”

Again, some easy swaps showed up.

“Some foods, like almonds, are water hogs,” says Rose. “So peanuts would be a good swap if you’re not allergic.”

Other water savers: replacing grapes with apples, asparagus with peas, and white rice with bulgur.

One more tip: Whatever you buy, don’t let it go to waste.

“A quarter to a third of food is wasted,” says Rose. “When restaurants give you huge portions, take home the excess in a recyclable container.”



Going Flexitarian

The [EAT-Lancet](#) flexitarian (flexible vegetarian) diet allows 1 serving of dairy + 1 other serving of animal food per day.

STEP 1. Start with plants. Vegetables, fruit, beans, nuts, soy foods, and whole grains are your base.

STEP 2. Add optional dairy. You can add one serving—1 cup of milk, 1 oz. of cheese, or 5 oz. of yogurt—per day.

STEP 3. Add optional seafood, poultry, or eggs. You can add one small serving—3½ oz. raw (about 3 oz. cooked) or 1 egg—per day.

STEP 4. Limit red meat to 3 oz. (cooked) per week. You can have, say, one burger a week or one 12 oz. steak once a month.

3 Finding planet-friendly seafood.

Which seafood causes the least damage to the planet? It's complicated.

"We looked at five environmental pressures for aquatic foods: greenhouse gas emissions, nitrogen runoff, phosphorus runoff, freshwater use, and agricultural land use," says Jessica Gephart, assistant professor of environmental science at American University.

Gephart and her colleagues examined data from 1,690 farms and 1,000 fishery records worldwide.³

Their findings:

■ **WILD.** For wild-caught seafood, greenhouse gas emissions are the key concern.

"The biggest factor is fuel use for fishing vessels," says Gephart. "And that depends on how the species are caught and how easy they are to catch."

Among the winners: "Small fish like sardines, anchovies, and herrings are low on greenhouse gas emissions. So are cods, haddocks, and hakes."

Among the losers: Lobsters and the flounder-halibut-sole group. Why?

"Both lobsters and flounders are bottom-dwelling species, which are often fished with bottom trawls that require a lot of energy," says Gephart.

In contrast, she adds, "a lot of the cod, hake, and haddock group is represented by Alaskan pollock from U.S. fisheries that often use less energy-intensive gear and are well managed, so they're getting good catches for each unit of effort."

■ **FARMED.** "For aquaculture, greenhouse gas emissions depend on what it takes to grow the feed and how much

feed is required," explains Gephart.

Among the questions Gephart and her colleagues asked: "Was land deforested to grow the feed? How much fish gets to market for each pound of feed? How much energy is used for pumps or aerators on the fish farm?"

Again, there were some clear winners.

"Farmed bivalves like clams, mussels, oysters, and scallops are produced in coastal areas, so their feed comes from filtering wild phytoplankton in the water, rather than requiring feed inputs," says Gephart.

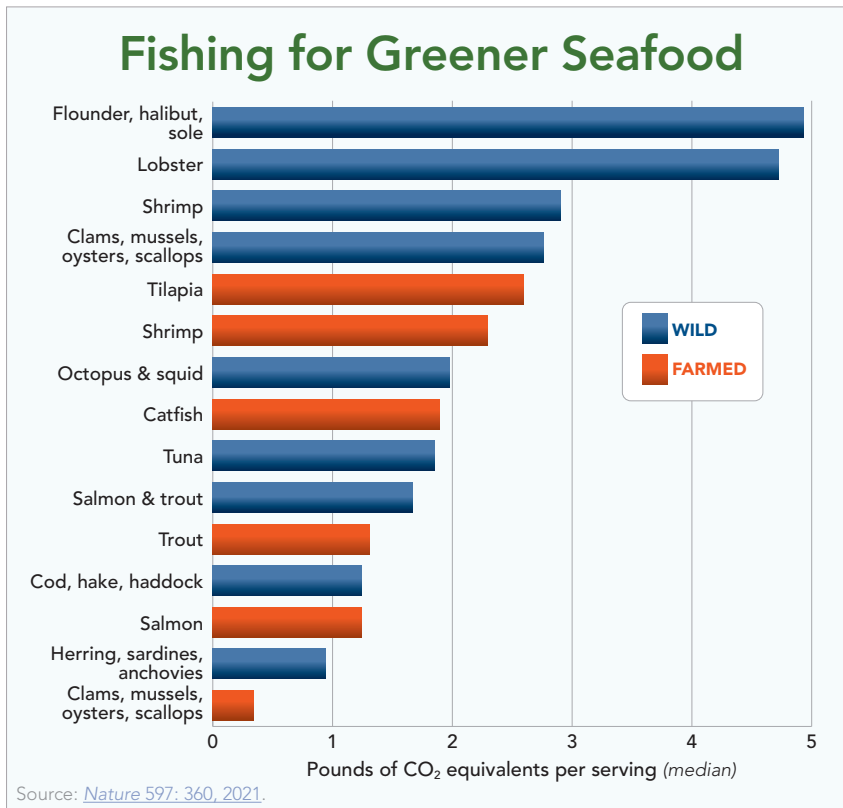
you're talking about wild or farmed," says Gephart, "whereas shrimp and bivalves have lower emissions if they're farmed than if they're wild-caught." (See "Fishing for Greener Seafood.")

That said, she adds, her study didn't look at other concerns like lost biodiversity, shrinking fish populations, antibiotic resistance, and bycatch—when other fish, dolphins, or other animals get caught in fishing gear.

So what can consumers do?

"If you don't have a retailer who's working with farmers or fishers, the

Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch is a great place to look," says Gephart. Its [website](http://seafoodwatch.org) (seafoodwatch.org) divides seafood into "Best Choice," "Certified," "Good Alternative," and "Avoid" categories.



Aim for seafood with low greenhouse gas emissions. Farmed fish have other costs like nitrogen and phosphorus runoff, but they're typically lower than chicken's.

"Salmon and trout are also pretty low on greenhouse gas emissions. That's because they've been bred to be efficient at turning feed into meat."

Tilapia, shrimp, and catfish have higher emissions. "Tilapia falls close to chicken," says Gephart.

How does wild compare with farmed? It depends.

"Greenhouse gas emissions for salmon and trout are similar, whether

conscious certification so that we can all feel good about putting beef on the grill."

