Papaya, Red Pepper and Pecan Salad With Turkey

Makes 4 servings
6 cups torn romaine lettuce leaves
2 medium, ripe papayas, peeled, halved, seeded and cubed
1 large red bell pepper, halved, seeded, sliced into ⅛-inch pieces
2 scallions, trimmed and sliced, white part only
½ cup freshly squeezed lime juice
2 tablespoons fat-free, reduced-sodium chicken broth
1 tablespoon honey
garlic cloves, minced
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
⅛ pound cooked boneless, skinless turkey breast, cut into bite-size pieces
1 cup chopped pecans, toasted

Prep for the dressing: In a medium salad bowl, combine the lettuce, papaya, bell pepper and scallions.

Preparation: Pour the dressing over the salad, add the turkey, and toss until well combined. Add the pecans and serve.

Approximate nutritional analysis per serving (made with chicken): calories, 306; fat, 17 grams; carbohydrates, 33 grams; protein, 24 grams; fiber, 7 grams; sodium, 122 milligrams.

Source: Adapted recipe, nutritional analysis from "The New American Plate Cookbook" (University of California Press, 2005).

Two-Potato Salad With Spinach and Fresh Herb Dressing

Makes 1 2 side-dish servings
1 pound boiling potatoes, preferably yellow-fleshed (such as Yukon Gold) peeled and cut into ⅛-inch pieces
1 pound orange-flesh sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into ⅛-inch pieces
½ cup Dijon mustard
3 tablespoons white wine vinegar
3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
16 cup mixed shallots
1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary
1 tablespoon minced fresh thyme

Did you make both white potatoes and sweet potato? Use the leftovers to make this salad, and you can skip the boiling step. This is hearty enough to serve as a main dish.

Preparation: For the dressing: Whisk to combine the vinegar, olive oil, and shallots.

Approximate nutritional analysis per serving: calories, 128; fat, 5 grams; carbohydrates, 19 grams; protein, 2 grams; fiber, 2 grams; cholesterol, none; sodium, 148 milligrams.

Source: Adapted recipe, nutritional analysis from "The New American Plate Cookbook" (University of California Press, 2005).

Salt and freshly ground black pepper
4 cups fresh spinach leaves, washed and torn into bite-size pieces, tightly packed

Preparation: Put the boiling potatoes and sweet potatoes in two separate pots with enough cold water to cover them. Cover both pots with tight-fitting lids and bring the water to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook until just barely tender when pierced with a fork, about 4 to 5 minutes. (The potatoes will continue cooking after they are removed from the pot.)

Make the dressing: Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, whisk together the mustard and vinegar. Gradually whisk in the olive oil until the mixture is smooth and well combined. Mix in the shallots, rosemary and thyme, and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Assembly the salad: Drain the potatoes and transfer them to a large bowl. Drizzle in half of the dressing (about ¼ cup) toss gently, and set the salad aside to allow the potatoes to absorb the flavors while cooking. When the potatoes are at room temperature, gently mix in the spinach and the remaining dressing.

Presentation: Adjust the seasoning and serve at room temperature. A growing body of research suggests that a diet high in plant foods including fruits, vegetables, and whole grains promotes better health.