

Quick-to-fix dinner

"Help yourself." Most often we hear those inviting words while seated at a dinner table. The statement gives your company the go-ahead to enjoy a meal.

Helping yourself also pertains to the cook, especially when time is of the essence in getting the food prepared.

That's where *Cheesy Chili 'N Chips* come in to lend a hand. This

Sugar!

by Monine Stebbins
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A lot of people are talking about sugar these days. In the same conversation they may talk about how they are cutting down on refined sugar and share their favorite dessert recipe with you. There are words like "sugar free" blazing boldly from the package or a great pride shown in honey being used instead of sugar.

It's very confusing. On the one hand, the nutritionists and our common sense tell us that we shouldn't eat too many foods that are high in calories, especially if they don't have any nutrients that we need. On the other hand all those sweets look and taste good. How many times have you been served a luscious dessert that has had the "calories removed," when you protest that you're watching your weight?

From 1960 to 1977, annual per capita consumption of caloric sweeteners increased about 22 pounds. Most of this increase, in fact, two-thirds of the sugar supply is used by industry. Various sugars are found in processed foods where you'd expect to see them, such as in desserts, jams, ice cream and beverages. But they are also in things such as cream substitutes, salad dressing, ketchup and meat coatings.

Manufacturers use different sugars because of their specific roles as ingredients. When we use the word sugar, we usually refer to sucrose which comes chiefly from sugar cane and sugar beets. There are other types of sugars, including lactose (found in milk), fructose (found in fruit) and glucose (found in fruits and certain vegetables). There's honey, brown sugar, maltose, dextrose, corn sugar and corn syrup. They all offer flavor, calories and some texture qualities, but no nutrients. Molasses is the one sweetener that has some nutritional value, but few people eat enough to contribute to their nutritional needs.

When sugars and sweeteners make up a substantial share of your calories, they may replace other foods which offer vitamins and minerals. Sugars found in fruits and vegetables are basically the same as refined sugar. The difference is that fruit juices, for example, provide nutrients as well as calories whereas a soft drink gives only calories. The principle sugar in fruit (fructose) is somewhat less apt to cause cavities in the teeth than sucrose. A person who consumes a high sugar diet may either consume less than the needed amount of nutrients or eat too much resulting in overweight.

Apart from sugar's role in tooth decay and its potential contribution to obesity, there is little evidence that directly links sugar with other disorders.

If you're feeling like you need to curb your sweet tooth, you might try some of these suggestions:

Keep track of all the foods you eat and when you eat them. Put a check mark by the sweet things that are high in sugar. Could you choose to have a smaller amount or substitute something that is lower in calories or higher in nutritional value? If you notice that you drink a lot of soft drinks, for instance, could you drink fewer or substitute water, tea, herb tea or coffee? Maybe you could switch your choice to fruit juice or milk; both have needed nutrients.

Read labels on foods. Ingredients are listed in order of decreasing amounts in the product. If sugar is first or second, or is listed with several different names, you know it's a major percentage of the product. There's also other information there. It may read "no sugar added," which doesn't mean that there's no sugar at all but may mean that there is less than other choices such as "heavy syrup."

Onions will stay firm longer and keep from sprouting if you wrap them individually in aluminum foil.

recipe can be prepared in 20 minutes.

You can either use your favorite chili recipe, or the one offered here. A pound of ground beef is browned, and tomatoes, tomato paste and seasonings are added. After simmering for 10 minutes, add one cup of shredded sharp natural cheddar cheese for a zesty flavor. Stir the ingredients until the cheese is melted. Then arrange corn chips on a platter, spoon the chili over the chips and top with another ½ cup of cheddar cheese.

With the satisfaction of knowing that a tasty meal was prepared with ease, you can say those two welcome words to your guests, "help yourself!"

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 16-oz. can tomatoes
- 1 6-oz. can tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon dehydrated minced onions
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ cups (6 ozs.) shredded sharp natural cheddar cheese
- 2 cups corn chips

Brown meat; drain. Stir in tomatoes, tomato paste and seasonings. Cover; simmer 10 minutes. Add 1 cup cheese; stir until melted. Arrange corn chips on platter. Spoon chili over chips; top with remaining cheese.

4-6 servings.



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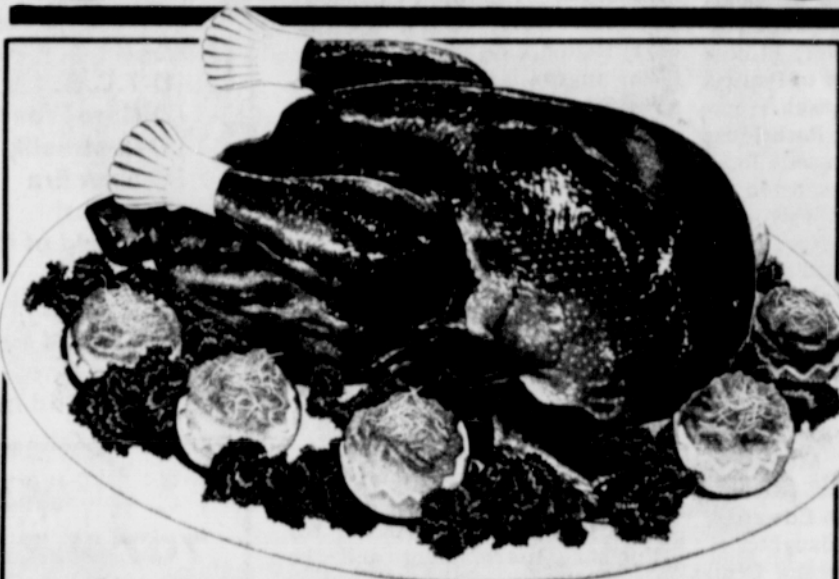
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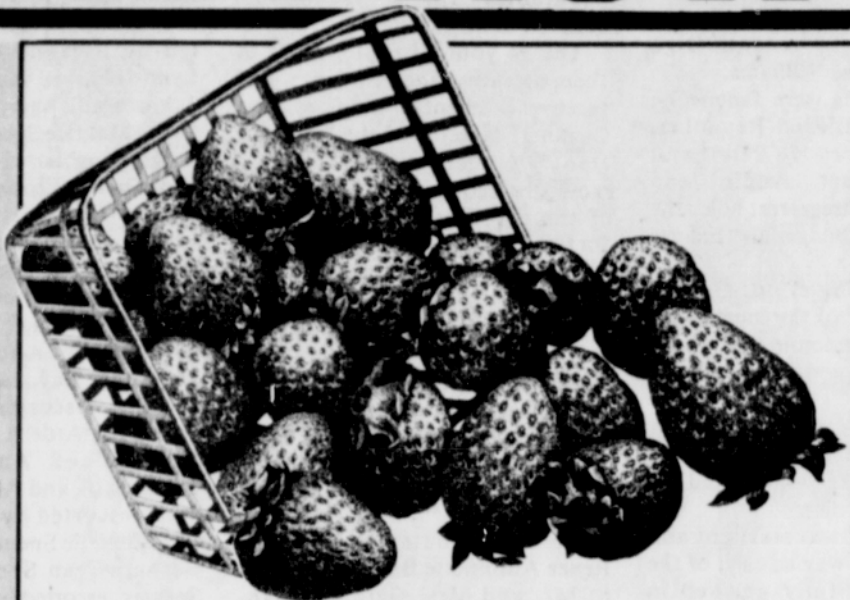
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