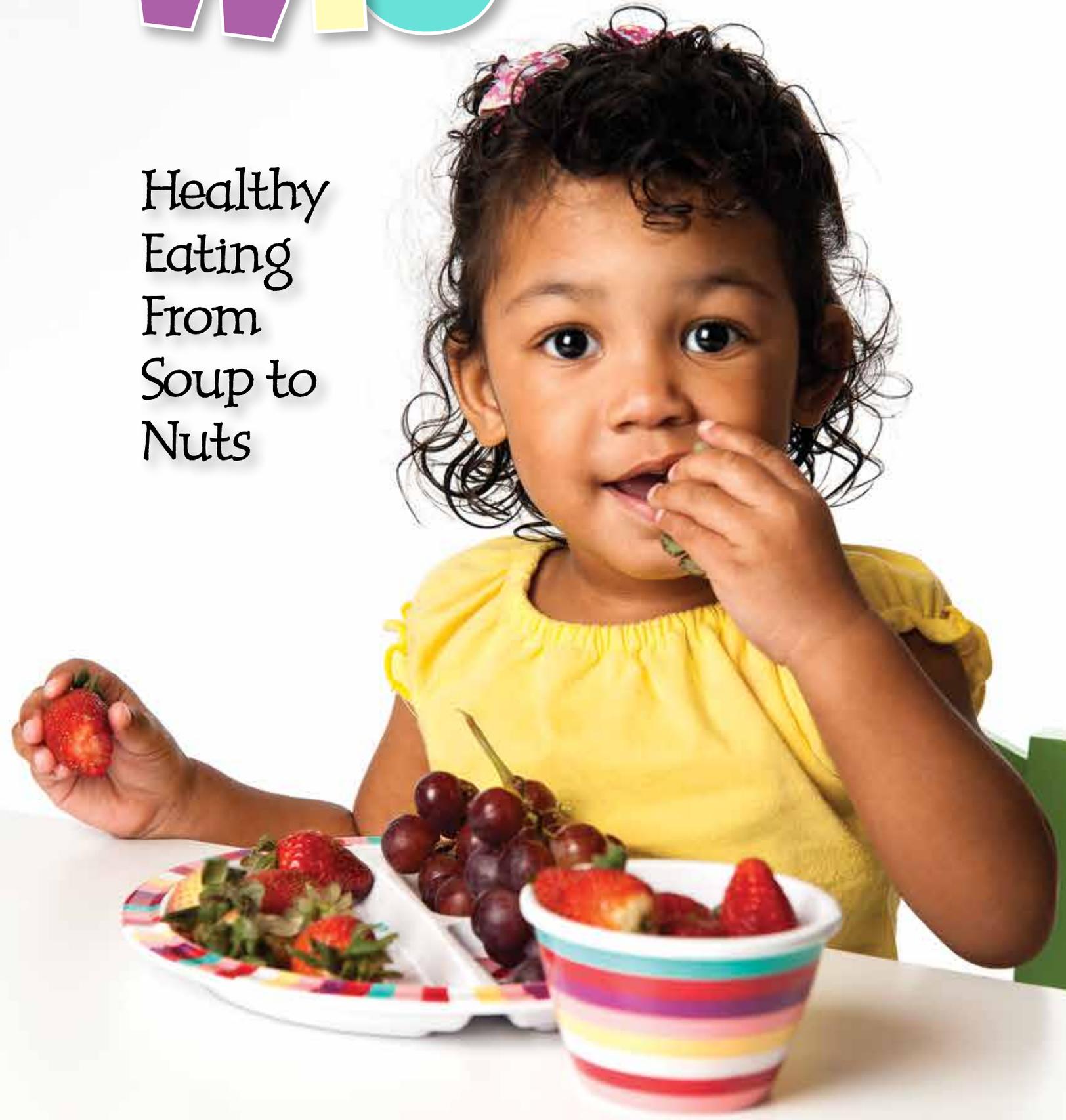


Healthy
Eating
From
Soup to
Nuts



Embrace the Joy of Healthy Eating

“Soup to nuts” is a phrase that means from start to finish, originating from a full course meal, in which courses start with soup and end with a dessert of nuts. In this issue of the Texas WIC News, we celebrate National Nutrition Month and embrace the opportunities we have to enjoy healthy eating from soup to nuts.

National Nutrition Month is a prime occasion to recognize the significant impact each of you make to improve the lives of women, infants, and children. Recent nationwide data show that obesity among WIC children is declining, and for the first time ever, the number of breastfeeding WIC moms outnumbered those who were not. Know that the work you do each and every day is making a difference, and results like this garner attention, support, and much-deserved recognition.

I hope this report gives you a sense of pride and validation. Whether it's learning the process of breastfeeding, building healthy meals, or getting access to health care, you are truly providing what our participants need, from

soup to nuts. Your dedication and powerful influence make WIC the amazing program that it is. Keep up the amazing work!

If you would like to read the full report on WIC participants, you can find it here:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/women-infants-and-children-wic-participant-and-program-characteristics-2012>

From the Texas WIC Director

- Lindsay Rodgers





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If you would like to write an article, please request subject approval and our writer's guidelines prior to writing the article. Keep in mind that each Texas WIC News issue is planned five months in advance. Articles submitted will be considered, but not guaranteed for publication.



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National Nutrition Month —

Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right

by Mandy Seay, R.D., L.D., C.D.E.
Nutrition Education Consultant



It's that time of year again — National Nutrition Month! This year, the theme is “Enjoy the taste of eating right.” Taste has long been documented as the main reason people choose the foods they eat. With that in mind, promote healthy eating by going straight for the taste buds!

Get Participants Involved

- Put up a poster in the waiting room that illustrates foods around the world. Include healthy recipes for Asian, Mediterranean, Mexican, etc. Place notecards, or provide an area, for participants to write about their favorite tasty and healthy foods.
- Decorate the waiting room with banners and balloons.