In November, the U.S. Department of Agriculture [approved](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/press-releases/2021/11/02/USDA-approves-low-carbon-beef) a "low carbon beef" certification for farmers who meet certain criteria—for example, they use renewable energy and follow specific "manure management practices."

But the "low carbon" claim means that greenhouse gas emissions are only 10 percent lower than usual. Since when does "lower" mean "low"?

4 Beware of "green-washed" beef.

"We believe beef can be a solution for climate change," says the Low Carbon Beef [website](https://www.lowcarbonbeef.com).

"Backed by rigorous life-cycle assessments and process verification, Low Carbon Beef delivers a high-quality, environmentally



“Calling beef low-carbon is laughable,” says Harvard’s Walter Willett.

“In North America, greenhouse gas emissions from beef are roughly 80 times higher per serving compared to beans.⁵ And there isn’t much difference between cattle that were feedlot or grass-fed.”

“So a 10 percent reduction would make greenhouse gas emissions from beef about 72 times higher per serving than healthy plant protein sources. That’s hardly ‘low carbon.’”

The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association is also upping its sustainability claims.

“Beef farmers and ranchers around the country are implementing land-conserving, wildlife-protecting, award-winning environmental efforts,” says a one-minute video on the Cattlemen’s website (BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com). It’s been watched over 3.6 million times.

“We should be doing all we can to produce beef in better ways, including a full stop to feeding grain and soy to cattle,” says Willett.

“But by far the most effective way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from food is to eat less beef and replace it with some combination of nuts, seeds, soy, other beans, and only modest amounts of poultry, dairy, and sustainably produced seafood.”

5 Protein? No problem.

Shakes. Bars. Bread. Cereals. Cookies. Chips. Water.

“The food industry has gone hog-wild putting protein in everything,” says Christopher Gardner, professor of medicine at the Stanford University School of Medicine.



Protein water? You don’t need it.

“Protein consumption is higher in the U.S. and Canada than in any other [region](#) in the world, yet companies now sell protein water. We’re obsessed with protein.”

People may assume that shifting their calories from carbs or fat to protein can build up their protein stores and give their muscles a boost. Wrong.

“How much protein can you store for later?” asks Gardner. “Zero. Within 24 hours, any extra gets turned into carbohydrate or fat.”

There’s only one way to build muscle, he adds. “You do it by working out, not eating meat.”

And the average American already eats [90 grams](#) of protein per day—well over the Recommended Dietary Allowance (50 grams).

To protect the planet, we need to shift more animal protein to plant protein, argues Gardner.²

One stumbling block: “Many people have heard that the protein in plants isn’t as good as the protein in animals.”

Yet the minor differences in their amino acid levels are irrelevant.

“Grains are low in lysine and beans are low in methionine,” says Gardner.

That might matter to someone who is barely getting enough protein and is eating mostly rice, for example.

“But we don’t get all of our daily protein from a single food, and we’re already getting plenty of protein, so it doesn’t matter a hoot,” says Gardner.

“A switch to plant foods would have a massive benefit for the planet our children will inherit.”¹

¹ oceanservice.noaa.gov/hazards/sealevelrise/sealevelrise-tech-report.html.

² [Lancet](https://www.thelancet.com/article/S0140-6736(19)31771-3) 393: 447, 2019.

³ [Science](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0954679520300000) 370: 705, 2020.

⁴ [Am. J. Clin. Nutr.](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7022222/) 115: 378, 2022.

⁵ [Nature](https://www.nature.com/articles/597360) 597: 360, 2021.

⁶ [Science](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0954679520300000) 360: 987, 2018.

⁷ [Nutr. Rev.](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC541197/) 77: 197, 2019.



Protein Counter

It’s easy to reach the RDA for adults (50 grams) even with zero animal foods. (Don’t forget: Adjust serving sizes to what you eat.)

	Calories	Protein (g)
Chicken or turkey breast, skinless ¹ (3 oz.)	130	26
Beef or pork ¹ (3 oz.)	210	22
Shrimp (3 oz.)	80	20
Beyond Meat Burger (4 oz. patty)	230	20
Salmon (3 oz.)	180	19
Impossible Burger (4 oz. patty)	240	19
Canned tuna, light (3 oz. drained)	70	17
Greek yogurt, plain, 0% (6 oz.)	100	17
Tempeh (3 oz.)	170	17
Red lentil spaghetti (2 oz., 1 cup cooked)	180	13
Cottage cheese, 2% (½ cup)	90	12
Gardein Chick’n Scallopini (1)	100	11
Beyond Meat Chicken Tenders (2)	210	11
Yogurt, plain, fat-free (6 oz.)	100	10
Silk Original Protein (1 cup)	130	10
Gardein Seven Grain Crispy Tenders (3)	150	10
Hemp seeds, shelled (3 Tbs.)	180	10
MorningStar Veggie Sausage Patties ¹ (1)	80	9
Edamame, shelled (½ cup)	90	9
Tofu, extra-firm (3 oz.)	90	9
Dairy milk, fat-free (1 cup)	80	8
Silk Original Soymilk (1 cup)	110	8
Beans ¹ (½ cup cooked)	120	8
Pumpkin seeds (¼ cup)	160	8
JUST Folded Plant Egg (1)	100	7
Spaghetti (2 oz., 1 cup cooked)	200	7
Egg, large (1)	70	6
Cheddar cheese (1 oz.)	110	6
Egg whites (3 Tbs.)	25	5
Nuts ¹ (¼ cup)	180	5
Silk Almondmilk yogurt ¹ (5.3 oz.)	180	5
Green peas (½ cup cooked)	60	4
Whole wheat bread (1 slice, 1.5 oz.)	100	4
Quinoa (½ cup cooked)	110	4
Oatly Oatmilk (1 cup)	120	3
Frozen yogurt or ice cream ¹ (⅔ cup)	170	3
Broccoli (½ cup cooked)	25	2
Hummus (2 Tbs.)	70	2
Silk Original Almondmilk (1 cup)	60	1
So Delicious coconut yogurt ¹ (5.3 oz.)	120	1
Silk Original Coconutmilk (1 cup)	70	0
Daiya dairy-free cheese (¼ cup shreds)	80	0

¹ Average. Source: fdc.nal.usda.gov, company information.

Going green at home

What can you do?

