

SAFE FOOD & ACTIVITY FOR THE FAMILY

Food for Fitness and Fun - September 2004

Pick a better snack™ – (how easy is that?)

SEPTEMBER featured produce for the Pick a better snack™ – the **color** way campaign includes:

- Plums
- Radishes
- Tomatoes
- Zucchini Squash



To learn more about selection, storage and use – go to the Food for Fitness and Fun website at www.extension.iastate.edu/food

NATIONAL CLEAN HANDS WEEK

September 19-26, 2004 has been designated as National Clean Hands Week. The initiative is aimed at getting kids to wash their hands – especially those ages 3 to 8. A new web site will be launched on September 19 designed to make hand washing fun. Check it out at: www.nsfscrubclub.org

LUNCHTIME MAKEOVERS



Now that you are getting into the swing of making and taking lunches again, you may wish to focus on keeping them as healthy as possible. Here are some makeover ideas to try.

Instead of	Consider
High-fat cheese and lunch meats	Roasted chicken and turkey with lots of lettuce and tomato
White bread	100% whole-wheat bread or pita pockets
Mayonnaise	Light mayonnaise or low-fat dressing
Fried chips	Baked chips, air-popped popcorn, veggies and dip
Fruit in syrup	Fresh fruit or fruit packed in juice
Cookies and snack cakes	Yogurt or low-fat baked goods
Fruit drinks and soda	Skim milk, soy milk, water or 100% fruit juice

Source: Communicating Food for Health, August 2004

PARENTS, ARE YOU LEADING THE WAY?

Here are steps parents may take to increase fruits, vegetables and physical activity of family members.

KEEP A VARIETY OF READY-TO-EAT FRUITS AND VEGETABLES AVAILABLE. For example:

- Keep fresh fruit in a bowl on the counter.
- Keep easy-to-eat vegetables in the refrigerator to grab as snacks. Examples: cherry tomatoes, sugar snap peas, baby carrots, bell peppers.
- Serve produce with every meal and snack.
- Bring home a new fruit or vegetable. Learn how to prepare it, and encourage your kids to try it.
- Keep frozen fruits and vegetables and canned beans available as easy additions to dinner.

TRY TO SIT DOWN FOR A MEAL WITH YOUR CHILDREN AT LEAST ONCE A DAY. Research shows that kids eating on their own are less likely to eat healthy food, including fruits and vegetables. During meals, talk with your children about fruits and vegetables.

- How many servings of fruits and vegetables have you eaten so far today?
- How many are in this meal?
- What produce should we have tomorrow night?



INCLUDE YOUR KIDS IN CHOOSING PRODUCE.

- Ask your kids to select their favorite fruits and vegetables at the store.
- Take your kids to a great farmer's market.
- Have your children help prepare fruits and vegetables for meals and snacks.
- **UNDERSTAND THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.** VISIT www.5aday.gov.

BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE. Staying active and eating healthy go hand-in-hand – it's critical to do both in order to achieve better health.

- Children should get 60 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on 5 days of the week or more.
- Encourage kids to participate in activities that get them moving instead of watching TV.
- Make physical activity part of family time. Play a game outside, or take a bike ride together to a local park for a healthy, produce-filled picnic.



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THE TOP 20 ANTIOXIDANT FOODS

1. Small red beans (dried legumes)
2. Wild blueberries
3. Red kidney beans 
4. Pinto beans
5. Blueberries, cultivated
6. Cranberries
7. Artichokes, cooked
8. Blackberries
9. Prunes 
10. Raspberries
11. Strawberries
12. Red Delicious apples
13. Granny Smith apples
14. Pecans
15. Sweet cherries
16. Black plums
17. Russet potatoes, cooked
18. Black beans
19. Plums 
20. Gala apples

The Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry published the top 20 list of antioxidant-rich foods recently in their June 2004 issue. United States Department of Agriculture nutrition scientists used the latest technologies to tabulate antioxidant levels in more than 100 types of vegetables, fruits, nuts, berries and spices. See the list printed above.

WHAT ARE ANTIOXIDANTS?

Antioxidants are believed to help undo the damage done by molecules within the body called free radicals. Experts believe that free radicals may be associated with a higher risk for heart disease, cancer and aging.

HOW MANY ANTIOXIDANTS SHOULD I EAT?

There is no established amount for antioxidants in the diet as there are for vitamins and minerals. Much research is needed with regard to antioxidants and phytochemicals. Most health authorities recommend that you get your antioxidants from a variety of whole plant foods including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and legumes.

STRIVE FOR FIVE

This finding brings one more reason you should strive to eat 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Try to "eat from the rainbow" meaning get a variety of dark colors in your fruit and vegetables servings. These fiber-rich beauties can help improve your diet so you lower your body weight and your risk for many chronic diseases including certain cancers, cardiovascular disease, stroke, hypertension, diabetes and more. They can also help to protect your eyesight. The lutein found in spinach can help prevent macular degeneration.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.healthfinder.gov and www.cdc.gov

Source: *Communicating Food for Health*, August 2004.

TIPS FOR HEALTHY TV WATCHING



Too much TV can lead to poor learning or health problems like being overweight. Setting limits and keeping an eye on what your children watch can turn TV into a way for the whole family to learn together.

Most doctors recommend no more than 2 hours of TV a day for children.

- Let TV be a reward for good behavior. Example – No TV until homework and chores are done.
- Help your child to be active – limit time watching TV and playing video games to 2 hours a day.
- Talk with your child about what he or she watches on TV.
- Only turn on the TV when you are watching a program.
- Turn the TV off during meals.
- Choosing one day a week for your family to be "TV Free." Instead of watching TV, play games, read, or go for a walk together.

Turn your favorite show into a workout! Each player writes down an exercise, like jumping jacks, sit-ups or push ups on a piece of paper. Fold the papers and put them in a hat. During the ads, each player pulls an activity out of the hat and does the exercise until the ads are over. When everyone is done, fold the papers and put them back in the hat. Start over with the next ad.

Source: *Healthy K.I.D.S. Newsletter*, the Children's Health Fund, Made possible by a grant from MetLife Foundation

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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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