

# Words on Wellness

## Boost Your Energy with Smart Food Choices



Is what you're eating helping you power through your day or putting you in nap mode? Your diet plays a key role in maintaining energy levels. Choosing the right foods can help nourish your body and fight fatigue throughout the day.

- **Unprocessed Foods:** Fast food, frozen dinners, candy, and energy drinks might seem quick and easy, but they don't give your body the good stuff it needs and can slow you down. Choose fresh, unprocessed foods.
- **Fruits and Vegetables:** If you're looking for energy-boosting foods, you can't go wrong with plant-based options. Choose apples, bananas, oranges, blueberries, strawberries, pears, asparagus, broccoli, sweet potatoes, spinach, and beans.
- **Whole Grains and Complex Carbs:** Steer clear of sugary stuff like cookies, sweets, and white bread that lack nutrients and can make you tired. Choose whole grain foods and complex carbs for added fiber and steady energy.
- **Lean Proteins:** Proteins are slow to digest, which helps fight off fatigue; the key is to choose lean proteins. Chicken, turkey, and fish provide quality protein without excess saturated fat. Eggs, beans, and yogurt are great protein choices, too.
- **Healthy Fats:** Avocado, olive oil, almonds, walnuts, and pistachios offer lasting energy and support brain function.
- **Noncaffeinated Beverages:** Caffeine is okay in moderation and provides a short-term boost, but it doesn't truly energize the body. Skip the soda and energy drinks that can make you crash later. Choose unsweetened tea, coconut water, or a fruit smoothie. Water is also a smart choice. Even mild dehydration can cause fatigue!

Remember, balance is key. Aim for a variety of nutrient-dense foods, drink enough water, and listen to what your body tells you. By making mindful choices, you'll have more energy and be ready to take on the day!

Source: [Cleveland Clinic](https://www.clevelandclinic.com), [go.iastate.edu/WWK50G](https://go.iastate.edu/WWK50G)

## *Meatloaf in a Mug*

Serving Size: 1 meatloaf | Serves: 1



### Ingredients:

- 1/4 pound lean ground beef
- 2 tablespoons oats
- 1 tablespoon ketchup
- 2 teaspoons skim milk
- 1 teaspoon dry onion mix

### Directions:

1. Spray microwave-safe mug with cooking spray.
2. Combine all ingredients and stir to mix.
3. Pat beef mixture into mug. Make a small hole in the center, all the way to the bottom. Wash hands.
4. Microwave on high (100%) for 3 minutes or until cooked to 160°F.

### Tips:

- Cooking time increases if more than one is placed in microwave at a time. Leftover onion mix can be used as a seasoning for microwaved or baked vegetables.

### Nutrition information per serving:

270 calories, 12g total fat, 4.5g saturated fat, 0.5g trans fat, 75mg cholesterol, 360mg sodium, 14g total carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 5g sugar, 25g protein  
This recipe is courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach's Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website. For more information, recipes, and videos, visit [spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu](https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu)

## Women's Health—Do you know the symptoms?

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women worldwide, and early detection is key. Symptoms include lumps, nipple changes, thickened skin, changes in appearance (size, shape, dimpling), and skin color changes (pink, red).

Ovarian cancer also affects women. It's important to know the symptoms because they can be hard to detect. Symptoms include abdominal or pelvic pain, feeling full quickly, bloating, changes in bowel habits, frequent urination, and feeling tired without a clear reason.

Early detection can save lives. Let's raise awareness and encourage our loved ones to recognize these symptoms.

Sources: [Mayo Clinic](https://www.mayoclinic.org), [go.iastate.edu/9RC4ST](https://go.iastate.edu/9RC4ST)  
[Mayo Clinic](https://www.mayoclinic.org), [go.iastate.edu/Z86DJ0](https://go.iastate.edu/Z86DJ0)



## Growing Together Iowa Grant: Cultivating Health and Community

The [Growing Together Iowa Mini-Grant Program](https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/growing-together-iowa), [www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/growing-together-iowa](https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/growing-together-iowa), has provided funding for the Master Gardener donation garden projects since 2016. The funding helps volunteers buy materials such as seeds, fencing, and harvest supplies to support food pantry donation gardens.

Growing Together Iowa aims to accomplish the following:

- Increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables
- Promote healthy food choices
- Provide nutrition and gardening education

In 2023, 33 Iowa counties participated in the project, growing an impressive 103,670 pounds of fruits and vegetables. These nutritious crops were donated to 100 food pantries and distribution sites, benefiting 82,000 Iowans.

This project is funded by the USDA SNAP-Ed program and Amerigroup. It's an example of how community gardens can address food insecurity while creating a sense of togetherness and well-being. For more information, visit the [Growing Together Iowa](https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/growing-together-iowa) website, [www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/growing-together-iowa](https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/growing-together-iowa), and explore the [map](https://iastate.app.box.com/s/6rfxw4iip42885bckjc7hmk1096b2o6k), [iastate.app.box.com/s/6rfxw4iip42885bckjc7hmk1096b2o6k](https://iastate.app.box.com/s/6rfxw4iip42885bckjc7hmk1096b2o6k), of participating counties.

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*If you or someone you know is skipping meals, going hungry, or choosing between food and medicine, call 1-855-944-3663 to apply for assistance today.*

*Call Iowa 2-1-1 or Iowa Lifelong Links, 1-866-468-7887, for additional resources.*