BY CAITLIN DOW

Wondering how you can shrink your carbon and water footprints? The Environmental Protection Agency is a good place to start. Its [website](#) can help you use less fuel to heat or cool your home, find energy-saving appliances, save water, and switch from fossil fuels to renewable solar, wind, or hydropower. And, of course, don't forget to press your state and federal legislators to support clean energy policies.

The [calculator](#) gives a rough estimate of your carbon footprint based on your home energy use, your transportation choices, and how much waste you recycle. You can also estimate how much small changes—like using cool water in the wash or line-drying your clothes—can curb your CO₂ emissions...and save you cash.

Carbon Footprint Calculator

What is your carbon footprint?

Take a few minutes to find out with EPA's Household Carbon Footprint Calculator.

Number of people in your household

ZIP Code

Get Started

epa.gov/carbon-footprint-calculator

What You Can Do About Climate Change — Water



As the climate changes, some communities could face water supply short [water infrastructure](#). It takes a lot of energy to pump, treat, and heat water. Reducing water use reduces greenhouse gas emissions, too.



Replacing appliances? Look for the [WaterSense](#) label. Got a leaky toilet? It can waste 200 gallons a day. The EPA's website has a [how-to](#) for fixing leaks, plus other water-saving tips.

epa.gov/climate-change/what-you-can-do-about-climate-change-water

You may be able to power your home with wind or solar energy either from your utility company or an independent green power supplier. And check out the [Energy Star](#) page for tips on purchasing energy that is certified "green."

Green Power Options



energystar.gov/products/green_power_options

ENERGY STAR HOME ADVISOR



Use this tool to assess your home and get customized recommendations for energy efficiency improvements

energystar.gov/campaign/home

Want a more thorough view of your energy use than the [Carbon Footprint Calculator](#)? To size up your heating, cooling, appliances, insulation, and more, use the [Energy Star Home Advisor](#).

Quick Studies

A snapshot of the latest research on diet, exercise, and more.

Take the High Road



Are some weight-loss diets better than others?

Scientists randomly assigned 100 people with abdominal obesity (waists larger than 35 inches for women or 40 inches for men) to eat their usual diet or either a high-quality or a low-quality diet with a 25-percent calorie cut.

The high-quality diet was richer in fiber, unsaturated fats, and plant protein from foods like whole grains, fruit, fish, tofu, and olive oil, while the low-quality diet had more refined grains, juice, meat, and butter. (The high-quality group also got a daily fish oil capsule with 400 mg of EPA and 300 mg of DHA.)

After 12 weeks, the high-quality group had lost 18 pounds, the low-quality group had lost 14 pounds, and the usual-diet group had lost no weight. What's more, blood cholesterol and triglycerides fell more in the high-quality than in the low-quality group (and not at all in the usual-diet group).

What to do: Trying to lose weight? A [healthy diet](#) is a good strategy.

[Am. J. Clin. Nutr. 2022. doi:10.1093/ajcn/nqac025.](#)

The More, the Merrier

When adults watched TV ads depicting a group of people eating, they responded more favorably and gave the advertised foods higher ratings than when the ads showed one person eating alone. (The researchers played the ads in random order.)

What to do: Keep in mind that ads showing a group of people eating together may be more appealing.

[J. Health Comm. 26: 773, 2021.](#)



Sleep More, Eat Less?



A third of adults get less sleep than the 7 to 9 hours a night that experts recommend. Could lack of sleep help fuel the obesity epidemic?

Researchers randomly assigned 80 people with excess weight who typically slept less than 6½ hours a night either to continue their usual sleep routine or to receive individualized counseling to reach 8½ hours of sleep a night for two weeks.

Compared with the usual-sleep group, the group that received counseling averaged 1.2 more hours of sleep per night, ate 270 fewer calories per day, and lost two pounds.

What to do: Aim for 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night. There's no guarantee that getting enough sleep can help you eat less, but too little sleep may raise your risk of high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease, according to the [American Heart Association](#). And drowsy driving is involved in an estimated 20 percent of fatal car crashes.

[JAMA Intern. Med. 2022. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2021.8098. Circulation 134: e367, 2016.](#)

Unhealthy Foods: Scaling Up



People eat more when served larger portions. And portions have grown.

Researchers compared the current serving sizes of popular processed or fast foods to their original sizes. Among their findings:

At McDonald's, a beef patty (1.6 oz. in 1955) now ranges from 1.6 to 8 oz., fries (2.4 oz. in 1955) range from 1.3 oz. ("kids") to

5.9 oz. ("large"), and a soda (7 oz. in 1955) has ballooned to between 12 oz. ("extra small") and 30 oz. ("large").

Likewise, a bottle of Budweiser (7 oz. in 1976) now ranges from 7 to 40 oz., a bottle of Coca-Cola (6.5 oz. in 1916) ranges from 8 to 24 oz., and the size of a Nestlé Crunch bar (1.6 oz. in 1938) ranges from 1.6 to 4.4 oz.

What to do: Beware serving-size creep. Is "medium" your go-to? It may be yesterday's "large"...and tomorrow's "small." 🚫

[Am. J. Public Health 111: 2223, 2021.](#)



An aspirin a day?

Why the guidelines have changed

BY CAITLIN DOW

Roughly [a quarter](#) of adults aged 40 and older report taking a low-dose aspirin every day. “A lot of people think of aspirin almost like a vitamin,” says Amit Khera, director of preventive cardiology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. “But it’s a medicine with both benefits and side effects.” Here’s what you need to know about aspirin and your heart.

“When it comes to taking aspirin to prevent a first heart attack or stroke, we used to say ‘generally yes, occasionally no,’” says cardiologist Amit Khera.

“We thought that if your risk of having a first heart attack or stroke was a bit higher than average, aspirin was a good choice to prevent those events. But now, it’s not that simple.”

Today, the message on aspirin is “generally no, occasionally yes,” which echoes advice from the American Heart Association and draft guidelines from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.^{1,2}

The draft guidelines recommend that people 60 and older *not* start taking aspirin to prevent a first heart attack or stroke, while 40-to-59-year-olds who are at high risk should discuss the pros and cons of taking aspirin with their doctor.

What led to the flip?

