

# To Your Health

## Make a Commitment to Regular Family Meals

Sometimes a seemingly simple act can have a profound impact on overall health. Eating more meals together can improve the physical, mental and emotional health for your entire family.

- Make family meals a top priority by writing them into everyone's calendar.
- Plan ahead for simple, nutritious, tasty, fun meals.
- Share the responsibility of meal planning, preparation, cleanup.
- Treasure time together. Turn off televisions and telephones during the meal. Encourage conversation about "good things that happened today." Children learn social skills from watching, listening, participating.

For more information: *Say "YES" to Family Meals - Raising Healthy Kids*, Pm 1842, Iowa State University Extension

## Five Ways to Enjoy Key Nutrients At All Ages

**Grains** (for fiber, folate and energy) - especially 100% whole grains - at least one serving at every meal. Start the day off with a bowl of whole grain cold or hot cereal. Try a satisfying sandwich on whole wheat bread for lunch. Finish up with brown rice or whole grain pasta at dinnertime. If you need a snack, a handful of whole grain crackers with cheese, or a slice of whole wheat bread with peanut butter would work.

**Produce** (for vitamins A, C and potassium) - fruits and vegetables - fresh, frozen, dried and canned in their own juices. Aim for 2 servings at every meal and 1-2 snacks per day. From A-Z, the choices are endlessly delicious - like a sliced apple snack to steamed zucchini for dinner.

**Milk products** (for calcium and vitamin D). Packed with body-building nutrition, dairy products - like fat-free or reduced-fat milk, yogurt and cheese - are creamy and good for you, too. To get the calcium and vitamin D (plus protein, potassium, phosphorus and more) you need, all it takes is 3 servings a day - 8 ounces of milk with each meal meets the goal.

**Lean meats, poultry, fish, legumes** (for iron, zinc, and protein). Add variety to meals and snacks with a variety of protein foods. Cooked dried beans and peas can be used in main dishes or sides dishes.

**Nuts, seeds** (for vitamin E and magnesium) - sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, almonds, pecans, cashews, and other nuts ... Add just a serving or two (1 ounce or a small handful counts as a serving) to your day. Sprinkle nuts on cereal, yogurt or fruit salad. Enjoy sunflower seeds as a snack.

Source: Eat Right Montana, February 2007

## Eat Smart

### VEGETARIAN CHILI

Menu Idea -

- ♦Vegetarian chili with shredded cheese
- ♦Carrots and celery
- ♦Corn chips
- ♦Chocolate pudding (made with milk)
- ♦Milk

*Makes 10 servings, 1 cup each*

- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cans diced tomatoes (14.5 ounces each)
- 1 can garbanzo or kidney bean (14.5 ounces)
- 1 can black beans (14.5 ounces)
- 2 cups frozen corn
- 3 to 4 teaspoons chili powder
- Pepper - to taste

Wash your hands. Peel and chop the onion. Put all ingredients in a large pot. Bring to a boil. Simmer for 10 minutes. Let the chili simmer longer if you want the onions to be soft.

Nutrition Facts: per 1 cup - 146 calories, 14 fat calories; 1.5 g fat, 0.3 g saturated fat; 0.2 mg cholesterol, 421 mg sodium; 27.7 g total carbohydrate, 5.5 g dietary fiber, 5.9 g sugars; 6.3 g protein

Source: *Food and Fun for Active Families* 2007 calendar, Iowa State University Extension

## Let's Move

### EXERCISE AND EATING

Physical activity (a.k.a. *exercise*) helps you control your appetite by making you more aware of how your body feels. You can focus on giving your body only what it needs - not more than it needs. But don't think that if you exercise you can eat whatever you want. If

you eat more calories than you burn off in a day, you will gain weight. A good fitness plan includes a balance between getting enough physical activity and eating right.

Source: *Food and Fun for Active Families* 2007 calendar, Iowa State University Extension

### FOCUS ON FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility is the range of motion around a joint. Good flexibility can help prevent injuries. You can improve flexibility by stretching, swimming, or other activities that lengthen muscles.

Warm-up stretch: Stand up and take two deep breaths. Step away from your chair, take a deep breath, stretch upward with your arms, and reach high while standing on your toes. Slowly bring your arms down to your sides in a big circle and pretend to push out the walls. Relax and exhale. Repeat.

Try to stretch at least three times a week to maintain flexibility. You'll benefit regardless of whether or not you have a regular exercise routine.

## Did you know?

### Wash 'em after...

Wash your hands after using the restroom; sneezing and coughing; smoking, eating, drinking or chewing gum; handling garbage or trash; handling raw foods; handling dirty dishes...wash your hands after every task!  
*Handwashing could prevent almost 2/3 of the 76 million cases of foodborne illness each year.*