

Food and Nutrition for Well-Being During Hard Times - Part 1: The Basics

In days of adversity, not only can there be food shortages, there may also be disease, contaminated water, poor sanitation, and very unhealthy living conditions; all of which will stress and weaken the immune system. Storing the right foods, along with having plenty of pure water, will be vital to maintaining good health.

The following is an excerpt from a FamilyWorx Newsletter sent to its subscribers. Details for subscribing to FamilyWorx and receiving the newsletter, monthly DVDs and other benefits can be found on line at www.PrepareMyFamily.com, or by an e-mail to info@PrepareMyFamily.com, or by writing Jim Phillips at PO Box 548, Spring City, UT 84662.

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Water

Stay Well Hydrated: Chronic dehydration is at the root of many of today's health issues. Many experts recommend drinking ½ fluid ounce of water for each pound of body weight, every day. (If you weigh 128, half is 64 fl oz, i.e. drink ½ gallon daily.) This must be pure water, not sugary drinks, and especially not soda or caffeine drinks (caffeine contributes to dehydration). Artificial sweeteners are also taboo. In the heat, you must drink even more water to make up for losses due to sweating.

In cold weather, staying well hydrated is essential to avoid hypothermia. Your body requires ample amounts of fluid to circulate heat throughout the body. Cold air is very dry and although you do not notice it, a lot of water evaporates as you breathe. Drink additional water to make up of that loss. If you become even mildly dehydrated in the cold it will become very hard for you to stay warm. As dehydration deepens (even moderately), the onset of hypothermia is likely even if you are adequately clothed.

When disasters have occurred around the world, more people have died (perhaps 10 times more) from drinking contaminated water and/or from dehydration, than from the actual disaster. Dehydration weakens the immune system. Severe dehydration can lead to death. Drinking contaminated water can lead to dysentery, which can cause severe dehydration, which can lead to secondary illnesses which may become deadly to an over-stressed and weakened immune system. Ample amounts of **pure water is absolutely vital for strength and survival!**

Water Storage: Water will run out fast, so store 30 to 60 gallons per person or more. Some water should be in containers that can be carried with you if you must leave. Select food-grade containers that are durable and intended for long-term storage. Avoid degradable plastics such as milk cartons. Plastic soda, juice or drink bottles are a good choice because they are free and easy to obtain on a regular basis. Clear is best because if you can see anything in the water, suspect trouble and properly treat the water before consuming. Generally, if filtered/purified water is put into clean containers, no other precautions are needed.

Water Filtration: It is highly recommended that during emergencies all water be filtered and purified before use, not only the water you drink but also bath and wash water, and any water that can get into your eyes mouth or open cuts etc. There are many different ways to filter, treat and purify water. Numerous such products can be found in the market. Unfortunately, many of them do not perform as promised and there is no way to "test-drive" one before you buy. When a time of need comes, it's too late to find out that it doesn't work well, therefore, look for reliable third party tests and comparisons. You can also learn some inexpensive techniques.

Salt: Salt is a life sustaining element. There are also other uses for salt, so store plenty, perhaps 5 times more than you anticipate needing. (Recommendation: real salt or a sea salt from a trusted source that contains natural occurring minerals.)

Sanitation: If you do not keep yourself, your clothes and your living area clean and sanitary you will become ill! There is no disputing this fact! During a crisis, the sewer system may not be working. Even if it is, you may not have water to spare to make it work. Store toilet paper, paper towels, wet wipes, feminine hygiene, baby diapers, plastic bags, and other similar items for cleaning and disposing of waste that require no water. Food and water which become contaminated for your surroundings can be deadly, especially during emergencies.

Food

Whole Grains: Grains include wheat, rice, barley, oats, corn, popcorn, rye, quinoa, amaranth, and more.

Whole grains have not had their nutrient rich bran and germ removed. Whole grains provide protein, fiber, essential fatty acids, antioxidants, minerals, and complex carbohydrates which breakdown slowly to provide long term energy. White flour, white rice, farina, pearly barley (or any other non-whole grain) cannot match the natural goodness of whole grains even if they have been “enriched.”

Additionally, whole **kernel** grains have their own natural defenses against insects and spoilage. Flour, rolled or cracked grains do not. Whole kernel grains can last for many years when stored where it is cool, dark and dry. (However, one common exception is whole grain (brown) rice. Because of its high germ oil content it is best to rotate brown rice within 6 months or store it in the freezer.) If insects do infest grains, they are more easily removed from whole kernel grains than from cracked grains, rolled grains or flour. However, insect infestation does not mean the product is unusable. There are ways to remove insects.

Sprouting: Most high quality whole kernel grains can be sprouted, and indeed should be eaten as uncooked sprouts to obtain a significantly higher nutritional value. During germination, enzymes convert starches into new living compounds containing a tremendous reservoir of vitamins and other beneficial chemistries vital to health. Also, sprouting does not require fuel or electricity (which may be unavailable) for grinding and cooking.