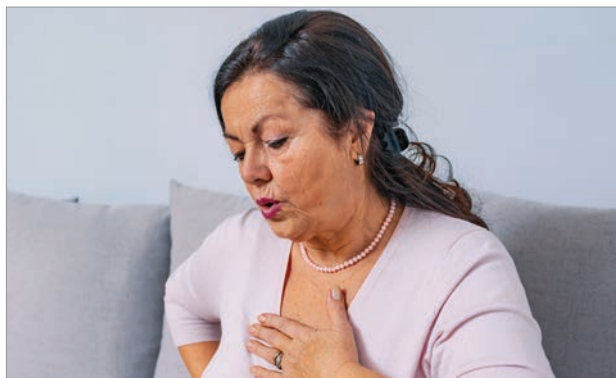
“In 2018, three big trials showed that aspirin either modestly lowered—or had no effect on—the risk of having a first heart attack or stroke,” Khera explains.³⁻⁵ (Bayer funded [one](#) of the trials and weighed in on the design of [another](#).)

And when researchers looked at data on roughly 164,000 people in those three trials plus 10 others, taking aspirin every day lowered the risk of a heart attack or stroke by a modest 11 percent.⁶ (All but two of the 13 trials used low-dose aspirin—between 50 and 100 milligrams. A regular aspirin is 325 mg.)

“So aspirin still works,” says Khera. “But maybe in the modern era where people are smoking less and risk factors like cholesterol and blood pressure are better controlled, there may be a little less utility for aspirin than in the past.”

That’s not what changed the guidelines, though.

“We’ve really started looking at the risks,” explains Khera. “And in those



Should you take aspirin to prevent a first heart attack or stroke? “Generally no, occasionally yes,” suggest [new guidelines](#).

13 trials, the risk of major bleeding increased by about 43 percent in people taking aspirin compared to a placebo.”⁶

“When I say major bleeding, I’m not talking about nosebleeds. We’re talking about bleeding in the brain, bleeding ulcers in the gut. Serious bleeding.”

The bottom line: “For most people, aspirin is causing more major bleeding than the heart attacks and strokes it’s preventing,” says Khera.

To his point, in the 13 trials, aspirin

prevented one stroke or heart attack for every 241 people—and caused a major bleed for every 210 people—who took it for roughly five years.

What does that mean for you?

“If you’re at a higher risk for bleeding, you shouldn’t be on aspirin to prevent a first heart attack or stroke,” says Khera.

That includes everyone over age 70. It also includes people of any age who have a history of ulcers or gastrointestinal bleeding, or are taking blood thinners, steroids like prednisone, or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or other medications that increase the risk of bleeding.

On the other hand, aspirin may be a good option for those whose risk for a first heart attack or stroke is high and whose risk of bleeding isn’t.

“Let’s say you have a very strong family history, and with imaging tests of the heart we can see that you have a lot of plaque buildup in your arteries,” says Khera. “Your doctor may recommend that you take aspirin.”

“We just have to be a bit smarter and more judicious about who we recommend it for. It’s a decision that should be made between a patient and their doctor.”

There’s one caveat, though.

“We’re talking about people who have never had a heart attack or stroke,” says Khera. “If you’ve had either, these new recommendations don’t apply to you. Aspirin lowers the risk of a second event.”⁶

¹ [Circulation 140: e596, 2019.](#)

² [uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/draft-recommendation/aspirin-use-to-prevent-cardiovascular-disease-preventive-medication.](#)

³ [N. Engl. J. Med. 379: 1509, 2018.](#)

⁴ [Lancet 392: 1036, 2018.](#)

⁵ [N. Engl. J. Med. 379: 1529, 2018.](#)

⁶ [JAMA 321: 277, 2019.](#)

April Fools!

BY LINDSAY MOYER

Eat healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, nuts, and yogurt, say health experts. So food companies create processed foods that seem to fit the bill. In the supermarket, every day is April 1st.



Thin on Nuts

"Made with real almonds," boasts the box of **Blue Diamond Almond Nut-Thins Hint of Sea Salt** crackers.

"Made with" is label-speak for "made with very little."

See that skinny, squished type on the bottom right of the box? "Rice cracker snacks with almonds," it says. Translation: You're getting mostly (white) rice flour.

In fact, judging by the 2½ grams of fat, a 19-cracker serving contains about four almonds, max.

"We love our almonds so much we baked them into crispy crackers with irresistible flavors," says the back of the box.

Who *wouldn't* love an ingredient that makes cheap rice flour look like a health food?

Tip: Seeking a gluten-free or low-carb cracker made of nuts or seeds, not flour? Try **Flackers Organic Flax Seed Crackers**.

Summer Sugar Bliss

Expecting berry juice in **Tropicana Summer Berry Bliss**? And why not? After all, the company made its name selling orange juice.

Maybe Tropicana is hoping that you won't notice the teensy pale "DRINK WITH OTHER NATURAL FLAVORS" below "Bliss" on the front of the bottle or the "15% juice" above the Nutrition Facts on the back.

And even *that* juice has more apple juice concentrate, apple purée, natural flavors, grape juice concentrate, and citric acid than blackberry or blueberry juice concentrates. In fact, each 90-calorie cup has 4 teaspoons of added sugar—a third of a day's worth.

But why be upfront about all that? For Tropicana, ignorance is bliss.



Babybaloney

"Vitamin A has been shown to help support eye health," says **Babybel Plus+ Vitamins A & B12** cheese, which refers label readers to a National Institutes of Health [webpage](#).

Go there, and you'll see this: "Most people in the United States get enough vitamin A from the foods they eat, and vitamin A deficiency is rare."

Oh, so we *don't* need cheese with extra vitamin A.

Experts do advise people over 50 to get some B-12 from a vitamin or fortified food, because they may produce too little stomach acid to absorb foods' naturally occurring B-12. But Babybel only adds enough to reach 15 percent of a day's worth. Take a multivitamin instead.

And as for Babybel's claim that B-12 "has been shown to support the body in converting food into energy," don't count on extra doses to help you burn more calories or feel more energetic.

So the A & B-12 are a plus...but only for Babybel's sales.



Sweet Sham

Late July Organic Multigrain Sweet Potato Tortilla Chips are "made with a blend of grains & seeds," says the label.

"Multigrain" only means "more than one grain," so it's an easy way to dress up corn chips. These are mostly whole-grain corn plus some brown rice.

What about those "seeds"? You get less than ¼ teaspoon

of chia in a nine-chip serving, we estimate.

And the chips have more corn and oil than sweet potato. In fact, it looks like a serving has no more than half a tablespoon or so of sweet potato.