Get Coworkers Involved

- Get together with your coworkers and have everyone sign up to bring a healthy snack to share for each day of the month.
- Organize a “healthy recipe” contest with coworkers. Have a potluck and allow everyone to vote anonymously and take home the recipes they like.
- Post a National Nutrition Month tip of the day in the waiting room, in the break room, or in a place where everyone can see it.

Get Family Involved

- Look online for a “healthy” version of a meal you’re interested in trying (look for high ratings from those who have already made it).
- Ask your child to help you cook a healthy meal with a new fruit or vegetable. Talk to them about the health benefits of the foods you are preparing and why you enjoy that food so much.
- Start an herb garden (see WIC Wellness Works for instructions). See page 12 and 13 on how to use herbs to pump up the flavor of your foods.

Try any or all of these things or come up with something on your own. No matter what you decide, be sure to take pictures and send them to us! Submit your stories and photos to Mandy Seay at mandy.seay@dshs.state.tx.us. To find National Nutrition Month® promotional resources, go to: <http://www.eatright.org/nnm/promotionalresources/>.



Soup's On!

Mandy Seay, R.D., L.D., C.D.E.
Nutrition Education Consultant

Soup is a popular food consumed across the world, and it's no wonder since it is so versatile. For some people, soup is the first course of a meal, and for others it is the entire meal. Whether you like stew, gazpacho, pozole, pho, gumbo or any other variety, there's a soup that'll fit just about any person, season, and occasion.

Why is soup so great?

- Convenient way to use leftovers
- Adaptable for just about any diet – diabetes, vegetarian, gluten free, etc.
- Can be filling AND low calorie
- Easy way to get your daily serving of vegetables
- Contributes to your water intake

While soups have the ability to provide a great deal of nutrition, some may be deceptively unhealthy. It's always best to review the nutrition content on the label, at the restaurant, or in the recipe first, but listed below are a few things to watch out for.

Sodium. Some canned soups contain close to an entire day's worth of sodium, or more. Making soup at home can help reduce the salt level, but keep in mind that some ingredients like broth, bouillon, and canned vegetables and beans may make your soup salty too. Be sure

to use low sodium or no-salt-added varieties. Rinsing canned beans and vegetables before adding to your soup will also help. Experiment with herbs and spices, these will add tremendous flavor.

“Cream,” “bisque,” “cheese,” and “chowder.” These soups tend to be higher in fat and calories. Using low-fat or fat-free versions will help reduce calories.

High Fat Meats. Some soups may use certain cuts of meat that are high in fat, when making your own, use the lean version.

With a little research and creativity, you can make healthy soups part of your lifestyle!

Lasagna Soup

CONTRIBUTED BY MANDY SEAY, RD, LD, CDE
NUTRITION EDUCATION CONSULTANT

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 pound of lean Italian turkey sausage (or omit to make vegetarian)
- 3 cups chopped onions
- 1 squash and/or zucchini
- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano

(Continued on Page 6)

Soup's On

(Continued from Page 5)

- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 28-ounce can fire roasted diced tomatoes
- 2 bay leaves
- 6 cups low-sodium chicken stock
- 8 ounces of mafalda, fusilli, or any desired shaped pasta
- ½ cup finely chopped fresh basil leaves
- Fresh spinach (optional)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1-2 cups reduced-fat shredded mozzarella cheese

Directions

1. Cook pasta as directed. Drain and set aside.
2. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add turkey, breaking up into bite-sized pieces and brown for about 5 minutes. Add onions and squash/zucchini, cook until softened. Add garlic, oregano, and red pepper flakes. Cook for 1 minute. Add tomato paste and stir well to incorporate. Cook for 3-4 minutes, or until the tomato paste turns a reddish-brown color.
3. Add diced tomatoes, bay leaves, and chicken stock. Stir to combine. Bring to a boil and then reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes.
4. Place a handful of fresh spinach in the bottom of a soup bowl (optional), add desired



amount of pasta on top, then cover with soup. (The heat from the soup will soften the spinach.)

Note: Keep pasta separate from the big pot of soup to prevent the pasta from getting soggy in leftovers.

5. Stir in the basil and season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Top with a tablespoon of reduced-fat mozzarella cheese.

Thrown Together Vegan Lentil Soup

CONTRIBUTED BY DAVID BOGDANSKI
SYSTEMS ANALYST

Ingredients

- 1 16-ounce package of green lentils
- 8 cups of water
- 1 medium onion chopped into small pieces
- 4 garlic cloves crushed and chopped into small pieces
- 2 celery stalks chopped into small pieces
- 8 ounces of sliced mushrooms
- 2 sweet potatoes cut into ½" to ¾" cubes
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 large handfuls of fresh spinach
- salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Rinse the lentils.
2. Add the water and the rest of the ingredients other than the spinach in a large pot.
3. Bring to a boil and then lower the heat to a simmer until the lentils are tender, about 30 to 45 minutes.
4. When the lentils are cooked, drop the spinach on top of the lentils and cover the pot.
5. Allow the spinach to wilt for about 5 minutes and then mix it into the soup or stir the spinach in immediately.
6. Add salt and pepper.

The Power of Beans



Tonia Swartz, R.D., L.D.
Clinical Nutrition Specialist



Tiffany Brown, R.D., L.D.
WIC Certification Specialist Program Coordinator

Beans and Nutrition

A powerhouse food, beans are an excellent source of nutrients, essential vitamins, and minerals. Beans and peas are members of the legume family, which includes pinto beans, black beans, navy beans, red beans, split peas, lentils, and kidney beans. Dried beans are low in fat and free of trans-fats and cholesterol. Additionally, beans offer a high amount of the following nutrients:

- **Protein** – Beans provide on average 7 to 8 grams of protein per ½ cup serving and are a healthy source of lean (plant-based) protein.
- **Iron** – Beans provide about 11 percent of the daily value of iron (non-heme) per ½ cup serving.
- **Fiber** – Beans provide on average 7 grams of fiber per ½ cup serving and are one of the best food sources of fiber. Daily recommendations range from 25 to 38 grams of dietary fiber a day for adults and 19 to 25 grams a day for children 1 to 8 years of age. Unfortunately, most Americans only consume an average of 15 grams of fiber a day.
- **Folate** – Beans provide about 23 to 45 percent of the recommended daily value (DV) of folate per ½ cup serving. Folate, an important nutri-

ent for pregnant women and women planning on becoming pregnant, aids in the prevention of neural tube birth defects of the brain and spine in babies. **Tip:** The slow soak method better preserves the folate content in beans.