Grain Storage: Grains store best if they are kept dry, cool and dark. (Insects and mold do not survive where it is dry and cold.) Insect eggs may already be in your grains when you buy it. The best precaution against insects is to use “food grade” Diatomaceous Earth (DE) from PERMA-GUARD™.

<p>Important: PERMA-GUARD™ makes DE that is safe to consume. It is not a good idea to use chemicals to kill bugs in food. PERMA-GUARD DE is not a chemical.</p>
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Whole kernel grains to be used for sprouting may do better if stored in the presence of some oxygen. Seeds are alive and require a small amount of oxygen to remain viable and sproutable. Whole kernel grains stored long term in reduced oxygen might not sprout as well. To test germination, take a sample of 10 to 20 kernels (seeds). Keep them in a damp paper towel where it is warm. After a few days count how many have sprouted.

Legumes: Legumes include beans, peas, peanuts, and lentils. Legumes are high in protein and complex carbohydrates. Lentils are the most easily digested of all legumes and offer high quality protein and taste great sprouted. Beans include: Aduki or adzuki (easily digested), anasazi, black beans (or turtle beans), black-eyed peas or cowpeas (cook quickly and easily digested), chickpeas (garbanzo), great northern (white), kidney (red), lima beans (butter beans), mung beans, navy beans, pinto beans, and soybeans. (I suggest that you avoid non-organic soybeans. Limited space here prevents further explanation; please do research before deciding.)

Like grains, most legumes can be sprouted, and will provide the most nutrition. Note: Split peas do not sprout.

Storing Legumes: Store legumes same as grains. Beans become tougher to chew after a year or two, so keep them rotated. Peanuts have a high oil content and will become rancid after a few months, but will keep frozen.

<p>Protein: The human body requires adequate amounts of proteins from multiple sources. Foods that have all of the required proteins (such as meat, fish, poultry and eggs) are considered to be “complete proteins.” Individual vegetable sources (grains, legumes, nuts, seeds, and vegetables) are “incomplete proteins” because they are missing, or do not have enough of, one or more of the required proteins. Amaranth is one noteworthy exception.</p>
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<p>In general, the proteins that are missing in grains are found in legumes, vegetables or nuts, and vice versa. By daily consuming a variety of grains, legumes, vegetables and nuts, a person can get all of the required proteins. For example, grains combined with legumes provide enough of each of the required proteins. Note: It is not necessary to eat the different protein sources within the same meal.</p>

<p>To ensure that you have enough protein, you may want to store some canned fish, chicken, beef, or protein powders. Dried meats are also good; however, avoid commercially produced jerky as it has a high content of chemical additives. If you want jerky, dry your own from, fish, beef, deer, elk, antelope, or moose, but do not use pork or bear meat.</p>
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Oil (for fat): Fat will be critical during times of food shortages. Fat is absolutely vital to health. Without fat you become susceptible to numerous health issues. Fat also has a high calorie content that metabolizes slowly for sustained energy. High quality vegetable oils are amongst the most nutritious sources of fat.

Most oils are extracted using petrochemical solvents, pressure, and heat. Hydrogenated or trans-fats have additional processing. Processing destroys enzymes, vitamins, trace minerals and essential fatty acids. “Cold-pressed” oils have the least nutritional loss. If it does not say, “cold-pressed” or “virgin” it has been processed using heat and/or solvents. Cold-pressed olive oil is one of the healthiest oils, but there are many other good choices. Cold-pressed oils are more expensive. You will need to do considerable research before deciding whether to have a lot of a less expensive product or less of a much better product. It may be wise to have some of both. (Do considerable research before choosing canola oil and non-organic soybean oil.)

Avoid hydrogenated, partially hydrogenated, trans-fats. These oils are found in margarine, shorting, most peanut butters, and many other common products.

Storing Oil: Most oils have a shelf life of 3 to 12 months, depending on variety and storage conditions. With ideal conditions, olive oil may store over 2 years. Oils go rancid quickly with exposure to oxygen, heat, and light. It helps to use small containers oil, this minimizes the amount of oil “opened” and thus exposed to air. Rancid oils are unhealthy and potentially toxic. Oil storage can also be improved by storing in the fridge or freezer. Oil may go cloudy or solid at low temperatures, but it will not expand and break its container. Oil will return to normal when warmed.

During a time of crisis, fats and oils will be in very short supply and difficult to produce – it will be wise to store 2 to 3 times more than you anticipate needing! **Again, fat is very critical during times of food shortages.**

Other

Vitamins & Minerals: The human body on its own cannot produce all of the vitamins and minerals that it needs. Without vitamins and minerals, health will begin to deteriorate. When food is scarce or the variety and quality of that food is questionable, a good vitamin / mineral supplement may be necessary!