Late July is just following the tried-and-true playbook: Add a smidgen of vegetables to make mostly-grain-or-potato chips look like a health food.

Who cares if they compete with *real* veggie snacks like baby carrots, cukes, bell peppers, and grape tomatoes?

Spot the Squash



How much strawberry and squash do you get in a Kellogg's Nutri-Grain Strawberry & Squash Breakfast Bar that's "made with REAL fruit & veggie"?

The bars' filling has more invert sugar, vegetable glycerin, corn syrup, and sugar than strawberry purée concentrate or—there it is!—butternut squash purée.

See that "NATURALLY FLAVORED WITH OTHER NATURAL FLAVORS" below "Strawberry & Squash"? "Flavored" is often a clue that a food has little (or none) of the ingredient.

So why call them Strawberry & Squash? Maybe Sugar & Corn Syrup Breakfast Bars wouldn't sell as well.

Potato Ploy

"Great alternative to potato tots & fries," say Green Giant Cauliflower Veggie Tots, which have "NO POTATO" and are "filled with cauliflower."

Wow.

Sounds like Green Giant slashed the starchy carbs and calories in tater tots by switching to cauliflower.

Turns out, the Veggie Tots have as many carbs and calories as ordinary Ore-Ida Golden Tater Tots. They just come from refined flour and corn-starch instead of potato.

Want to *really* replace refined carbs with cauliflower? Try riced cauliflower from Green Giant or Birds Eye. To replace potatoes, steam and mash cauliflower florets.



Sugar 'n Oil Snacks



Welch's Fruit 'n Yogurt Blueberry-Acai Snacks are an April Fools twofer.

Fool No. 1: Fruit. "Fruit is our 1st Ingredient!" says the box. True, but each pouch has 10 grams of added sugar and only 2 grams of naturally occurring (fruit or milk) sugar.

That's because the second and third ingredients are sugar and corn syrup. (Would sugar have been the "1st

Ingredient!" if Welch's had used only one kind? Maybe.)

What's more, the snacks' "fruit center" is a blend of purées—not intact fruit—with more grape and pear than blueberry or acai.

"Not intended to replace fresh fruit in the diet," says the small print on the side. Got *that* right.

Fool No. 2: Yogurt. Welch's "yogurt coating" has more sugar and palm kernel oil than any dairy ingredients (whey powder, nonfat milk powder, yogurt powder). Then there's the titanium dioxide, which is probably added to help whiten the "yogurt." So the snacks apparently aren't intended to replace yogurt either.

Just a health halo to sell gussied-up gummies. 🚫

Fresh Out of Guavas



What fruits do you get in Del Monte Fruit Refreshers Red Grapefruit in Guava FLAVORED SLIGHTLY SWEETENED Fruit Water?

Grapefruit? Yep. Guava? Nope.

Never mind those guavas on the label. Looks like the only guava in Guava Fruit Water comes from "natural flavor."

Sigh. And the drink's vibrant pink hue comes from red grapefruit ...with a boost from carmine (red coloring from insects). Mmm.

It's Not all Greek to Us

"The days of sour, tangy yogurt are over!" says The Greek Gods Greek Style Yogurt.

Greek yogurt that's not tangy? There's a surprise.

Here's another: A 4 oz. tub of the Strawberry with Honey has only 5 grams of protein. The same amount of a Greek yogurt from Fage or Chobani has at least 50 percent more.

"Why do other brands of Greek yogurt have a higher protein content than Greek Gods Greek Style Yogurt?" asks The Gods' "FAQ" [webpage](#).

"Our yogurt is 'Greek Style' and reminiscent of the classic flavors used in Greece. Because Greek Gods yogurt is made in the traditional cup-set or pot-set method, we never strain our yogurt like the other Greek yogurts you'll find in stores."

Of course, straining is what makes *real* Greek yogurt thicker and gives it more protein. "Greek Style" yogurt? That's whatever the marketing department wants you to believe.



The Healthy Cook

Go-to Tofu

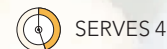


Trying to eat more plants? Think tofu. It's mild, so all it needs is a flavor-packed sauce. (Bonus: Unlike chicken, tofu is just about impossible to overcook.) No bell pepper? Try carrots, snow peas, or zucchini. 🌶️

Golden Tofu Stir-Fry

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|------------------------------|
| 1 | 14 oz. package extra-firm tofu | 1 | jalapeño, sliced (optional) |
| 3 | cloves garlic, minced | ¼ | cup reduced-sodium soy sauce |
| 1 | Tbs. + 1 Tbs. neutral-tasting oil (grapeseed, safflower, or sunflower) | ¼ | cup dry sherry |
| ½ | bell pepper, sliced | 1 | Tbs. maple syrup |
| 1 | onion, sliced | 1 | tsp. cornstarch |
| | | 2 | cups cooked brown rice |

1. Cut the tofu into triangular slabs. Blot dry with a towel.
2. In a small bowl, combine the garlic and 1 Tbs. oil. Set aside.
3. In a large nonstick pan over medium-high heat, heat the remaining 1 Tbs. oil until shimmering. Sauté the tofu until browned on both sides, 5–8 minutes. Remove from the pan.
4. In the same pan, stir-fry the bell pepper, onion, and jalapeño until tender-crisp, 1–2 minutes. Remove from the pan.
5. Add the reserved garlic and oil to the pan. Stir-fry for 30 seconds. Whisk in the soy sauce, sherry, maple syrup, cornstarch, and ½ cup water. Cook until thickened, 2–3 minutes.
6. Return the tofu and vegetables to the pan. Toss with the sauce. Serve with the rice.



SERVES 4

PER SERVING (1 cup stir-fry + ½ cup brown rice): calories 340 | total fat 13 g | sat fat 1.5 g | carbs 38 g | fiber 4 g | total sugar 6 g | added sugar 3 g | protein 14 g | sodium 590 mg

**For more
tofu recipes**

Go to nutritionaction.com/tofu2
for **Peanut Tofu Stir-Fry**
and **Crispy Tofu Salad**

**For cooking
advice**

Write to Chef Kate at
healthycook@cspinet.org



HOW SWEET IT IS!

Better cookies, brownies, etc.

BY LINDSAY MOYER

Is it worth hunting for a better cookie? That depends. If you have a hankering for an occasional sugar-butter-white-flour experience, maybe not. Ditto if better cookies draw you away from healthy snacks like fresh fruit or nuts.