- **Antioxidants** – Move over blueberries...you may be top fruit, but beans are one of the top vegetable sources for antioxidants like Vitamins A, C, and E, selenium (mineral), beta-carotene, and lycopene. Small red beans (dried), red kidney beans (dried), and pinto beans rank as a higher antioxidant source than cultivated blueberries. **Tip:** The darker the bean color, the higher the antioxidant level.

Health Benefits

Research shows that beans provide many health benefits. They can help prevent or lessen the impact of the following chronic illnesses:

1. **Heart disease** – Beans are rich in phytochemicals (e.g. plant sterols, flavonoids) and antioxidants. Studies have shown that frequent consumption may lower the risk of heart disease. **Tip:** Aim for eating 3 cups or more of beans a week.
2. **Cancer** – The antioxidants and phytochemi-

cals found in beans may help to reduce a person's risk of developing some cancers including breast, stomach, and colorectal cancers.

3. **Diabetes** – Including a complex carbohydrate such as beans in your diet on a regular basis may help control blood glucose in those with diabetes.
4. **Obesity** – Some studies have shown that eating beans on a regular basis may help lower body weight and waist circumference. The fiber and protein content of beans provide a short term feeling of fullness, potentially reducing hunger.

Other Benefits

1. **Special diets** – Beans are a safe food source for individuals who have to follow a special diet, including those on a gluten-free, dairy free, soy free, egg free, allergy restricted, or low glycemic diet. Beans are also vegan and vegetarian friendly. **Tip:** When using canned beans, choose sodium-free or rinse beans to reduce the sodium content.
2. **Environmental** – Bean crops are eco-friendly in that they utilize less water and conserve land space.
3. **Cost savings** – A ½ cup of cooked, dry beans cost just \$0.07 per serving compared to 4 ounces of beef at \$1.16 per serving or 4 ounces of boneless chicken breast at \$0.82 per serving. Canned beans may cost more, but are still less expensive than other protein sources.

Cooking Dry Beans

Large white beans, such as butter beans, cook the quickest. Navy beans, and other small beans, take the longest time to cook. Before dry beans can be used in recipes, they should be plumped up with water by soaking them for several hours. Experts have different opinions on the soaking methods as well as cooking times. Most people agree that the traditional soak tends to yield consistent results.

Traditional Soak: Clean and rinse beans; cover with 3 times as much water as beans (e.g., 1 cup beans to 3 cups water). Soak overnight (at least 8 hours).

After beans have soaked, add fresh water to fully cover the beans along with 1 to 2 tablespoons

of oil, if you wish. Adding oil prevents foaming and boiling over. Foam can also be skimmed off during cooking. Stir beans occasionally to prevent sticking. Keep them covered with water throughout the cooking process (water may need to be added periodically during cooking). Simmer beans until they are tender and can easily be mashed between two fingers or with a fork. Cooking times will vary based on the cooking method used as well as the variety and age of the bean. Drain immediately after they have reached the desired texture to prevent overcooking.

If cooking beans in a crockpot, boil water on the stove first, add beans, and then transfer to heated crockpot and cook until tender.

Lentils: *Unlike other legumes, lentils cook quickly without pre-soaking. Boil them for 15 to 30 minutes, add seasonings, and serve over rice, stir into a soup, or mix with other vegetables and enjoy.*

Flavor Boosting Tips:

- **Acid** – Adding sources of acid is a great way to increase the depth of flavor in bean dishes. Lemon juice, vinegar, tomatoes, chili sauce, barbeque sauce, ketchup, molasses, or wine may be added after beans have been fully cooked. Keep in mind that acidic foods can prevent beans from becoming tender and lengthen the cooking time if they are added too soon.
- **Onions** – Adding onions can also increase the depth of flavor in beans and may be added at any time during the cooking process. For a stronger onion flavor, add during the last 30 minutes of cooking.
- **Herbs and Spices** – Oregano, thyme, garlic, parsley, or any other herbs/spices may be added at any time during cooking. However, flavors of herbs and spices tend to diminish the longer they are cooked.
- **Salt** – Salt should be added when the beans are almost tender because salt tends to toughen the beans.

Other Uses for Beans:

- **Soups** – Pureed beans can be used to replace cream or higher-fat ingredients.

- **Dips and spreads** – Bean dips and spreads, such as hummus, make great snacks or appetizers.
- **Baked goods** – Replace all or part of the fat ingredients with mashed or pureed beans in foods such as brownies and cookies. Beans will give the baked items additional protein and fiber and also reduce fat, cholesterol, and calories.

Bean arithmetic: 2 cups of dry beans will yield approximately 5 cups of cooked beans. If using canned beans, the rule of thumb is to substitute four 15 to 16 ounce cans for 1 pound of dry beans.

Web-based Resources

- The Bean Institute <http://beaninstitute.com/beans-101>
- United States (U.S.) Dry Bean Council <http://www.usdrybeans.com>
- The Bean Coordinated Agricultural Project www.beancap.org/Extension.cfm
- Northharvest Bean Growers Association www.northharvestbean.org

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- The Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry, 9th edition, June 2004. Ronald L. Prior, PhD, chemist and nutritionist, USDA's Arkansas Children's Nutrition Center in Little Rock, Ark.

