

# Celebrate *healthy living*

2020 Week Six



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## Eating Mindfully – the 80% Rule

People in Okinawa say “Hara Hachi Bu” before meals to remind them to stop eating when their stomachs are 80% full. This strategy helps them eat mindfully, and it is one of the Power 9® traits of people who live in Blue Zones®. Studies show that cutting back on calories is helpful in maintaining a healthy weight and can lead to better heart health and longevity. Losing just 10% of your body weight can lead to lower blood pressure and cholesterol, which reduces your risk of heart disease.

Think about your eating habits for a moment. Do you ever eat on the run, in your car, or while watching TV? Do you eat at your desk or in front of the computer? It is easy to eat while distracted and this “mindless” style of eating often leads you to eat more than you need.

To eat mindfully, pay full attention to what you are eating without being distracted. You will notice your body’s hunger and fullness cues, and mindful eating can help you distinguish between physical hunger and emotional hunger. When you feel like eating, ask yourself if you are actually hungry or if you are bored or anxious. If you tend to be an emotional eater, try other strategies before eating. Take a walk or get some sort of exercise, drink a glass of water or cup of tea, or write in a journal.

People in Blue Zones® communities eat their smallest meal in the evening and avoid late night snacking. Using a smaller plate or bowl for this meal can prompt you to eat less, and planning ahead for healthy smaller meals will also help.

Try something fun – use your non-dominant hand or chopsticks to slow down the pace you eat and encourage you to eat less. It takes about 20 minutes from the time you eat for your brain to receive the message that your stomach is full. Eating slowly gives you the opportunity to receive this message without overeating.

By making it a habit to sit down, savor your food, and enjoy it, in the company of friends and family, you are more likely to slow down, eat less, and enjoy your food more. Remember, Hara Hachi Bu!

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## Wine at 5? What Does Research Say?

Wine, in moderation, can be beneficial if included as part of a Mediterranean eating style. Consuming wine along with a meal can help the body absorb more of the flavonoids, which are artery-scrubbing antioxidants, from the food you eat with it.

People in most Blue Zones® communities enjoy Wine at 5, responsibly and in moderation. The recommendation specifies no more than one glass/day for women and two/day for men. Sardinians are known for their daily consumption of a robust red wine called Cannonau, an antioxidant-rich beverage. In addition, they always consume wine surrounded by good friends and good food.

Research backs up the link between moderate amounts of wine and increased longevity. Wine, enjoyed sparingly as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle, can benefit your health, but it does not cancel-out the negative effects of a poor diet and unhealthy lifestyle habits. Plus, you can't save up all week and have 7 to 14 drinks on Saturday!

So, raise a glass and responsibly enjoy a glass of wine with your meal and with friends.

*Note: Do not consume alcohol if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, underage, an alcoholic or have a family history of alcohol dependence, have a liver condition, or take medications that alcohol can interfere with.*



## Tame Your Sweet Tooth

It is easy to get too much sugar in your diet. It seems like the more of it we eat, the more we crave sugar. Foods with natural sugar, such as fruit, are still part of a healthful diet. Experts agree, however, that limiting added sugar has many benefits, including weight maintenance, heart health, diabetes prevention and management, and a stronger immune system.

People in the Blue Zones® eat sugar intentionally, not by habit or accident. Their diet contains about the same amount of natural sugar as ours in the U.S., but their consumption of added sugar is only about one-fifth the amount that we consume.

Here is good sound advice on limiting added sugar in your diet:

- » Read labels. Sugar is hiding in pre-packaged and processed foods. Check the ingredient list for corn syrup and sweetener, molasses, honey, malt sugar, cane juice, brown or malt sugar, fruit juice concentrates, and sugar molecules ending in “ose” (sucrose, dextrose, etc.)
- » Save cookies, candy, and bakery items for special occasions and ideally as part of a meal.
- » Limit sugar added to coffee, tea, and other beverages. Consuming intensely sweetened beverages can leave you craving foods/drinks with more sweetness.
- » When baking, cut sugar in the recipe by  $\frac{1}{3}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$ .
- » Seek out whole foods. These will satisfy you and they are full of nutrients.
- » Be patient. The first few days you eat less sugar will be the hardest. Try getting more sleep, choose healthful carbs (whole grains, fruits, nuts, seeds), and find support.

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- » In addition to walking or other moderate intensity exercise, do strengthening exercises at least two days this week.
- » Practice one of the strategies for eating mindfully.
- » Talk with your teammates about something in the newsletter that you can identify with — something you want to work on and improve this week. Support each other in making these changes.
- » Think about your diet and the added sugars you are consuming. Identify at least one way you can begin to reduce added sugar.

## Med Meringues

The technique of beaten egg whites, combined with nuts and seeds, offers a meringue with med influence – healthy fat and low sugar. You can use any combination of nuts and seeds, just make sure they are unsalted.

Makes 40 meringues

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup sunflower seeds
- 1 cup sliced almonds
- 1 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup shredded unsweetened coconut
- ½ cup old-fashioned oats
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 large egg whites
- ½ cup sugar

### Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F.
3. Heat olive oil in a large skillet until hot but not smoking.
4. Add the sunflower seeds, almonds, pumpkin seeds, coconut, oats, and salt. Toss for several minutes until toasted. Keep the mixture moving and reduce heat so it does not burn.
5. Put the nut mixture in a large bowl and refrigerate until cool.

6. Separate egg yolks from whites, then wash hands with soap and water. Place whites in another large bowl and beat until foamy. Continue to beat and slowly add the sugar; beat until thick.
7. Combine the cooled nut mixture and egg whites. Fold together until combined.
8. Drop by rounded tablespoons on to a parchment lined baking sheet (you can also use a baking mat or lightly greased cookie sheet).
9. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes until slightly brown. Cool on a wire rack. Store in airtight container at room temperature. Med Meringues can be frozen for longer storage.

### Nutrition Information per cookie:

80 calories; 6 g fat (0 trans fat, 2 g saturated fat); 5 g carbohydrates; 3 g protein; 1 g fiber; 35 mg sodium; 3 g added sugars.



## More Moves for Strength

In addition to walking, and other types of aerobic activity, you should do strengthening exercises at least two days per week, with a rest day between. It is important to work all major muscle groups, including the legs, hips, back, stomach, chest, shoulders, and arms. Given the circumstances created by COVID-19, we all need to do these in our homes to be safe. Here are some resources that may be helpful:

Walk Kansas Muscle Strengthening Videos

[www.walkkansas.org/activity/strength.html](http://www.walkkansas.org/activity/strength.html)

At Home Beginner Strength Training

[spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/video/at-home-workout-beginner-strength-training/](https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/video/at-home-workout-beginner-strength-training/)

Go4Life Workout Videos – for older adults

[youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmk21KJuZUM7kDgg7EOsXqPKAoOnD5Q8N](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmk21KJuZUM7kDgg7EOsXqPKAoOnD5Q8N)

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#### Kansas State University Walk Kansas

This newsletter developed by Sharolyn Flaming Jackson, Extension Specialist – Family and Consumer Sciences, K-State Research and Extension

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