However, if you prefer a cookie that's less sweet, whole grain, and rich in nuts or dried fruit, look no further. We also tossed in a handful of better brownies, "bites," and "thins."

A Better Cookie?

Our added-sugar and saturated fat cutoffs for Better Bites (see p. 15) are based on the number of cookies that comes closest to 30 grams (about 1 oz.). Exception: For cookies that come in an individual pouch, a serving is the full pack. How we chose our Better Bites:

■ **Some real food. The first ingredient is a whole grain, nut, seed, or dried fruit.** Does that mean the second ingredient could be white flour or sugar? Yep. They're cookies, after all.

■ **Added sugar. No more than 9 grams (2 teaspoons).** That gets you to less sweet. Think biscotti, not Oreos.

■ **Saturated fat. No more than 2 grams.** That doesn't leave much room for butter, palm oil, coconut oil, etc.

■ **Low-calorie sweeteners. No sucralose.** That's the only low-calorie sweetener with an "Avoid" rating at CSPI's chemicalcuisine.org that we found in cookies.

We didn't disqualify cookies sweetened with (safe) stevia extract or with monk fruit extract. (It's a natural sweetener that hasn't been well tested in animals, but monk fruit has been eaten in China for centuries.) Allulose and sugar alcohols (like sorbitol) are also safe, but they may cause diarrhea or (with erythritol) nausea if you eat too much.

Keto, etc.

Nowadays, the "healthier"-cookie aisle is morphing. Are any keto, lower-carb, lower-sugar, or higher-protein cookies worth it?

■ **The upsides.** Highkey, Fancypants, and some others replace cookies' usual white flour with nuts or seeds like almond flour, sunflower seeds, peanuts, or peanut butter. And most have no more than 1 gram of added sugar per serving.

■ **The downsides.** Most lower-carb cookies have a butter or coconut oil or palm oil



Misses a Better Bite by just 1 gram of sat fat.

Brownies, etc.

Better brownies are tricky. Some are better for *you*, while others just *look* better. Two of the best:



A flourless "brownie" of mostly dates and cashews.

■ **Lärabar Fudge Brownie.** It's a Lärabar spin on brownies, so you're getting a dense, fudgy square of mostly dates, cashews, hemp seeds, and chocolate chips. The **Chocolate Raspberry** gets a Better Bite, while the **Chocolate Sea Salt** just misses. Bravo!

It may make them more filling than typical brownies, which are mostly sugar, white flour, and oil.

Still, Nature's Bakery adds plenty of sugar (4 teaspoons, or 17 grams). But each 200-calorie pouch weighs 57 grams and holds two mini brownie bars. Eat just one, and you're looking at a Better Bite.

Two of the better-brownie impostors:

■ **Fiber One Chocolate Fudge Brownie.** Yes, it has only 70 calories, as the box boasts. But the ingredients list is full of processed fibers, sugar alcohols, and white flour.

■ **Brownie brittle.** "With all the wholesome goodness of gluten-free ingredients baked in, and only 130 calories per serving," says **Sheila G's Gluten-Free Chocolate Chip Brownie Brittle**. Wholesome goodness? The first three ingredients are refined rice flour, sugar, and starch. And there are 16 grams of added sugar in just a 28-gram serving.

problem. They can easily hit 5 to 10 grams of saturated fat—a quarter to half a day's max.

For some protein cookies, the issue is portion size. A **Lenny & Larry's Chocolate Chip The Complete Cookie** ("16 g protein"), for example, clocks in at four times the usual cookie serving. At 420 calories, it's a small (and unhealthy) meal.

Most lower-sugar cookies use low-calorie sweeteners like erythritol or allulose, plus processed fibers like inulin (aka chicory root) or polydextrose. If they give you GI distress, steer clear.





Kodiak does whole grains right.

Yes, Kodiak adds milk protein concentrate and egg whites. But the 5 grams of protein per serving are only a few more grams than you'd get from typical cookies. It takes twice that much (10 grams) to call a food "high protein," according to labeling rules. And even a high-protein cookie is still a cookie.

Grahams

Graham flour is whole-grain wheat. So why do many graham crackers have more "enriched" (refined) flour than whole wheat? Who knows?

Kodiak Graham Bear Bites are the only 100% whole-grain grahams we found. Take your pick: the **Chocolate**, **Cinnamon**, and **Honey** are all Better Bites...and all delicious.

Just don't be fooled by their "protein-packed" claim.

Thins

Ounce for ounce, "thin" versions of typical cookies—**Oreo Thins**, **Chips Ahoy!** **Thins**, etc.—have no less sugar and no fewer calories than regular Oreos, Chips Ahoy!, etc.

So they're only healthier if you eat fewer cookies.

In contrast, **Simple Mills Sweet Thins** aren't just a thin version of a sugary, white-flour cookie. They're a new, lightly sweet spin on thins altogether. Sweet Thins' first ingredient: a "seed & nut flour blend" of cashews and watermelon, sunflower, and flax seeds. Yum.

Watermelon seeds? Don't worry. If you didn't know they were there, you'd never notice.



Cookies meet crackers: A slightly sweet, thin crisp.

Biscotti, etc.

Biscotti are made with white flour, so there are no Better Bites. But if you're looking for a crunchy, not-too-sweet cookie, they're worth a shot. Two standouts:

■ **Nonni's THINaddictives.** The 21-gram pack, which contains three crisp, nut-studded biscotti thins, delivers just 4 to 6 grams of added sugar and 90-or-so calories.

■ **Whole Foods 365 Classic Pizzelle.** Like biscotti, the traditional Italian "waffle cookies" aren't too sweet. Unlike biscotti, they have a soft bite.



Any brand's biscotti is a decent bet.



"60% of grains are whole grain," says the label. Now *that's* helpful! Most labels aren't.

else. Some better whole grains in the cookie aisle:

■ **Nature Valley.** Both the **Peanut Butter** and **Chocolate Peanut Butter Minis Sandwiches** are Better Bites that are made with 100 percent whole grains (oats and wheat).

■ **Voortman.** The whole-grain oats, wheat, rye, and buckwheat in its **Super Grains** cookies make up 60 percent of their total grains. Not too shabby. And the first ingredient in its **Oatmeal Raisin** cookies is actually oats!