Chocolate Chip Bean Muffins

Ingredients

- 2 (15.5 ounce) cans Cannellini beans drained and rinsed (may substitute Great Northern or Navy beans)
- ½ cup low-fat milk
- 1 cup sugar
- ¼ cup butter or margarine
- 3 eggs
- 3 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup whole-wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup semisweet chocolate chips

Directions

Combine beans and milk in a food processor or blender until smooth. Mix sugar and butter or margarine in a large bowl; beat in eggs and vanilla. Add bean mixture, mixing until well blended. Mix in flours, baking soda, and salt. Add in chocolate chips. Spoon mixture into 16 inch greased or paper-lined muffin tins about half full. Bake at 375° F for 20 – 25 minutes. Cool on wire racks.

Makes: 16 servings. Per serving: 240 calories, 7g fat, 6g protein, 37g carbohydrate, 5g fiber, and 115mg sodium.





NUTrition

by Brittney Miller, R.D., L.D.

Are you nuts about nuts? Nuts are a delicious AND nutritious food that can be incorporated into any diet. They are a good source of protein, fiber, and healthy fats such as Omega-3 fatty acids. Did you know peanuts are technically legumes, like a bean? Many of the nuts we eat are actually seeds, but whether they're tree nuts, seeds, or legumes, they are all an important part of our diet.

Even though nuts and legumes are high in fat, they contain no cholesterol. The types of fat found in nuts are healthier fats (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated) than those found in most other fatty foods. With the high fat and calorie content, nuts are best used as a replacement for saturated fats, such as those found in meats and sweets. Eating nuts in addition to high saturated fat foods will negate the health benefits of the nut, as will eating nuts covered in chocolate, sugar, or salt. So enjoy nuts raw, roasted, or even cook with them. Make salads and casseroles extra tasty and healthy with a sprinkling of walnuts, pistachios, or almonds.

NUTrient content

Nuts, seeds, and legumes are often high in vitamin E, folic acid (B9), niacin (B3), and riboflavin (B2). Not only are they rich in protein and fiber, but they also contain essential minerals such as copper, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, and selenium. One might say that nuts are nature's version of a multivitamin. With all these nutrients packed into a tiny delicious treat, it's no wonder nuts carry a list of health benefits.

Resources:

<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/nut-nutrition-database>
<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/nuts/HB00085/NSECTIONGROUP=2>

Britt's Pear-stachio Delight



This recipe was inspired by locally grown pears from the farmer's market combined with pistachios for a tasty treat that will satisfy any nut-lover. Add honey for a great snack or side dish.

Ingredients:

- 4 large ripe pears, like D'Anjou, Bosc, or Bartlett
- 1 cup pistachios, shelled
- 4 Tbsp honey (go local!)
- 2 Tbsp canola or grapeseed oil

Directions:

1. Prepare a grill or panini press to medium hot heat. Oil the grate with a small amount of canola or grapeseed oil.
2. Halve pears and scoop out their cores. It is not necessary to peel the pears.
3. Put pears on a tray or baking sheet. Brush them lightly with the oil.
4. Put pears, cut-side down, on the grill. Cover and cook until grill-marked and heated through, about 10–15 minutes. You should be able to easily pierce the pear with a fork, but be careful not to overcook, as they can become mushy.
5. While the pears are grilling, take the pistachio pits and place them in a plastic or paper bag. Crush the pistachios using a rolling pin or meat tenderizer.
6. Remove the pears from the grill and place them flesh side up on a dish. Let cool 2–3 minutes.
7. Sprinkle the crushed pistachios over each pear. Drizzle with honey. ENJOY.

What nuts do for you:

- Lower the risk of heart disease
- Have low glycemic index; good snack for those with insulin resistance
- Are high in antioxidants which may prevent cancer
- Offer a healthy meat replacement for vegetarians and vegans
- Are packed with nutrients that can reduce the physical effects of stress

Healthy nuts:

- Almonds
- Brazil
- Cashew
- Hazelnut
- Macadamia
- Pecan
- Peanut (legume)
- Pistachio
- Walnut
- Plus many more!

How to Grow an Indoor Herb Garden

CONTRIBUTED BY: CHRIS MCCARTHY, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN,
DIETETIC INTERN

Starting an indoor herb garden can be a fun and simple way to relieve stress while improving your health. Herbs can do everything from protecting against chronic disease conditions to adding color and variety to a normally bland meal. Connecting with nature through simple herb gardening can begin the cultivation of a healthy lifestyle change without a big commitment. Plus, there's no better way to get fresh herbs than to grow them yourself.

Here are some guidelines to help you grow your herbs indoors:

Start by choosing a south facing window that will get around six hours of sunlight a day. The sun follows a slightly southern east-to-west arc across the sky, allowing the plants to receive the most direct sunlight possible.

Determine the herbs you want to plant. Here's a list of some that grow well indoors and the foods they pair well with:

- Basil – tomatoes, pasta, pizza, eggs, bruschetta, and any Italian sauce
- Cilantro – salads, salsas, Mexican, and Thai cooking
- Dill – salads, soups, fish, meat sauce, egg dishes
- Rosemary – roasted vegetables, meat dishes, and many Italian dishes
- Mint – beverages (tea), desserts, yogurt, fruit salads, and sauces

Different herbs grow best in different size pots. Make sure you check the seed packet recommendations. Use leftover milk jugs, coffee cans, plastic containers, or anything that can contain enough soil for your herb.

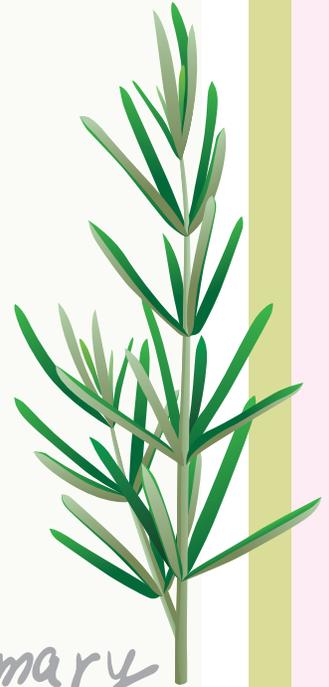
Fill your pot with enough soil to allow the herb to grow and water to be added. Adding pea gravel at the bottom of the pot can act as a reservoir to

(continued on WWW — Insert D)

basil



rosemary



mint



Living to be 100 — Ways Your Personality May Affect Your Longevity

CONTRIBUTED BY: DEBBIE LEHMAN, PHD, RD, LD, STATE COORDINATOR FOR WIC WELLNESS WORKS

Have you ever wondered what it takes to live to be 100 years old? Although it's still a rare event (0.2% or ~53,000 Americans), the number of centenarians (100+ years-old) has been increasing each year. We know that good genes definitely help you live a long healthy life — your parents' longevity is the most frequent predictor of how long you may live, but there is also compelling research that suggests our personality can also influence how long we live. Several personality traits are associated with positive health outcomes for longevity. What are some of these “fountain of youth” traits?

