

MARCHING INTO SPRING

Food for Fitness and Fun, March 2002

Pick A Better Snack & Act

MARCH featured produce items for the Pick A Better Snack and Act Campaign include

- Cauliflower
- Cabbage
- Raisins
- Celery



For information about the produce and the Snack and Act Bingo card contact an Iowa State University Extension Office or go to the web:

www.extension.iastate.edu/food/

Return completed March Snack & Act Bingo cards by the 31st of March to: *Pick a Better Snack*

P. O. Box 1913

Iowa City, IA 52244

MARCH IS PEANUT MONTH

Peanuts pack a lot of nutrition into a tiny package. They are a good source of inexpensive protein, with 7 grams in a one-ounce serving. There are also 2 grams of fiber and almost one quarter of the RDA for vitamin E in each ounce. Fear of fat keeps many people from making peanuts part of their diet, but the monounsaturated fat in peanuts is a healthy choice. A serving is just ¼ cup.

It's a myth that peanut butter contains artery-clogging trans fatty acids – a recent study has shown it has the same type of fat as peanuts. So if you like peanut butter, purchase the regular variety instead of the reduced-fat variety that has just as many calories, but more sugar and less of the healthful monounsaturated fats.

Fun Facts: 1) It takes about 540 peanuts to make a 12-ounce jar of peanut butter. 2) There are enough peanuts in one acre to make 30,000 peanut butter sandwiches.

Source: *Communicating Food for Health, March 2002*

CASSEROLE SAUCE MIX (About 4 'cans' of soup)

- 1 cups instant nonfat dry milk crystals
- 1/3 cup plus 1 Tablespoon cornstarch
- 2 Tablespoons reduced sodium chicken bouillon
- 1 Tablespoons dried onion flakes
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme, crushed
- 1/4 teaspoon basil, crushed
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Combine all ingredients and store in airtight container.

To use as a substitute for one can condensed soup, mix 1/3-cup dry mix and 1 ¼ cups water in saucepan. Cook and stir until thickened.

CREATE-A-CASSEROLE

Use foods you already have in your kitchen to create your own main dish in only a few minutes. Directions: Choose ONE item from each group listed below (protein, grain, vegetable and sauce). Mix together and spoon into a large casserole dish. Add a topping if desired. Bake at 350°F for 30-45 minutes. Serves 6.

Protein Group – Cook and drain unless precooked:

- 1 pound ground beef, pork or turkey
- 4 small pork chops
- 1 pound frozen fish
- 1-2 cups cooked chicken or turkey
- 1 can tuna
- 4-6 hard cooked eggs, cut-up
- 1-2 cups diced cheese
- 1-2 cups any leftover meat
- 2 cans beans rinsed & drained (ex. kidney, navy, pinto)

Grain Group:

- 3 cups cooked noodles
- 2 cups cooked rice, barley or bulgur
- 1 pound canned sweet potatoes
- 2 cups cooked potatoes
- 2 cups cooked macaroni or spaghetti
- 1 10 oz. package frozen hash browns

Vegetables Group:

- 2 cups cooked (from fresh) **or** 10-16 ounces frozen **OR**
- 1 pound can of: green beans, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, yellow squash, tomatoes, peas, lima beans, or whole kernel corn

Sauce: (Use low sodium, low fat varieties if possible)

Homemade casserole sauce mix (recipe on left)

1 can soup plus 1/3 cup water: (cream of chicken, cream of mushroom, cream of potato, cream of broccoli, cream of celery, cheese, tomato or vegetable)

1 can tomato sauce+1 bouillon cube + ½ c. boiling water

Toppings (Optional):

- 2 cups mashed potatoes
- Sliced or shredded cheese
- Crushed bran cereal, potato chips, or French fried onions
- Cracker or bread crumbs
- Uncooked biscuits

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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES FOR INFANTS & TODDLERS



The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) recently established the first physical activity guidelines specifically designed for the developmental needs of infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

Guidelines for Infants

Part of the infant's day should be spent with an adult who encourages physical activity through baby games such as peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake. The child needs to be held, rocked and carried to new environments.

