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## Food for Thought



Want to know a few things nutrition experts avoid?

If you're planning a healthy diet, why not learn a few secrets from the savviest people at the table? These foods, goods, and ingredients just shouldn't be on your plate:

### Artificial Sweetener

It's best to indulge in the real thing occasionally and mindfully. There isn't enough evidence to prove that artificial sweeteners are safe, plus there is research that shows how consuming diet beverages actually lead to weight gain!

### Margarine

Most rely primarily on highly processed vegetable oils (soybean and palm), which removes the omega-3s and adds toxins

### Blended Fruit Yogurt

This is basically dessert masquerading as breakfast- nearly half the calories come from added sugar! Choose plain with a piece of real fruit on the side instead to get the essential nutrients without affecting your waistline

## Get Your Ruck On!



*Outdoor fitness has been steadily growing in popularity since the pandemic. More than 75% of adults fail to meet the recommended physical activity guidelines. The message is clear: we need to spend more time outside moving, and less time on a phone or computer screen*

**Rucking** is a booming fitness trend that entails going for a walk or hike while wearing a weighted pack. It's become more popular since military workouts have garnered interest on social media sites like Instagram and TikTok.

Rucking is an effective low-impact workout that combines endurance and strength, plus it's efficient and affordable, which heightens the appeal

While rucking, you will burn a lot more calories than just walking alone. If you walk faster with more weight, it's not only a greater challenge- it can burn up to 3x more!

### Try this:

**Backpack** there are rucksacks made specifically for rucking, but don't overthink it. Just grab a backpack to start

**Weight** start with what you have at home- dumbbells, bricks, books, a bag of potting soil- anything to add some weight. Aim to start with 10 lbs

**Walk** start at a comfortable pace, and keep upright posture. Over time, you aim to increase the weight, speed, and distance travelled



**Did You Hear?  
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## **Spring Minestrone Soup**



This seasonal version of the Italian classic celebrates all the fresh, new green veggies available in springtime!

### **Ingredients**

2 tbsp olive oil  
6 medium green onions, sliced thin  
2 garlic cloves  
1 pound baby potatoes  
1 can (15 oz) diced tomatoes  
4 cups stock (chicken or vegetable)  
¼ tsp salt  
½ lb artichoke hearts, rough chopped (fresh or frozen)  
1 can (15 oz) chickpeas, rinsed and drained  
1 cup peas (fresh or frozen)  
½ lb asparagus, cut into chunks  
2 cups greens, thin sliced (spinach, kale, chard, etc)  
¼ cup pesto  
1 tsp black pepper  
Grated parmesan cheese for garnish

### **Directions**

1. Sauté green onion and garlic in olive oil using a large pot over medium heat for 1 minute, then add potatoes.
2. Add diced tomatoes and stock. Bring to a simmer, and add salt to taste. Cover and cook over medium for 10 minutes
3. Add artichoke, chick peas and green peas, and cook another 5 minutes.
4. Add asparagus and greens, cook 1 minute.
5. Remove from heat, stir in pesto and add salt and black pepper to taste. Serve topped with grated cheese if desired.

**Check out *Simply Recipes* for step-by-step instructions  
and nutritional information**



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