Conscientiousness

Those with high levels of conscientiousness are generally hard working and reliable. Characteristic behaviors include being productive, organized, disciplined, careful, and thorough. Conscientious people tend to be more satisfied because they feel a need for achievement and they set goals and work towards them. To build this trait, keep setting small goals and strive to attain them. Find others around you who seem to have this trait and learn from them.

Extraversion

If you tend to be outgoing, talkative, and energetic, versus more solitary and reserved, you may experience better health and live longer. Meaningful connections can add years to your life while social isolation has been found to contribute to depression, stress, inflammation, and cardiovascular disease. To experience the benefits of extraversion, find others around you who share similar interests and make meaningful social interactions. Giving and receiving support can improve your health immensely. In



addition, volunteering, because you want to help others, or giving for the sake of helping others, is another characteristic of centenarians.

Optimism

Numerous studies show optimism is related to good health. But it's important to note that those who lived to old age actually faced a fair share of struggles in their life. The key to longevity is not an easy life, but a positive outlook in the face of hard times. Those who weather the storm repeatedly, seeking the silver lining each time, live healthier lives. Being optimistic is beneficial, but it doesn't work if you become too carefree and disregard your safety and health.

Hard workers that find meaning in their jobs

Having an easy, stress-free job may not be the key to living longer. Studies of longevity found that people who worked diligently at a job they found fulfilling

(continued on WWW — Insert D)

Share your wellness success stories for a chance to be spotlighted in Texas WIC News and inspire other WIC staff! Contact your State Wellness Coordinator, Debbie Lehman, at Debbie.Lehman@dshs.state.tx.us or 512-341-4517.

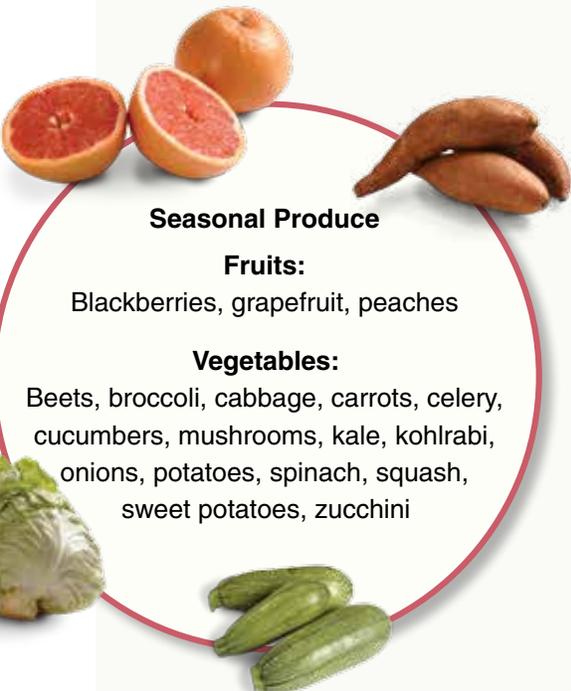


Mind Games

Replace each letter below with a number so that the addition will be correct. (Hint: K = 9)

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{M O M} \\
 \text{M O M} \\
 + \quad \text{N O} \\
 \hline
 \text{B O O K}
 \end{array}$$

Answer: $\overline{8=1, 1, N=4, O=5, M=5, O=4, N=1, K=9}$



Seasonal Produce

Fruits:

Blackberries, grapefruit, peaches

Vegetables:

Beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, celery, cucumbers, mushrooms, kale, kohlrabi, onions, potatoes, spinach, squash, sweet potatoes, zucchini

recipe

Zesty Salmon, Cream Cheese, and Asparagus Sandwiches

Serves: 12

Ingredients:

3 salmon steaks (about 2¼ pounds total)
 1½ loaves 100% whole-grain bread, thinly sliced
 4 cups water

For the Seasoning:

1 medium onion, peeled and cut into thick slices
 1 teaspoon dried parsley
 ½ teaspoon dried thyme
 1 bay leaf
 20 whole black peppercorns

For the Topping:

½ cup grated horseradish
 1½ cups nonfat sour cream
 1 teaspoon coarse salt
 36 spears asparagus (about 3 pounds), ends trimmed



Preparation:

1. Place water, onion, parsley, thyme, bay leaf, and peppercorns in a medium pan set over high heat; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, add salmon, cover, and allow to simmer until the salmon is cooked through, about 8 minutes. Remove salmon from water and flake salmon into a medium bowl. Add horseradish and sour cream, stir to combine. Set mixture aside.
2. Fill a large bowl with ice and water; set aside. Bring a wide, shallow pan of water to a simmer over medium heat. Add asparagus; let simmer until tender, about 3 minutes. Transfer the asparagus to the ice bath; let cool. Transfer to a cutting board, and slice the asparagus in half lengthwise; set aside.
3. Assemble the sandwiches: Spread reserved horseradish-salmon mixture onto each slice of bread. Top half the slices with six asparagus-spear halves, then cover with the remaining slices of bread. Serve immediately.

Nutrition Information Per Serving:

290 calories; 5g fat (1g saturated fat, 2g polyunsaturated fat, 2g monounsaturated fat); 307mg cholesterol; 43g carbohydrates; 17g protein; 2g fiber; 753mg sodium

Indoor Herb Garden

(continued from page WWW — Insert A)

prevent overwatering or you can use a plate to collect any overflow. Don't use too much fertilizer — most herbs grow well in moderate to poor soil.

