

# NUTRITION BITES

Summer 2024

## The AON Dietitian Team's Summer Food Favorites

By Hillary Buch, MS, RD, CSO, LD

With new faces on the AON Dietitian Team, I thought it would be the perfect opportunity to introduce our new members and share something fun about ourselves.

So many fresh seasonal foods are available during the summer months — too many fruits and vegetables to count, grilling favorites and summer treats to help you cool off. Below are a few of our favorite summer foods. While we all love nutritious foods, you will see that we also enjoy indulging in fun treats from time to time.

Throughout the article, you will find links to some of our favorite recipes so that you can make them yourself.

### ONCOLOGY DIETITIANS

#### Carolina Blanco-Cortes, MPH, RDN, CNSC



Carolina is our newest team member. She joined AON in May 2024. Carolina supports patients in Indiana and Michigan.

**Grapes:** Grapes are my favorite fruit and summer snack. I will eat them at any meal, anytime. I especially like them with cottage cheese, granola

and a bit of honey.

**Pasta Primavera:** For an easy weekday meal, I'll cook pasta with any vegetables we find at the farmers market (cucumbers, bell peppers and carrots) or any leftover frozen veggies and toss them with olive oil, lemon and grated cheese. It can be eaten either hot or cold, but I prefer it cold in the summer. You can even add red pepper flakes or black pepper to spice it up.

**S'mores:** Summertime always calls for smores, mostly because I associate them with summer camping. Sometimes, I will make them over the stove. To make them extra yummy, I substitute the plain chocolate with one Reese's peanut butter cup.

#### Casey Brown, MS, RDN, LD



Casey joined AON in September 2023. She supports patients in North Carolina, Maryland and Virginia.

**Roasted Chickpeas:** These are one of my favorite snacks to take on the go for a summer hike or other outdoor activity. They are easy to make and can be seasoned in many ways. Try using

salt and pepper, smoked paprika and cumin, garlic powder with Italian seasoning and parmesan cheese, or everything bagel seasoning. Enjoy these quickly since they lose their crunch over time.

**Hummus Quesadilla with Roasted Vegetables:** This is my favorite summertime twist on a classic cheese quesadilla. Spread a generous amount of hummus on a tortilla and top with your favorite roasted vegetables. I love using onions, garlic, bell peppers and tomatoes. Heat both sides in a skillet and serve with salsa, guacamole or pesto.

**Mango Sorbet:** I love anything flavored with mango, and one of my favorite summer treats is this easy mango sorbet. Mix 1 cup of frozen mango with 1 tablespoon of maple syrup and ½ tablespoon fresh lime juice in a blender or food processor. Serve and enjoy this refreshing treat.



## Hillary Buch, MS, RD, CSO, LD



Hillary joined us in 2020. She supports patients in Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, Louisiana and Texas.

**Peaches:** Peaches are one of my favorite fruits, and I wait all year for them. Nothing beats biting into a giant juicy, sweet peach. I love them as a snack and in my oatmeal, yogurt and dessert like a peach crisp.

**Grilled Salmon:** Anything grilled makes me think of summer, but I especially enjoy grilled salmon. It makes a light meal on those hot days, and I think it is perfect with a little olive oil, thyme, rosemary and lemon. Don't forget the grilled veggies on the side.

**Ice Cream Pie:** So simple but so delicious. Crushed OREOs are used for the pie crust and then filled with your favorite ice cream. We often use vanilla and then drizzle with hot fudge or homemade ganache. It is the perfect cool, satisfying and sweet treat on a hot summer day.

## Jennifer Lafferty, MS, RDN, CSO, LD, FAND



Jenn joined AON in December 2022. She is our nutrition manager and supports patients in Georgia and South Carolina.

**Home-Grown Tomatoes:** I wait all year for ripe, juicy tomatoes grown in my own backyard. So many salad recipes feature this summer staple, but my

favorite way to showcase them is in a [panzanella salad](#).

**Fresh Herbs:** Herbs are easy to grow and can take summer recipes to the next level. I love fresh lemony-basil pesto on pasta, homemade pizza, roasted potatoes and vegetables, sandwiches, eggs – you name it! It's also a nutritious alternative to mayonnaise in typical summer salads like potato salad or [pasta salad](#).

**Chocolate Zucchini Bread:** If you or your neighbors grow summer veggies, you likely end up with more zucchini than you know what to do with. Zucchini is the perfect ingredient to add nutrients and moisture to cakes and sweet breads.

## Madelyn Wilcox, RDN, CSO, LD



Madelyn joined AON in January 2023. She supports patients in Arkansas and Missouri.

