Ask the Pharmacist: Getting the Most Out of Antibiotics

Q: When should antibiotics be prescribed?
A: Antibiotics are effective in treating certain types of infections caused by bacteria and work by killing bacteria in the body that cause the infection. However, many infections, such as the common cold or the flu, are caused, not by bacteria but by viruses, and antibiotics are unable to kill the viruses that cause these infections. Using antibiotics to fight infections they are unable to treat may cause undesirable side effects such as nausea and diarrhea, without providing any benefit. Misuse of antibiotics can lead to antibiotic resistance.

Q: What is antibiotic resistance?
A: Antibiotic resistance is a growing health problem across the world. It occurs when bacteria adapt and become unresponsive to treatment with one or more types of antibiotics. When bacteria become resistant, they can cause serious infections that are more difficult to treat. In some cases, this results in strains of bacteria that cannot be treated by any existing antibiotics.

Q: If I am prescribed antibiotics, how should I take them?
A: It is important to finish the entire prescription as written by your doctor. Do not stop taking the medication when you start to feel better. Stopping an antibiotic prematurely can cause the bacteria to become resistant to that antibiotic. To ensure that the medication is effective throughout the entire day, take antibiotics at the same time each day with a glass of water. Pay close attention to instructions regarding the need to take with or without food.

Q: What else is important to consider when taking antibiotics?
A: Antibiotics should only be taken by the patient for whom they are prescribed. Do not save part of your prescription to share with someone else or to use in case of an infection in the future. This can lead to the spread of antibiotic resistance. It is important to tell your doctor if you take any other medications. Antibiotics can interact with a variety of different drugs, including blood thinners, antacids, and birth control. It is important to read the medication information that comes with your antibiotic prescription. If you have questions about antibiotics or any other medications you are prescribed, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.

References:
Summer Recipes

Summer Eating: Spot Light on Nancy Oliveira

Summer is finally here! With this beautiful, warm weather, now is the time to fire up the grill and look to garden-fresh fruits and vegetables for some delicious meals. Here to help is Nancy Oliveira.

Nancy is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) at the Nutrition Clinic at Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital and a Group Fitness Instructor at the Tanger Be Well Center. She created her own website, RD Recipe Resource, so she could better answer the question “What can I eat?”

Specifically, let us explore the idea of Super Salads. As Nancy says, “salads have now evolved into a flavorful art form with an endless mix of ingredients,” so it is time to get creative and transform these longtime side dishes into satisfying, delicious meals. She suggests constructing a glorious salad using the following guidelines:

2+ cups Non-starchy Vegetables: Any lettuce or leafy greens, bell peppers, carrots, broccoli, asparagus, cauliflower, eggplant, cucumbers, zucchini or summer squash, onions, mushrooms, bean sprouts, Brussels sprouts.

1 Protein: 3 ounces chicken or tuna, 1 ounce cheese, 1/2 cup cubed tofu, 1/2 cup any beans (black, chickpeas, edamame).

1 Starch: 1/2 cup cubed sweet potato or butternut squash, 1/2 cup corn, 1/2 cup whole grains.

1 Fat: 1/4 avocado, 1 tablespoon seeds (chia, flax, sunflower), 1 tablespoon chopped nuts.

Check out some of her own creations. The possibilities are endless!

Kale Salad with Cucumbers, Green Bell Pepper, Clover Sprouts, Mashed Avocado and Baked Tofu

Roasted Beet and Butternut Squash Salad with Pear, Walnuts, Chia Seeds and Maple Vinaigrette

Fiesta Bean Salad with Quinoa, Black Beans, Chickpeas, Tomato and Avocado.

Sources:
https://rdreciperesource.org/
https://rdreciperesource.org/2016/03/20/super-salads/