

Health In Progress

Lesson 16

Processed Foods



QUESTION 16:

TRUE OR FALSE

Processed foods are always unhealthy.

ANSWER: False

1. **A processed food is one that has been changed from its original state.** All processed food is not bad, and in fact processing food has allowed us to have a much safer and convenient food supply.
2. Here are **some examples of healthy processed foods:**
 - Milk** Processing milk (pasteurization) decreases dangerous substances that may be in the milk as well as organisms and enzymes that cause rapid spoilage. Usually vitamin D is added as a public health measure to insure prevention of nutritional rickets, a bone disease.
 - Frozen and Canned Foods** Freezing and canning food allows us to store the foods to use at a time when the food is not plentiful. For example, we can eat fruits and vegetables during the winter. Many fresh fruits and vegetables are now available during winter, due to improved transportation and economic cooperation between nations, but they can be more expensive.
3. It is important not to eat ***only*** processed foods, but to **include several unprocessed foods in your daily diet** for the following reasons:
 - a. **In processing, some important parts of the food may be lost** such as vitamins when the food is cooked, or fiber when grains are processed.
 - b. Many processed foods taste good, but if you look at the ingredients on the label **they provide little nutrition except for calories.**
 - c. In some cases to make a product that will store well, **manufacturers have to add substances (such as sweeteners or unhealthy fats)** that are potentially not beneficial for the consumer.
4. **A good rule of thumb is to choose *minimally processed* food.** This means food that is closer to the natural state. The more processed that a food is, the more likely:
 - a. Some nutritional value will have been lost.
 - b. Potentially unhealthy substances such as sweeteners or unhealthy fats will have been added to improve storage, texture or taste.