**Grilled Cabbage Steaks:** Nothing quite screams summer like grilled vegetables, and these “cabbage steaks” are no exception. I use this “roasted cabbage steak” recipe as

the inspiration for the mustard vinaigrette. If you haven't eaten cabbage in this way, I strongly encourage you to try it! Plus, you can grill these up in advance and keep them warm in the oven until you are ready to serve to your family or guests. Doing this gives that delicious marinade more time to infuse into the cabbage.

**Cold Bean Salad:** Another recipe that is very easy and customizable. You can use canned beans at the beginning of the summer. Then, if you are growing a garden, you can start to tap into your supply and use fresh garden beans. This is one of those recipes that is better the second day once those sweet and tangy dressings infuse into your vegetable medley. You can also get creative and include other summer vegetables, such as diced colored peppers or sweet corn.

**Watermelon Slushy:** This is such a quick and refreshing beverage. Simply blend up a few cups of fresh watermelon cubes, three to five fresh mint leaves (or basil leaves), a wedge or two of peeled lemon or lime and some ice. And ta-dah! You now have an easy and tasty slushy that is perfect to quench your thirst after a long, hot day in the garden or a sunset hike.



## Nicole Franklin, MS, RDN, CSO, LD



Nicole has been with us since 2020. She supports patients in Florida and North Carolina.

**Farmer's Market:** Going to a local farmer's market is one of my favorite ways to spend a summer morning before the heat sets in. Seeing the local fruits and vegetables inspires

me to use fresh and seasonal produce. One of my favorite challenges is finding a new fruit or vegetable that I haven't tried before.

**Banana Ice Cream:** Ever since I can remember, we've had homemade banana ice cream during the summer. It's creamy and cool, and the sweetness of the banana takes it to another level. If you've never tried it, homemade banana ice cream straight from the churn is a life changer.



## DIETITIAN SUPPORT SERVICES

Our Dietitian Support Services team introduces nutrition services, schedules patients, completes patient assistance applications, and conducts various other tasks that support patients and keep the dietitian team on track.

### Amanda Carroll



Amanda has been with us since 2021.

**Pineapple:** This is one of my favorite fruits, and there is nothing better than a sweet pineapple during summer. You can even grill it on your barbeque with cinnamon, honey and lime juice. It is delicious!

**Chicken Kebabs:** These always remind me of camping and summertime. My favorite vegetable choices are peppers, onions, squash and zucchini. They are grilled over medium-high heat on skewers for 8 to 11 minutes, turning every few minutes to cook all sides.

**S'mores Dip:** My favorite summer dessert is s'mores dip. To make it, you need to layer chocolate bars or chips on the bottom of a baking dish, layer it with peanut butter chips and then put cut marshmallows (with the cut side down) on top. Then, bake for 3 to 4 minutes at 350 degrees or until the chocolate melts and the marshmallows start to brown. Use graham crackers to dip and enjoy!

### Taylor Bailey



Taylor has been with us since 2021.

**Watermelon:** Juicy, ripe watermelon is my favorite! I look forward to biting into this sweet treat every summer.

**Grilling:** I love anything grilled, and there are so many options. I especially enjoy lemon pepper chicken.

**Chocolate Éclair Cake:** This refreshing cake will always leave you wanting more. It's easy to make, and there's no need to turn the oven on. Combine instant vanilla pudding with whipped topping, then make alternating layers of graham crackers and the pudding mixture. Top all of it with chocolate frosting and enjoy!



# Featured Recipe

## Basil Pesto

Adapted from: [Eating Well](#)

Prep Time: **NA**

Total Time: **10 minutes**

Cook Time: **10 minutes**

Servings: **16 (Yield: 1 cup)**



### INGREDIENTS

**2½ cups** firmly packed fresh basil leaves (about 5 ounces)

**⅓ cup** finely shredded Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

**¼ cup** pine nuts, toasted

**1 large clove** garlic

**1 tablespoon** lemon juice

**½ teaspoon** salt

**¼ teaspoon** ground pepper

**⅓ cup** extra-virgin olive oil

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Place** basil, cheese, pine nuts, garlic, lemon juice, salt and pepper in a food processor. **Pulse** until coarsely chopped.
- With the food processor still running, **add** oil and **blend** until well combined, **scraping down** the sides once or twice.
- Use it in salads, to dip vegetables, on roasted vegetables, with chicken or fish, mixed with pasta or any other interesting way you can think up.

### Nutritional Information:

Serving Size: 1 tablespoon

Calories: 65; Total Carbohydrates: 1g; Total Sugars: 0g; Protein: 1g; Total Fat: 7g; Saturated Fat: 1g; Sodium: 101mg.

