

# WELLSPRING

THE HEALTH MAGAZINE FOR THE JEWISH FAMILY

## Fill 'Em Up

Which foods will fuel up your workout?

## A is for Ask (and Adar)

Rebbetzin Bina Altsweiser's profound response to the most popular question of all time

## I Want to Be a SWAT Robot with Wings—From Mars

4 ways to help your child maintain their sense of individuality in a cookie-cutter world

## Nourished with Nature

After Sheindy Unger discovered the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, she was determined to share them with others

SLEEP SCHEDULE

PLAY PRECIPITANT

STARTING SOLIDS

TUMMY TIME

# ARE YOU NUTS?

**SELF-APPOINTED EXPERTS  
ACROSS THE BOARD DEBATE THEIR  
TAKE ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

**PLUS** BECAUSE PURIM IS ONLY  
ONE DAY A YEAR, THE MOST  
EFFECTIVE, EVIDENCE-BASED  
STRATEGY FOR EACH TOPIC

## Switch It Up

In the spirit of *venahafoch*, Esti Asher highlights 6 fabulous food swaps

## A Refreshing Perspective

How to tap in to the unique joy of the days of Mordechai and Esther

## Dress Up to Hike Up

Does garb impact productivity and spirit?

11 Samples take on the challenge

## My Table

How We Do Purim

## Hamantaschen, Rebranded

These fillings are actually good for you

## Citrus Strawberry Sparkling Water

With sweet drinks like these, who needs sugary soda?

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# VENAHAFOCH HU

6 UPSIDE-DOWN INGREDIENT SWAPS

BY ESTI ASHER, MS, RDN, LD

The concept of enjoying food is supported within our Torah teachings. Hashem gave us taste buds for a reason, and there are many ways to elevate the physical act of eating into a spiritual experience, including making *berachos* before and after eating and having the intention that the food we are eating is fuel to help us better serve Hashem. Therefore, while some nutrition approaches focus on (almost) always making sure we are using “healthy” ingredients, I often advise people to enjoy an original recipe as intended, while being mindful of the occasion, the portion size, and how delicious and satisfying the food is.

However, there are times—perhaps when a specific food is eaten more regularly—when we may want to switch around the ingredients for others that are more beneficial to our body. With the inspiration of switching and *Venahafoch Hu*, this Purim edition of Tidbits will explore six healthy ingredient swaps, and their corresponding nutritional benefits.



### Cacao Nibs or Dark Chocolate

#### ~~chocolate chips~~

This seemingly minor replacement can have a big payoff in the world of nutrition. Cacao nibs, or even a high cacao percentage of dark chocolate chips (70 percent or above), result in a decrease in sugar and increase in antioxidants and fiber in the final product. Also, cacao nibs are particularly high in iron and protein. (Please keep in mind that cacao nibs may be a choking hazard for small children.)



### Puréed Avocado

#### ~~butter in baked goods~~

This substitution can take place in a 1:1 ratio, so replace 1 cup butter with 1 cup puréed avocado. While butter produces a delicious and flaky texture within baked goods, avocado is a great alternative with less calories and with healthy fats that may be beneficial for cardiovascular health. Avocado purée also contributes vitamins C, E, K, and B6, magnesium, potassium, and other nutrients. To avoid browning in lighter-colored baked goods, try adding 1–2 teaspoons of lemon juice to the puréed avocado.



### Flax Egg

#### ~~egg~~

The term “flax egg” comes up often in vegan recipes but is rarely defined. This egg substitute refers to a mixture of 1 tablespoon ground flaxseed and 3 tablespoons water, which is then left for 10 minutes to thicken. While this substitution is not recommended for more than one egg, it can be a delicious and nutrient-dense option for someone who prefers a vegan dish or wants to explore different ingredients. Flax is especially high in polyunsaturated fatty acids such as omega 3s, as well as fiber. Potential health benefits of ground flaxseeds include lowering cholesterol levels and reducing blood pressure, and may also have a protective effect against cancer.



### Canned Pumpkin or Unsweetened Applesauce

#### ~~oil~~

Similar to puréed avocado and butter, canned pumpkin or unsweetened applesauce may also be substituted with a ratio of 1:1. Puréed pumpkin contributes toward extra-moist baked goods and also adds nutritional benefits such as fiber, and other vitamins and minerals such as vitamins A, B1, B6, and C, copper, folate, and manganese. Some recommend using  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup unsweetened applesauce in place of 1 cup oil for a closer texture outcome; the applesauce will also contribute small amounts of B vitamins, as well as vitamins C and E. These replacements minimize the amount of fat and calories in the final baked-good product, while maintaining the delicious taste and texture.





## Mashed Banana

~~egg~~

The recommended swap is between 1 half to 1 whole (depending on the size) mashed, very ripe banana as a substitution for 1 egg. The high moisture content and creamy texture bind ingredients together, while also providing a rich and sweet flavor. Bananas are famously known for their high level of potassium, a mineral that helps improve heart health and blood pressure.



## Greek Yogurt

~~sour cream~~

Whether you opt for a full 1:1 ratio of Greek yogurt in place of sour cream, or simply opt to replace a portion of the sour cream with Greek yogurt, this suggestion can increase the amount of protein, probiotics, calcium, and B12 you are consuming. It may also decrease the amount of fat and—depending on the recipe—should not compromise the flavor. Try this swap with baked goods that call for sour cream or within different dips or dressings.

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## Two Kiwis a Day May Keep Constipation Away

It's easy to take a symptom-free tummy and regular bowel movements for granted until one experiences gastrointestinal discomfort and constipation. Typical home remedies recommended for constipation include drinking a lot of fluids, eating dried fruits such as prunes, or walking around and being active to get gravity to help.

A recent study, published in the *American Journal of Gastroenterology*, found that two green kiwis a day decreased constipation and abdominal discomfort. Participants were suffering from functional constipation and constipation-predominant irritable bowel syndrome. The 63 participants were randomly assigned to eat two green kiwis per day or 7.5 grams of psyllium per day for four weeks, followed by a four-week washout period. After the washout period, the groups swapped treatments. The researchers found that with the kiwis, participants had increased GI comfort and experienced an increased number of complete spontaneous bowel movements per week. Potential explanations for this benefit are the fiber content and raphides found in kiwis, in addition to the water retention in the small bowel and ascending colon that the kiwi causes. Also, the fiber found within kiwis allows for a large water-holding capacity and swelling, which in turn can help with stool softening and an increase in stool frequency.

## More Fiber, Fewer Migraines?

Severe headaches and migraines can be common and very disruptive to one's daily routine. Many factors, both genetic and environmental, can contribute toward the occurrence of migraines, while stress, specific foods, and dietary patterns can influence their duration and intensity. A recent study, published in *Frontiers in Nutrition*, examined the association between fiber intake and migraine headaches.

The study analyzed data collected between 1999–2004 from the NHANES study, and included 12,710 participants after narrowing down participants to specific criteria. The analysis concluded that there was a significant inverse association between fiber intake and migraine or severe headaches. Researchers found that for every 10 grams of dietary fiber intake, there was an 11 percent decrease in migraine occurrence. While further study is needed before official nutrition recommendations can be made in this area, this research is a promising start. ♡