■ **BelVita Breakfast.** If you ignore the "breakfast" nonsense in its name, BelVitas are decent cookies that have more whole grain than refined flour. Most varieties come close to a Better Bite, even though they're sold in large (50-gram) packs of four biscuits or two sandwiches.

Fig Bars

Fig bar fan? It's a snap to spot 100 percent whole-grain versions.

■ **Newtons.** Even original **Fig Newtons** get a Better Bite. And while they have some whole grain, the **100% Whole Grain** version has almost twice as much...and tastes nearly identical. Skip the **Strawberry Newtons**, though. They're dyed red and have an extra 3 grams of sugar per two-cookie serving.

■ **Nature's Bakery.** Each 57-gram pouch of the brand's 100% whole-grain fig bars holds two mini bars. That's twice the usual cookie serving. But a single bar meets our Better Bite criteria. Nature's **Gluten Free** bars, on the other hand, have little whole grain. Too bad.



Look for the Newtons made from 100% whole-grain wheat.

Bites

If your idea of a cookie is flexible, try "bites." They're more likely to deliver nuts, dried fruit, and/or whole grains:

■ **The GFB Gluten Free Bites.** The first ingredient is usually almonds, cashews, or peanuts. And most varieties are Better Bites, with no more than 3 or 4 grams (1 tsp.) of added sugar per two-bite serving.

■ **Laura's Wholesome Junk Food Bite-lettes.** They're heavy on rolled oats and dried fruit and light enough on added sugar to score Better Bites for all five varieties. Wholesome junk food, indeed! 🍌



A sweet, chewy bite coated in crunchy nuts.

The Cookie Sheet

Better Bites (✓) have a “real food” (a whole grain, fruit, nut, or seed) as their first ingredient, and have no more than 2 grams of saturated fat and 2 teaspoons of added sugar per serving. They’re also free of sucralose. Within each category, products are ranked from least to most saturated fat, then added sugar. We’ve listed mostly better-for-you cookies, but we also tossed in a few regulars for comparison.

Cookies—1st ingredient “real food”

(No. per serving, about 30 grams, unless noted)

	Calories	Sat Fat (g)	Added Sugar (tsp.)
✓ Kodiak Graham Bear Bites ¹ (15)	120	0	1.5
✓ Fig Newtons Fat Free (2)	90	0	2
✓ Fig Newtons—original or 100% Whole Grain (2)	100	0	2
Nature’s Bakery Fig Bar ¹ (1 pouch, 57 g)	200	0	3.5
✓ Voortman Oatmeal Cranberry Flaxseed (1 cookie, 20 g)	90	0.5	1
BelVita Breakfast Golden Oat (1 pouch, 50 g)	230	0.5	2.5
✓ The GFB Gluten Free Bites—except Coconut + Cashew or Dark Chocolate + Coconut ¹ (2)	110	1	1
✓ Cooper Street Granola Cookie Bake ¹ (1)	110	1	1.5
✓ Voortman Super Grains Blueberry (2)	150	1	2
BelVita Breakfast Honey Chocolate Chip (1 pouch, 50 g)	230	1	3
✓ Nature Valley Minis Sandwiches ¹ (1 pouch)	140	1.5	1.5
✓ BelVita Breakfast Sandwich Peanut Butter (1 pouch, 50 g)	230	1.5	2
✓ Laura’s Wholesome Junk Food Bite-lettes ¹ (2)	120	1.5	2
✓ Voortman Oatmeal Raisin (2)	160	1.5	2
✓ Voortman Super Grains Banana Chocolate Chip (2)	150	1.5	2
BelVita Breakfast Chocolate (1 pouch, 50 g)	220	1.5	2.5
✓ Simple Mills Sweet Thins Chocolate Brownie (12)	140	2	1.5
✓ Simple Mills Sweet Thins Mint Chocolate (12)	140	2	1.5
✓ Back to Nature Homestyle Soft Baked Peanut Butter Chocolate Chunk (1)	120	2	2
Lesser Evil Mini Almond Butter Chocolate Chip (4)	130	2.5	1
The GFB Gluten Free Bites Coconut + Cashew (2)	110	2.5	1
Highkey Mini Peanut Butter (7)	130	3	0
Trader Joe’s Double Chocolate Almond Flour (7)	150	3.5	1
Nature Valley Granola Cups Almond Butter (1 pouch)	170	3.5	1.5
Simple Mills Sweet Thins Honey Cinnamon (12)	140	3.5	1.5
Fancypants Keto Friendly Chocolate Chip (4)	120	4	0
Simple Mills Crunchy Almond Flour ¹ (4)	150	4.5	1.5
Siete Grain Free Mexican Wedding (5)	150	4.5	2
Highkey Mini Snickerdoodle (7)	140	6	0
Fat Snax! Double Chocolate (1 pouch, 40 g)	180	8	0

Cookies—1st ingredient NOT “real food”

(No. per serving, about 30 grams, unless noted)

Nabisco Ginger Snaps (4)	120	0	2.5
Nature’s Bakery Gluten Free Fig Bar ¹ (1 pouch, 57 g)	210	0	3
Strawberry Newtons (2)	100	0	3
Nonni’s THINaddictives ¹ (1 pouch, 21 g)	90	0.5	1
Cooper Street Twice-Baked ¹ (4)	120	0.5	2
Nonni’s Biscotti Originali (1 cookie, 20 g)	90	1	1.5
Whole Foods 365 Pizzelle Classic (5)	140	1	2
Trader Joe’s Five Seed Almond Bars (1)	100	1.5	1.5
Nilla Wafers (8)	140	1.5	2.5
Oreo Thins Dark Chocolate Flavor Creme (4)	140	1.5	2.5

