

Nutrition Tip of the Week: Whole Foods vs Processed Foods



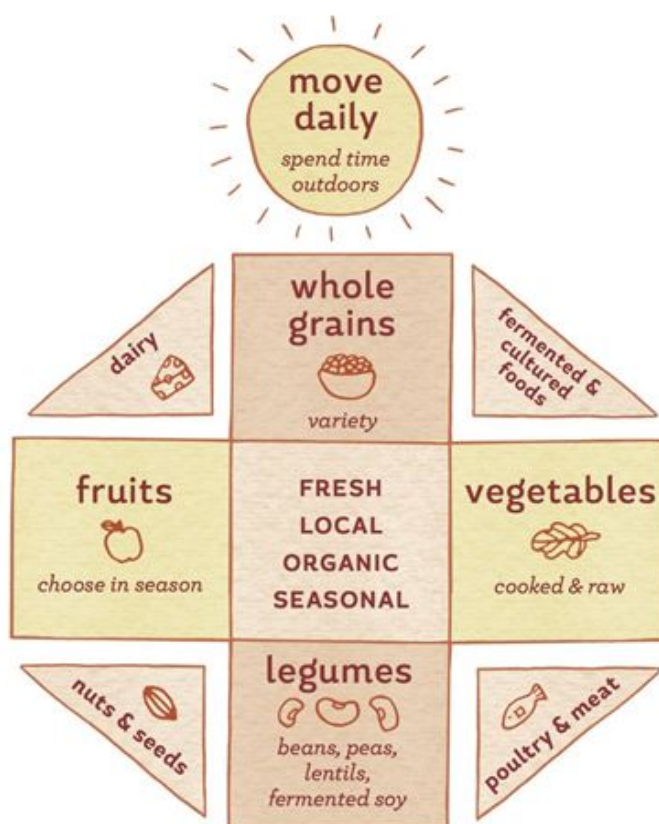
Hello CSUSM Athletes!

This week we are talking about the differences between a whole food vs a processed food and why it's the ultimate game changer in your daily overall health and eating patterns. A **whole food** is a food that is in its whole and *natural state*- the way Mother Nature created it-with little to no processing, artificial ingredients, or additives. They consist of only one ingredient- the food itself. They are nutrient-rich in that all of sources of macronutrients (carbohydrates, fats and proteins) and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) are naturally found in whole foods. Whole foods are also a main source of fiber. Fiber found in whole foods help with blood sugar regulation, keeps us satiated for longer, and acts like a broom in our intestines that scrapes out all toxins and unwanted debris to help us form a bowel movement. Eating more whole foods also increases the likelihood of practicing more home cooking versus eating out or buying processed and premade meals.

Processed foods are foods that have somehow changed from its original form and involve more than one ingredient. It is any food that has been altered from its natural state. Something important to keep in mind is that not all processed foods are bad for us. Whole foods can be minimally or lightly processed and still help make up a healthy overall diet (tomatoes that are canned or made into a sauce, berries that are frozen, pre-chopped vegetables, whole grains made into breads or pastas, etc.). The trick is that if you do purchase processed foods, look for foods that are *minimally or lightly processed*. To do this, check the nutrition label and look for foods that have between **3-5 grams of fiber**. This is considered to be a good source of dietary fiber. Also, when looking at the ingredients list, check that there are little to no additives or preservatives, limited ingredients and look for ingredients that come from whole foods sources. This also helps navigate choosing from minimally or lightly processed foods from *highly*

processed foods. Highly processed foods are what we want to limit in our overall eating patterns and can be a risk to our overall health because they lack good sources of fiber, are high in calories and low in nutrients (aka empty calories). These can be found in a box, in the frozen aisles, or when going out to eat. They are also high in added preservatives that help increase shelf life, full of added ingredients such as sugar, unhealthy fats, and sodium, and are made up of mainly refined ingredients. For these reasons, highly processed foods increase the risk for several health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, diverticular disease, constipation and colon cancer. Essentially, the more whole foods in your diet, the healthier you will be and the lower the risk of negative health outcomes. Check out the simple and helpful infographics below to help you include more whole food sources into your overall eating patterns!