The best way to obtain vitamins and minerals is by eating abundant amounts of fresh, raw, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, etc. The next best thing is a supplement made from fruits and vegetables, and other natural sources, which have undergone very little processing. These vitamins are generally more expensive. The least expensive vitamins / minerals are the chemically synthesized pills. However, it is questionable as to how well the body is able to use synthesized vitamins & minerals. Do considerable research before choosing a supplement and deciding whether to have a lot of a less expensive product or less of a much better product. Storability of most supplements can be improved by storing them at colder temperatures such as the fridge.

Honey: Sweeteners are not necessary to nutrition, but if you want one, choose a natural one. Organic raw honey is a healthy choice because of live enzymes and lack of chemicals. Raw honey also contains natural elements that assist in honey metabolism. Pure honey will store for a long time provided **no water** has been added. Honey with added water will ferment and spoil. Unfortunately, the label may not say that water is added - buy honey from a trusted source!

Powdered Milk: Powdered milk is also not necessary, but does provide some protein. Milk is touted as a good source of calcium. Although it does contain high levels of calcium, only a small amount is bio-available to humans. Good sources of calcium include: most green leafy vegetables, broccoli, dry beans, almonds, other natural plant sources, or a good calcium supplement. Calcium is best utilized when adequate magnesium is available at the same time.

Storing Powdered Milk: Powdered milk is affected by heat, light and oxygen. The fat in whole powered milk will go rancid. Buy non-fat powdered milk in oxygen-free sealed cans. To improve storage, rotate often, store in the fridge or freezer. Powdered milk may pick up an unpleasant taste but will likely still retain much of its nutritional value.

How to succeed

Realign your priorities: Acquiring food storage is a matter of realigning priorities. If food storage is not high enough on your list, you won't get it done. If you are like most people, your time, energy and your budget are already maxed out, leaving little extra for food storage. If you truly want to become prepared you will have to move food storage much higher your priority list even if it means giving up something lower on your list.

Focus on the basics: You may be tempted to first obtain items that will maintain your lifestyle. Although such items are not bad, it is extremely important that you obtain a significant amount of the basics FIRST before obtaining secondary items. Too often, people acquire lesser important items before acquiring the basics and then run out of time or money before being able to obtain the basics. For example, for the cost of a 72-hour kit you can have a 1- 2 month supply of basics. For the cost of a small generator you can have a 6 - 12 month supply of basics.

Succeed by steps:

- Begin by acquiring a one-month supply of the basics then add as much as practical each week.
- Do something to become better prepared every single week.
- Do as much as you possible can each and every week.
- Feel grateful for every little bit you have acquired – don't be disheartened by what you don't yet have.
- Don't allow an obstacle (such as where to store it) to turn into an excuse that hinders your progress.
- Don't allow yourself to get discouraged or distracted. **Persistence will win in time!**

“Store what you eat – eat what you store” has always been good counsel. On the one hand it could mean to store the items you normally eat. On the other hand it means to regularly eat what you have stored, realizing that some of the things that people commonly eat may not be the best and most nutritious foods to store up for a time of stress. During periods of stress your body truly needs the best possible nutrition. Not only may it not be practical to store some of the foods you normally like to eat, some of your favorite foods might not be good for you anytime, especially during time of great physical and emotional stress. It is, however, practical as well as very important to regularly eat what you have stored. Therefore, may I suggest a program of regularly learning about and practicing improving what you eat on a daily basis (more on this at another time).

- Try small amounts of any food item that is new to you before obtaining large quantities.
- Gain experience with all stored items; how they store, how to use them, how they look and taste.
- Eat food storage items often so that your body and taste buds will be accustomed to them.
- Sprouting requires a little experience. Begin now and begin enjoying the benefits as well.
- Inspect all stored items occasionally to ensure they are still in good condition – sample if needed.
- If you already have some of the less-healthy food stored, don't fret. Any stored food in a time of crisis is better than no food. Just keep adding more of the good stuff to what you already have.
- If you have out-dated stored food, don't throw it out (unless it is spoiled). Out-dated food usually retains *some* nutritional value. Spoiled foods can be feed to chicken or pigs.
- Popcorn is an excellent diversion from other stored foods. Popcorn can also be ground to cornmeal for corn bread or eaten as hot cereal. However, popcorn is very hard and requires a heavy duty grinder.
- Making bread or doing any cooking may seem easy enough until you try doing it without electricity or gas. Learn to make bread and to cook over a fire or with a solar cooker. Better yet, learn to sprout!

This has been a brief overview to help you get started in the right direction. Many of the topics, especially; water, sanitation, and cold weather survival require more in-depth explanation. Much more information is available through the FamilyWorx Subscriptions, live classes and DVDs. You can find more information at www.PrepareMyFamily.com, www.jimsway.com, by e-mailing info@PrepareMyFamily.com or writing to Jim Phillips at PO Box 584, Spring City, UT 84662.

My goal is to help as many people as possible develop a positive culture of preparedness in the face of a changing world.

Have a great day,
Jim Phillips