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HEALTH ON YOUR PLATTER

Make sound food choices to stay energetic throughout the day



There are certain foods that not only help maintain a healthy weight but also support energy levels and moods throughout the day. They are also known to ward off PMS (premenstrual syndrome) symptoms, infertility, osteoporosis, heart diseases, estrogen-dominant cancers and hormonal imbalances. All you need is to stock up your pantry.

Strengthen bones with sesame seeds

Calcium plays an important role in regulating functioning of the heart and nervous system. Its deficiency leads to weak bones and brittle teeth, mood swings, irritability and anxiety. During menopause, the shortage of estrogen can also lead to weakened bones. The calcium in sesame seeds has a higher bioavailability than calcium in cow milk and you need two tablespoons of sesame seeds to give you calcium for the day. Consume Sesame seeds along with jaggery to help fight menstrual cramps.

Boost immunity with moringa

Moringa is abundant in protein, calcium, potassium and iron and has high levels of antioxidants such as vitamins A, B and C that can help combat infections. Vitamins A and E in particular help keep cells healthy, prevent cellular mutations and

reduce the side effects of chemotherapy.

Moringa is also a good source of vitamins B1, B2 and B3. Remember Fresh moringa leaves can be had in the form of curries, stir fries, soup and chutney. Those who don't like the flavour of moringa powder can opt for moringa supplements.

Cacao is a mood elevator

Be it anti-ageing, mood boosting, increasing your sexual desire or calming down cramping woes, cacao does it all. Cacao (not to be confused with chocolate/cocoa) packs a nutritional punch of magnesium, antioxidants such as flavonol and boosts serotonin, the feel-good brain chemical when the menstrual cycle gets you down. Magnesium also helps to protect against osteoporosis, reduces Type 2 diabetes, and lowers blood pressure.

Tip Have one tablespoon of cacao powder with water and honey, or cacao powder with almond milk and dates.

Coconut oil cures thyroid

Coconut is nature's medicine when it comes to healing an underactive thyroid. It fights sluggish metabolism, boosts liver health where the actual conversion of T4 to T3 takes place, encourages weight loss, increases basal body temperature, and behaves as an antioxidant, all of which work together in stimulating the proper functioning of this important gland. Must do One to two tablespoons of cold pressed coconut oil in raw form every day, either in vegetable juice, and dal.

Regulate hormones with flaxseeds

Flaxseeds are a great source of essential fatty acids. The omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids are not only hormone regulators but they also form a part of cell membranes, body tissue, and brain development of the foetus. Flaxseeds are rich in phytoestrogens (plant-based estrogen) that work well with menopausal women to reduce hot flashes. It lowers bad cholesterol, calms down systemic inflammation, improves skin and hair quality, and reduces the risk of breast cancer. Good to have One to two tablespoons of freshly ground flaxseed (to unlock its nutrition) per day is enough to reap its benefits.

Keep sugar levels in check with ragi

Amongst cereals, ragi or finger millet contains the highest amounts of calcium and iron. It is also rich in proteins, essential amino acids, vitamin A, B, fibre and phosphorous, all of which makes it an ideal food for pregnant and lactating women. It's way too low in glycemic index due to fibre and that helps in maintaining blood sugar levels. Why eat Ragi can very well be a part of a balanced meal. It can be consumed in the form of chapattis, healthy cookies, porridge, soup, steamed balls or dosas and idlis.

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