MAP FOR WHOLE FOODS EATING



MAIN DISHES (squares): Whole Grains; Vegetables; Legumes; Fruit

SIDE DISHES & TOPPINGS (triangles): Dairy; Cultured and Fermented Foods; Eggs, Fish, Meat, and Poultry; Nuts and Seeds

For most, having side dishes and toppings take a supporting role in the meal is best. However, the proportion of these can be adjusted in the diets

of those with elevated needs, such as women who are pregnant or nursing, persons who participate daily in hard physical labor, and children or adults who are regularly involved in aerobic athletic competition.

For those choosing to be vegan, it is important to include nuts and seeds (for fats) and sea vegetables (for minerals).

IS IT A WHOLE FOOD?

ASK YOURSELF 5 QUESTIONS

1

CAN I IMAGINE
IT GROWING?

2

HOW MANY
INGREDIENTS
DOES IT HAVE?

3

WHAT'S BEEN
DONE TO THE
FOOD SINCE IT
WAS
HARVESTED?

4

IS THIS PRODUCT
"PART" OF A FOOD
OR THE "WHOLE"
ENTITY OR ARE
ALL OF THE
ORIGINAL EDIBLE
PARTS PRESENT?

5

HOW LONG HAS
THIS FOOD BEEN
KNOWN TO
NOURISH
HUMANS?

WHOLE FOODS

VERSUS

PROCESSED FOODS

EAT

Fresh
vegetables,
unseasoned
nuts and
seeds

Fresh fruits

Whole grains,
legumes

Organic,
cage-free
chicken,
Wild caught
fish

LIMIT

Chips,
seasoned nuts
and seeds

Pastries,
cookies, soft
drinks, candy

Cereal,
granola
bars,
biscuits,
crackers

Microwave
meals and
meats, such as
bacon, ham,
sausage, and
deli meats

Recipe of the Week: Baked Sweet Potato Chippies

These 3-ingredient sweet potato chips are an ideal alternative to buying store-bought chips that are commonly fried, made with unhealthy oils, high in sodium, and can be highly processed. These lightly processed vegetable chips are fresh, filling and made from healthy whole food ingredients. Dip them with protein-packed hummus to make them a balanced snack! They are lightly coated with olive oil, a type of healthy fat that is rich in omega-3 and helps with recovery. Sweet potatoes are a great source of carbohydrates and fiber- the perfect formula for a healthy snack to eat after away games, practice or to take to class. They are rich in calcium, phosphorus, sodium, potassium and magnesium- electrolytes that are important to consume after a hard training. Their bursting orange color comes from vitamin A which helps to strengthen immunity, promotes muscle growth, and boosts bone health! A win-win for any athlete.

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Servings: 6 servings

Ingredients:

- 2-3 sweet potatoes (~1.15 lbs)
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- Salt to taste

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 300°F. Line several baking sheets with parchment paper and set aside.
2. Use a mandolin slicer and put on the thinnest setting or use a knife to cut rounds (~1/16 inch thick or less).
3. Pile all sweet potato rounds into a large bowl and pour olive oil over the top. Gently toss to coat to ensure they are all lightly coated.
4. Lie sweet potato rounds out on a baking sheet in a single layer. Sprinkle chips with salt as needed.
5. Bake for 20-30 minutes until crisp and golden around the edges. If you have a few that still have a soft center, bake for an additional 5 minutes.
6. Remove from the oven and cool for 5 minutes. Place in a bag or a bowl and enjoy!

This recipe was adapted from: <https://www.aspicyperspective.com/baked-sweet-potato-chips/>

Nutrition information: serving: **10chips**, calories: **152kcal**, carbohydrates: **17g**, protein: **1g**, fat: **9g**, saturated fat: **1g**, cholesterol: **0mg**, sodium: **46mg**, potassium: **286mg**, fiber: **2g**, sugar: **3g**, vitamin a: **12065iu**, vitamin c: **2.1mg**, calcium: **26mg**, iron: **0.6mg**





The Cougar Pantry serves free food to all CSUSM students. Each Student may visit once per week, in addition to attending Fresh Market Mondays (every Monday in Chavez Plaza from 10am - 1pm) and Produce Truck Tuesdays (first tuesday of every month in front of Markstein Hall from 12-1 pm) for fresh produce.

Cougar Pantry is located in **USU 3100A** and the hours are as follows:

Mondays: closed for Fresh Market

Mondays; Tuesday - Thursday: 9 AM - 5 PM

Friday: 9 AM - 1 PM

Don't forget your reusable bag and student ID!

Thank you Cougars and have a wonderful week!