Wait for the plants to reach 6 to 8 inches tall before harvesting. Harvesting tips:

- Basil – start snipping as soon as plants unfurl at least four sets of leaves
- Cilantro – pick leaves as needed, starting on the outside of the plant
- Dill – pick ferny leaves as needed, or pull entire stems to thin plantings
- Rosemary – strip needles from stems and chop before adding to dishes

- Mint – for the most intense flavor, clip topmost mint leaves before flowers form

Experiment with what goes well with your favorite dishes and make gardening a part of a healthy lifestyle that fits your needs. Once you're on your way to a fresh herb garden, you can sit back and wait for the health benefits to grow from your creation.



Living to be 100

(continued from page WWW — Insert B)

actually lived longer. Find a job you enjoy and keep working well past your prime. Achievement and satisfaction are key.

A little worry, but not too much

Those who live long and healthy lives worry just enough to take care of themselves. Too much worrying, on the other hand, can lead to mental health problems which actually shortens lifespan.

Openness and adaptation to new experiences and positive perceptions of aging

Research shows adults who are open to new experiences, especially those challenges they may face as they age, often live longer. Also, a positive outlook on aging resulted in living a longer, healthier life.

Whether or not we were born with these personality traits, we can experience immediate

positive health effects if we build them into our lives at any point in time. Challenge yourself to work on one of these areas for the next few months. See if you feel a difference in life satisfaction.

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Making Sense of Good Nutrition with Eaton

by Eaton Wright, BS, NUT
Nutrition Expert



If there is one thing that I am known for it's eating right. My wife, Mrs. Always B., might say that I'm better known for eating too much — hey-oh! Anyhoo, when it comes to making simple, appealing, and healthy meals you might say that I have a keen sense for eating right.

Taste may be the big bud on campus, but sight, sound, feel, and smell aren't exactly psychology majors. From crunchy and fragrant to bright and tangy, it takes all five senses to enjoy the foods we eat.

Quiz:

1. True or False – Umami is the person who changed your diapers when you were a baby.
2. Say the word food. What sense(s) come to mind?
 - a. Smell
 - b. Taste
 - c. Sight
 - d. Sound
 - e. Feel
 - f. Common
 - g. All but f.
3. True or False – The tongue has distinct areas for sweet, sour, bitter, salty, and umami.
4. The Garcia Effect allows a person (most organisms) to
 - a. See in low-light conditions
 - b. Recognize a food that might be poisonous or toxic
 - c. Listen to the Grateful Dead while eating ice cream
 - d. Eat a box of Samoas without looking at the nutrition facts label
5. Bonus question. True or False – Cats are able to taste sweet.

Answers:

1. False. Pronounced “oooh-mommy.” Umami is a Japanese word that loosely translates to savory. The tongue has taste receptors for the amino acid glutamate which naturally occurs in many foods including meat, fish, vegetables, and cheese. Umami is a formally accepted taste, like sweet and sour. Some say there are many others, like astringency, coolness, fattiness, and numbness to name a few. While your mommy loved you a whole bunch, it's doubtful that she savored the idea of changing your diaper.
2. G. One of the wonderful things about eating is that all of our senses get in the game. Think about the sound of a crunchy carrot, the sight of a brightly colored strawberry, the feel of creamy peanut butter, the smell of popping corn, or the taste of dark chocolate. One sense that Eaton lacks — common. I mean who eats a pickle with Cheerios?!?
3. False. According to Ancient Greek philosopher Democritus, there were four basic shapes of food. Four shapes for four tastes — sweet, salty, bitter, and sour. The old saying goes the tip of the tongue tastes sweet, the sides for sour and salty, and the back of the tongue tastes bitter. Taste is complicated, but it appears that a single taste bud may have taste receptor cells that can sense sweet, bitter, sour, salty, and umami tastes.
4. B. The Garcia Effect, named after John Garcia, is the ability to develop a conditioned taste aversion to a food that might be poisonous. Taste aversion is often caused by consuming a food that causes nausea or vomiting. The association between the harmful food and sickness prevents the consumption of the food in the future. The ability to listen to the Grateful Dead while eating a pint of ice cream is known as the Jerry-Cherry Garcia Effect.
5. False. Cats do not respond to sweet because of the absence of a gene that encodes sweet receptors on the tongue.

About the author: Eaton Wright is a certified NUT living in Austin, Texas.

Healthy Foods are the Spice of Life

by Jessi Cano, R.D.
Nutrition Education Consultant

People want healthy foods that TASTE great too. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' consumer research shows that "taste tops nutrition as the main reason why one food is purchased over another." So while we are interested in making healthy choices, the foods we enjoy are ultimately the ones we will eat the most. The challenge is in balancing health and taste, which is what this year's National Nutrition Month theme, "Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right," is all about.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 recommend that we reduce daily sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) and further reduce intake to 1,500 mg for people in several "at risk" categories. The 1,500 mg recommendation applies to about half of the U.S. population, including children and the majority of adults. The guidelines also recommend reducing daily intake of calories from solid fats and added sugars. Most of the people in the United States get much more than the recommended amounts of all three of these unhealthy ingredients, which are usually added to foods to enhance flavor.

Adding herbs and spices is a great way to boost flavor without adding extra calories, sugar, or fat. Studies have even shown that some herbs and spices can reduce inflammation in the body which can reduce your risk of heart disease and certain cancers. Herbs and spices have also been linked to lower blood pressure and blood glucose concentrations and may play a role in weight control.

Excited about the benefits but wondering how you'll get all of these herbs and spices into your daily routine? It's not as difficult as you might think. Benefits of many of these seasonings may be obtained from as little as a couple of teaspoons a day. Keep in mind that dried herbs do lose their potency over time and should be replaced about once a year.