1. Infants should interact with parents and/or caregivers in daily physical activities that are dedicated to promoting the exploration of their environment.
2. Infants should be placed in safe settings that facilitate physical activity and do not restrict movement for prolonged periods of time.
3. Infants' physical activity should promote the development of movement skills.
4. Infants should have an environment that meets or exceeds recommended safety standards for performing large muscle activities.
5. Individuals responsible for the well-being of infants should be aware of the importance of physical activity and facilitate the child's movement skills.

Guidelines for Toddlers and Preschoolers



For toddlers, basic movement skills such as running, jumping, throwing and kicking do not just appear because a child grows older, but emerge from an interaction between hereditary potential, movement experience and the environment. For instance, a child who doesn't have access to stairs may be delayed in stair climbing and a child who is discouraged from bouncing and chasing balls may lag in hand-eye coordination.

1. Toddlers should accumulate 30 min. or more daily of structured physical activity; Preschoolers - 60 min.
2. Toddlers and preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours per day of daily, unstructured physical activity and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping.
3. Toddlers should develop movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks; preschoolers should develop competence in movement skills that are building blocks for more complex tasks.
4. Toddlers and preschoolers should have indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large muscle activities.
5. Individuals responsible for the well-being of toddlers and preschoolers should be aware of the importance of physical activity and facilitate the child's movement skills.

Copies of the full document may be purchased by calling 1-800-321-0789. Stock number is 304-10254.

Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating.

and justice for all

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CABBAGE: GREAT FLAVOR & NUTRITION!

Although the weather is unpredictable in March we *can* be sure people will be eating cabbage this month, especially around St. Patrick's Day.



Cabbage is very economical, rich in vitamin C, fiber and indoles making it a great cancer fighter.

Purchase – Choose solid, heavy heads with no more than three or four loose 'wrapper' (outer) leaves. These wrapper leaves should be flexible, but not limp, and free from damage. Two pounds of cabbage will yield 10 cups shredded and be enough to serve 4-6 as a side dish.

Storage – It's very important to keep cabbage cold to retain its vitamin C. An uncut head of cabbage put in a perforated plastic bag will keep at least 2 weeks in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Once cut, cover the cut portion with plastic wrap and use the remainder within 1-2 days. Apply lemon juice to the cut surface to decrease the discoloration from oxidation.

Preparation – Wash cabbage just before using. Use a stainless steel knife when cutting cabbage. Carbon steel causes cut edges of green cabbage to turn black and red cabbage blue. Do not cook in aluminum or cast iron.

Boiling Cabbage: Cook cabbage quickly, in a large quantity of water, in an uncovered pot to minimize the pungent smell. Other pointers: avoid an aluminum pot as it will make the smell worse; drop a whole, unshelled walnut or a slice of bread into the water to reduce unpleasant odors. Preserve the vitamin C by adding cabbage to boiling water. Cook quarters for 10-15 minutes; shredded cabbage 3 to 5 minutes.

Steaming Cabbage: This is the best cooking method for preserving the color, nutrients and texture of the cabbage. Place quartered, sliced, or shredded cabbage in a pan with ½ inch of boiling water. Cook quarters 10-15 minutes; shredded 5-10 minutes.

Raw: Shredded cabbage is delicious on tacos or burgers instead of lettuce. Coleslaw tastes great as a topping on a sandwich. Try it on a BBQ or sub sandwich.

Quick Creamed Cabbage

Heat 1-cup fat free milk over medium heat, just under boiling. Add 2 cups shredded cabbage and stir. Simmer for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. In a small bowl, blend 1 ½ Tablespoons flour into 1 Tablespoon softened margarine. Pour 2-3 Tablespoons of hot milk from cabbage into the flour-margarine mixture. Stir until smooth. Return all to the cabbage. Season with salt and pepper. Cook three to four minutes longer over low heat, stirring occasionally; and serve. Makes 2 -3 servings.

Cheesy Cabbage: Follow recipe as above, but add 1/3 cup shredded cheddar cheese to the cabbage mixture after blending in the flour-margarine mixture.