	Calories	Sat Fat (g)	Added Sugar (tsp.)
Quest Frosted ^{1,5} (1)	90	2	0
Keebler Country Style Oatmeal with Raisins (2)	130	2	1.5
Whole Foods 365 Cookie Thins Salted Caramel (8)	120	2	2
Oreo Gluten Free (3)	160	2	3
Oreo Thins (4)	140	2	3
Milk Bar Chocolate Confetti Cookies (1 pouch, 46 g)	200	2	3.5
Oreo (3)	160	2	3.5
The GFB Gluten Free Bites Dark Chocolate + Coconut (2)	100	2.5	1
Dewey’s Bakery Moravian Style Cookie Thins ¹ (8)	120	2.5	1.5
Whole Foods 365 Organic Oatmeal Raisin (2)	140	2.5	1.5
Trader Joe’s Triple Ginger Snaps (6)	120	2.5	2
Whole Foods 365 Cookie Thins Brownie (8)	120	2.5	2
Chips Ahoy! Original (3)	160	2.5	2.5
Lotus Biscoff (4)	150	2.5	2.5
Trader Joe’s Soft Bite Mini Biscotti Almond (3)	150	2.5	2.5
Chips Ahoy! Thins Original (4)	150	2.5	3
Glutino Gluten Free Chocolate Vanilla Creme (2)	130	2.5	3.5
Catalina Crunch Keto Sandwich Chocolate Vanilla (2)	90	3	0.5
Tate’s Oatmeal Raisin (2)	130	3	2
Tate’s Gluten Free Ginger Zinger (2)	130	3	2.5
Rip Van Wafels Honey & Oats (1)	120	3.5	0.5
Pepperidge Farm Milano Dark Chocolate (3)	180	4	2.5
Tate’s Vegan Chocolate Chip (2)	140	4	2.5
Pepperidge Farm Farmhouse Thin & Crispy ¹ (2)	150	4.5	2.5
Tate’s Chocolate Chip (2)	140	4.5	3
Loacker Quadratini Hazelnut (8)	150	5	1
Walkers Gluten Free Pure Butter Shortbread (2)	160	5	1.5
Walkers Pure Butter Shortbread Rounds (2)	180	6	1
Levain Oatmeal Raisin (1 cookie, frozen, 57 g)	240	6	3.5
Lenny & Larry’s The Complete Cookie Chocolate Chip (1 cookie, 113 g)	420	6	4.5
Atkins Protein Chocolate Chip ⁵ (1 cookie, 39 g)	170	7	0
Levain Chocolate Chip Walnut (1 cookie, frozen, 57 g)	260	7	4.5

Brownies—1st ingredient “real food”

(No. per serving, about 30 grams, unless noted)

Nature’s Bakery Double Chocolate (1 pouch, 57 g)	200	1	4
✓ Lärabar Chocolate Raspberry (1 brownie, 45 g)	200	2	0.5
Lärabar Chocolate Sea Salt (1 brownie, 45 g)	200	2.5	0.5
Emmy’s Organics Brownie Snaps ¹ (7)	130	3	2.5

Brownies—1st ingredient NOT “real food”

(No. per serving, about 30 grams, unless noted)

Fiber One Chocolate Fudge (1)	70	1	0
Luna Keto Brownie Bites ¹ (1 pouch, 40 g)	140	2.5	0
Sheila G’s Brownie Brittle Chocolate Chip (2)	120	2.5	3.5
Sheila G’s Gluten-Free Brownie Brittle Chocolate Chip (6)	130	3	4

✓ Better Bite. ¹Average of the entire line or the varieties listed.

⁵ Contains sucralose.

Daily Values (for a 2,000-calorie diet): **Saturated Fat:** 20 grams.

Added Sugar: 12 tsp. (50 grams).

Note: 1 tsp. of added sugar is 4.2 grams. Because the chart rounds added sugar to the nearest 0.5 tsp., products that show “0” tsp. could contain up to 1 gram of added sugar.

Source: company information. The use of information from this article for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited without written permission from CSPI.



FOOD FIND

Ch-ch-ch-chia!



Thought **chia seeds** were only for Chia Pets? Think again.

For starters, the tiny-but-mighty seeds—look for them in the “natural” aisle—offer an impressive bundle of nutrients.

A standard serving (about 3 tablespoons)

is rich in heart-healthy polyunsaturated fats, and is

loaded with zinc, iron, and magnesium...all for only 150-or-so calories.

And if you’re looking for fiber, you’ve come to the right seed. A serving of chias delivers a whopping 10 grams. Plus, you get a decent dose (5 grams) of plant protein.

But it’s not *just* about nutrients. A spoonful or two adds a hearty, filling texture to oatmeal or [overnight oats](#) (see November 2021, back cover).

And the little seeds are the main event in chia pudding, our Healthy Cook’s Dish of the Month.

How do chia seeds turn into pudding? When you add water, milk, or another liquid, they absorb some of it and form a gel. That also makes them easier to chew.

And while you’re stocking up on seeds, don’t forget about nutty-tasting **shelled hemp seeds**, aka hemp hearts. The little guys lack most of chia’s fiber, but they bring more plant protein to the table (10 grams). And there are those polys and that zinc, iron, and magnesium again!

Try sprinkling hulled hemp seeds on a salad, oats, or cereal or into a smoothie.

Turns out, good things really *do* come in small packages.

Photos: kisananan Kuna/stock.adobe.com (top left), Chili’s (top right), Kate Sherwood/CSPI (bottom).

FOOD FAIL



There’s the Beef

“When we say we’ve got some big news, we mean *Big Mouth* big,” crowed Chili’s October [press release](#) announcing four new burgers.



“Because go big or go home, right? Two of the new **Big Mouth Burgers** boast two (yes, TWO) beef patties for a full pound of beef!”

Just what you—and our sweltering planet—need! (See cover story.) Remember when people thought a McDonald’s Quarter Pounder was big? Half-pounders soon made them look puny. But that was just the start.

The Big Mouth **Bacon Rancher**, for example, packs

two beef patties and six slices of bacon, plus American cheese. You’re talking 1,780 calories, 53 grams of saturated fat, and 2,780 milligrams of sodium—about a full day’s calories and sodium and more than two days’ sat fat.

Choose fries as your side, and you hit 2,200 calories. That’s like eating three Double Quarter Pounders with Cheese, but with *only* 3,440 mg of sodium. (The McD’s burgers hit 4,080 mg.)

“We can’t help you decide which one to try first but do highly recommend a #YOLO mentality and say go for all of them,” says Chili’s.

Yes, you only live once. And if Big Mouth Burgers help get you there a little sooner? Well, at least you went “big.”

[chilis.com](#)—(800) 983-4637



DISH of the month

Chocolate Chia Pudding

Whisk together ½ cup chia seeds, ¼ cup cocoa powder, ⅓ tsp. salt, 1 tsp. vanilla extract, 2 Tbs. maple syrup, and 2 cups milk. Let sit 15 min. Whisk again. Spoon into 4 cups. Chill until set. Top with berries.

WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

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