You don't need to make drastic changes in the way you're cooking to benefit from herbs and spices. Here are some simple ways to spice up foods you already enjoy:

Basil

- Make a sandwich with low-fat mozzarella cheese, sliced tomatoes, and fresh basil leaves.
- Make a simple pesto by combining garlic, parmesan cheese, basil leaves, walnuts, and olive oil in a food processor or blender.

Cinnamon

- Add a teaspoon of cinnamon to oatmeal or yogurt.
- Sprinkle cinnamon into a traditional peanut butter & jelly sandwich.
- Top a fat-free latte or hot cocoa with ground cinnamon.

Cloves

- Sprinkle ground cloves on applesauce.
- Add a pinch of ground cloves to hot tea.

Dill

- Add dill to stews.
- Sprinkle dill on carrots or cucumbers.
- Add dill to plain yogurt to make a dip.

Garlic

- Include garlic in soups and stews.
- Sauté steamed spinach, garlic, and lemon juice.
- Purée fresh garlic, canned garbanzo beans, tahini, olive oil, and lemon juice to make quick and easy hummus dip.

Ginger

- Add ginger to sauces and marinades.
- Spice up stir-fry dishes with chopped ginger.
- Sprinkle ground ginger on cooked carrots.

Oregano

- Add a dash of oregano to salad dressings and marinara sauce.
- Sprinkle oregano on top of pizza.
- Stir oregano into black bean soup.

Parsley

- Include chopped parsley in meatballs and meat loaf.
- Sprinkle parsley on fish and chicken.
- Add parsley to potatoes.

Thyme

- Add thyme to bean, egg, and veggie dishes.
- Sprinkle dried thyme onto cooked vegetables in place of butter.
- Use thyme in a rub when cooking salmon.

Turmeric (commonly found in curry powder)

- Add turmeric to water when cooking rice.
- Sprinkle turmeric on tuna salad or egg salad.
- Mix half a teaspoon turmeric with 1 cup Greek yogurt and use as a dip or sandwich spread.

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Veggie Stacks with Basil

Ingredients

- ½ cup red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped garlic
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 eggplant, cut crosswise into 12 (¼ inch thick) slices
- 1 yellow squash, cut crosswise into 8 (¼ inch thick) slices
- 1 zucchini, cut crosswise into 8 (¼ inch thick) slices
- ¾ cup uncooked couscous
- 1 small red onion, cut into 4 (¼ inch thick) rings
- 1 vine-ripened tomato, cut crosswise into 4 slices
- ½ cup (2 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella, divided
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil, plus additional leaves for garnish

Directions

1. To make the vinaigrette, whisk together first 6 ingredients. Reserve ¼ of the mixture. Add eggplant, squash, and zucchini. Let stand 20 minutes.
2. Bring 1 cup water to boil, and stir in couscous. Remove pan from heat, cover, and let stand 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork; cover and keep warm.
3. Preheat a lightly oiled grill. Cook eggplant, squash, zucchini, and onion, turning 3 minutes per side or until golden brown and tender. Cook tomatoes 30 seconds per side or until grill marks appear. Make 4 stacks, beginning with a slice of eggplant, then 1 tablespoon mozzarella. Continue stacking vegetables, ending with 1 tablespoon mozzarella. Grill stacks (or bake at 350° for 5 minutes), covered, 2 minutes or until cheese melts.
4. Stir reserved vinaigrette into couscous with chopped basil; spoon onto plates. Top with stacks. Garnish with additional basil, and serve.



Obesity Prevention During Life Transitions — How Two Local Agencies are Doing Their Part

by Angela Gil, R.D., L.D.

There is no question that WIC plays a critical role in obesity prevention. We have contact with participants during times in their lives when weight gain is most common, like during pregnancy, infancy, childhood, and for some participants, even through puberty and adulthood. Implementing obesity prevention strategies during these vulnerable life transitions empowers our participants to make positive choices that will help them live a healthy life.

In FY 2013, 35 local agencies were awarded Obesity Prevention Mini Grants, totaling \$632,450. Two of those agencies are taking different approaches to obesity prevention in their community. Local Agency 12, Hidalgo County, is tackling obesity during the infant stage while Local Agency 11, Galveston County, is focusing their efforts on family shopping practices.

Grocery Mock...to know how to SHOP: Local Agency 11, Galveston County

By KRISTLE GRIFFIN, B.S.
HEALTH EDUCATOR

Have you ever wondered why WIC clients choose not to purchase WIC allowable produce? Local Agency 11 wanted to identify the barriers, so they coupled “CCNE Cooking with WIC Approved Foods” and a new grocery mock shop class to create an all-day event held during National Nutrition Month 2013.

This piloted class transformed the WIC classroom into a quaint supermarket that not only displayed real fruits and vegetables but also allowed clients to demonstrate their normal grocery store habits. The goal for this project was to increase WIC participants’ confidence in selecting the best produce when shopping.

Each class discussed their current shopping practices, including the hesitation and insecurity that surrounded purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables. As the class progressed, participants participated in a hands-on activity that taught them how to use their five senses when shopping for produce. Additionally, a fresh fruit and vegetable shopping guide, created by health educator, Krystle Griffin, was given to each client to assist them at their next grocery store trip.

At the conclusion of each class, pledge cards

were given to clients who planned to cook one new vegetable before the follow-up evaluation in 3 months.

Seventeen clients submitted pledge cards and 13 participated in the 3-month follow-up phone interview. Ten of the 13 clients had indeed cooked with one new fruit or vegetable. All 13 stated that the shopping guide was useful to them when making their produce selections and that they felt more confident and competent when shopping for produce. They also expressed their delight in the classroom experience.

LA 11 feels that this activity was a success and plans to increase the frequency of this class.



Preventing Childhood Obesity in Hidalgo County: Baby Café

By NORMA L. LONGORIA, M.S., L.D.
PROJECT COORDINATOR



DIANA CARDONA, I.B.C.L.C.
FACILITATOR

Obesity in children predisposes them to be obese adults. Of obese children, 77 percent remain obese as adults; of children at a healthy weight, only 7 percent become obese as adults. To prevent childhood obesity and start infants off at a healthy weight, the Hidalgo County Health & Human Services WIC Program (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children) has created two Baby Cafés to encourage women to fully breastfeed their babies for a complete year.

