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## FOOD SAFETY TIP

Packing snacks for the day? Make sure to keep perishable items cold or pack items that can be stored at room temperature like crackers, granola, uncut fruits, popcorn and nuts.

## Healthy Snacking

March is National Nutrition Month and this year's theme is: Eat Right, Bite by Bite. One of the ways that the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is promoting eating right is by reminding people that a healthy diet doesn't need to be overwhelming or restrictive. Making small goals and changes can add up to an overall impact. One way to do this is to eat a variety of nutritious foods throughout the day.



Making a conscious choice to have a healthy and balanced snack means you'll eat more healthy food and less salty or sweet empty calories.

Here are some things to think about when choosing snacks:

- Try to have a snack that is made from at least two food groups
- Think about what helps keep people full—protein and fiber—and try to get each in your snacks
- Make sure they're packed with vitamins (hint: think fruits and vegetables)
- Don't worry about the snack being pretty or going well together

Here are some healthy snack ideas:

- An apple and peanut butter
- Grapes and string cheese
- Celery and a hard boiled egg
- A granola bar and blueberries
- Hummus and carrots
- Nuts and an orange



## Zucchini Meatballs

March 9th may be National Meatball Day, but that doesn't mean you need a meatball made of beef, pork, or turkey. Try this vegetarian version that still packs a flavor punch.

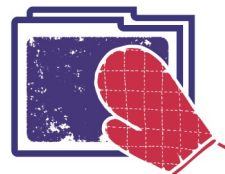
### Ingredients:

- 3 medium zucchini
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup sliced basil
- 1 egg lightly beaten
- 1 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan
- black pepper
- 16 oz marinara sauce

### Directions:

1. Mince or grate the zucchini onto a clean kitchen towel. Season with salt to taste and toss with your hands. Pull up the sides of the towel and squeeze over the sink until the extra moisture in the zucchini is removed.
2. Put the dried zucchini in a clean bowl. Add the garlic, basil, egg, panko bread crumbs, and Parmesan. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
3. Form the zucchini mixture into small balls. You should end up with about 15.
4. Move meatballs into an oven safe dish. Cover with marinara sauce and bake at 400F for about 25 minutes until meatballs are soft and cooked through. Serve over pasta.

*Makes 5 servings*



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### Nutrition Facts

Zucchini Meatballs.  
Amount Per Serving

|                                |                      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Calories 152                   | Calories from Fat 45 |
|                                | % Daily Value*       |
| <b>Total Fat 5g</b>            | 8%                   |
| Saturated Fat 2g               | 10%                  |
| Trans Fat 0g                   |                      |
| Polyunsaturated Fat 1g         |                      |
| Monounsaturated Fat 1g         |                      |
| <b>Cholesterol 39mg</b>        | 13%                  |
| <b>Sodium 523mg</b>            | 22%                  |
| <b>Potassium 633mg</b>         | 18%                  |
| <b>Total Carbohydrates 20g</b> | 7%                   |
| Dietary Fiber 3g               | 12%                  |
| Sugars 8g                      |                      |
| <b>Protein 8g</b>              | 16%                  |
| Vitamin A                      | 8%                   |
| Vitamin C                      | 26%                  |
| Vitamin D                      | 14%                  |
| Calcium                        | 17%                  |
| Iron                           | 9%                   |

\* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 calorie diet.

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# What Can You Do With ... Celery?

**Choosing:** Choose celery with straight, rigid stalks and fresh leaves. Celery should smell fresh. Avoid woody, brown, or limp stalks.

**Storing:** Store unwashed celery in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. If your celery starts going a little limp, cut off the root and store the celery upright in a cup of water in the fridge.

**Preparing:** Rinse the stems thoroughly before preparing. Cut the root off the stem and throw away or save to add to stock. Cut into the desired lengths.

**Cooking:** Celery can be used either raw or cooked. Cooking methods include: sautéed, steamed, or stir-fried.

**Uses:** Celery can be eaten in a variety of ways! Try raw celery sticks with a side of peanut butter or another flavorful dip. It can also be cooked with other vegetables to make a stew or used as an extra crunch in a salad. Celery is one of the key ingredients in a mirepoix, a starting block for many recipes including the chicken soup below.

**Nutrition:** Celery has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. It is also a source of fiber, vitamin K, potassium and vitamin C.



## Chicken Vegetable Soup

### Ingredients:

- Vegetable oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 carrots, diced
- 4 celery stalks, diced
- 1 tbsp thyme
- 1 tbsp oregano
- 1 small butternut squash, diced
- 3 small potatoes, diced
- 16 oz low sodium chicken stock
- 2 cups chicken, diced
- 2 cups spinach (optional)

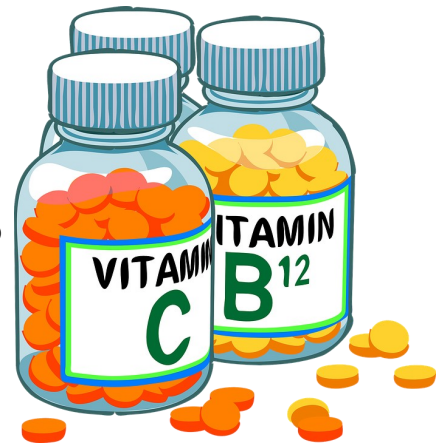


### Directions:

1. Heat oil in medium stock pot over medium heat. Add diced celery, onions, and carrots.
2. When soft and fragrant, add thyme and oregano. Stir. Let cook for another 2 minutes.
3. Add in diced squash, potatoes, and chicken stock. Cook until potatoes are soft, about 20 mins.
4. Add in precooked chicken and spinach and cook until chicken is warm.

# Supplements and Colds

Cold and flu season may be winding down but they aren't over yet. Should you keep taking supplements to avoid getting sick? It's hard to say because many supplements aren't well researched. The studies on them are typically small or funded by the industry that sells the supplements.



**Zinc**— Zinc has some evidence that it works. There are a number of studies where colds were one to three days shorter in adults who sucked on zinc lozenges rather than placebo lozenges every few hours throughout their colds.

**Vitamin C**— Vitamin C supplements don't seem to make colds shorter or less likely. If you still want to get more vitamin C, try getting more from food rather than taking supplements. Food sources of vitamin c include oranges, bell peppers, kiwi, broccoli, and lemons.



70 South Bay Avenue  
Boston, MA 02118  
Phone: 617-427-5200  
E-mail: [nutrition@gbfb.org](mailto:nutrition@gbfb.org)  
[www.gbfb.org](http://www.gbfb.org)

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## March 2020

**National Fresh Celery Month**

**National Cereal Day**

March 7

**National Meatball Day**

March 9

**National Chicken Noodle Soup Day**

March 13

**National Crunchy Taco Day**

March 21