Baby Café is a program that offers a site where women who are pregnant or breastfeeding can come to receive social support and the services of a certified lactation consultant and a trained breastfeeding educator, who provide hands-on advice on breastfeeding. Baby Café is licensed and modeled after a British organization and adapted to the local area.

Of women receiving WIC benefits in Hidalgo County, 99 percent initiated breastfeeding but few followed recommendations to fully breastfeed their infants for one year. Hidalgo County data shows that at day 2 of life 5.8 percent of infants are fully breastfed, and at day 2 of life 65 percent of infants are partially breastfed for a total of 70.8 percent combined

(compared with Texas rates of 8.9 percent and 32.4 percent, respectively; and combined 41.3 percent.)

Indeed most Baby Café visitors who are breastfeeding also supplement their infants with formula. Some stated that they preferred to fully breastfeed but faced obstacles in trying to do so. Mothers frequently mentioned problems with insufficient milk production and the baby refusing to breastfeed. Most of these problems identified were either because of improper latch and nipple confusion. Lactation consultants at Baby Café have the knowledge and expertise to educate mothers to overcome these and other breastfeeding problems.

Many women begin breastfeeding with the idea that it is natural, but are not aware of the biological mechanisms and benefits behind breastfeeding. In an effort to increase breastfeeding rates, education, support, and local resources must be available for our clients. Hidalgo County is happy to report that the Baby Café provides all of these.

Reference

WIC Breastfeeding Data: Local Agency Report, FY 2011 by USDA /FNS Supplemental Food Programs Division.



Left to right (Baby Cafe staff wearing yellow shirt): Blanca A. Colunga, Sandra Escamilla, Margarita Miller, Diana Cardona, Norma. L. Longoria, Anabel Hernandez, Aida M. Gonzalez, Sandra Acevedo, Janett Ortega, Patricia Bush, Gaby Reyna, Amy Traylor, Susana Iniguez, Elva Cantu, and Cindy Rivas.

Please visit the Obesity Prevention Mini Grant web page at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/nut/obesity.shtm> to discover more about other OPMG projects. If your local agency is interested in applying for the OPMG for FY 2015, applications are made available in the spring. Contact Angela Gil, RD, LD, at 512-341-4590 or at angela.gil@dshs.state.tx.us for more information on how to apply.

School Meals Get



Because a well-fed child does better in school, has improved attendance, and fewer discipline problems, the U.S. Department of Agriculture sponsors the National School Lunch Program, making meals possible for more than 31 million children nationwide at free or reduced prices. Many of the children taking part in this program once received WIC foods. Just like the WIC foods did in 2009, these meals are getting a makeover and changing to provide children with healthy and fun meals.

The Evolution of School Lunches

The National School Lunch Program has officially been in existence since 1946, although USDA provided funds for school lunches many years before its start. Prior to the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) review of the program's nutritional guidelines in the mid 2000's, the program was operating from guidelines established in 1995. This review marked the first step in raising nutrition standards for The National School Lunch Program.

The meal patterns released in 2012, based on the 2010 Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act, outlined new regulations based on input for organizations such as the Institute of Medicine's report and the Texas Department of Agriculture, which administers the National School Lunch Program here in Texas. The new regulations gave exact guidelines which Texas schools are now required to follow. The school nutrition professionals, like Katy Jechow, M.S., R.D.N, L.D., the Nutrition Education and Wellness coordinator for a San Antonio school district, have been and will be developing menus that meet new regulations. Some of these menu changes will take place at different times and include changes like:

- More whole grains
- More vegetables
- More fruits
- Less trans fat
- Less sodium
- Fat-free (skim) or low-fat milk (1%) only

For more information on changes in nutrition standards, visit www.SquareMeals.org.

School cafeterias are faced with the dilemma of meeting these goals while keeping their students interested in their meals. Katy Jechow believes the biggest misconception of school lunches has been that they are not healthy.

a Makeover

by Katie Lanier
Nutrition Education Consultant

Kids are still offered chicken nuggets and tacos, which traditionally are thought of as unhealthy, but school cafeterias are changing the way these foods are made.

This challenge is something that Texas WIC also experienced with the changes to the WIC foods in October of 2009, also implemented as a result of an IOM review of the nutritional content of the WIC food package. In fact, in the first month of the new food package rollout, whole grains (bread, tortillas, rice, and oatmeal) only had a 52 percent redemption rate. Whole grains are something that our WIC participants have slowly accepted, with a current redemption rate around 64 percent, but without these changes they may have never been exposed to whole grains! You may probably remember when our participants were resistant and even worried about switching from whole milk to lower-fat milk. We provided nutrition education and taste test challenges to help families overcome barriers in making the switch. In the same way, Texas Department of Agriculture created educational and promotional materials for schools and families. These materials will help keep families informed while delivering a positive message — reminding families that these changes are beneficial for their children's health. Jechow's district is getting creative with their marketing and nutrition education to draw students back into the lunch room.

Challenges of Being both Healthy and Kid-Friendly

Anyone who has a picky eater at home can understand how difficult it may be to offer healthy food that their family will eat. When asked how their school district keeps kids' food preferences in mind when choosing which healthy meals to serve, Jechow explained the following: "We often survey our students to find out what they like, but we honestly get the best feedback from our cafeteria employees. They see what the students like or don't like, and always let us know if something isn't moving." Schools can offer kid-friendly and healthy foods simply by

preparing them differently. For example, one of the most universal favorite foods for kids is pizza. Schools can reduce the amount of sodium by choosing a different pizza sauce and increase the amount of fiber by using whole wheat crust. With the National School Lunch Program requiring at least ½ serving of fruit at each meal, San Antonio schools have found unique ways to get their kids eating more fruit. For example, younger students receive sliced oranges arranged in a smile rather than a whole orange that they have to peel. This helps prevent waste while also being creative!

Creativity in the Cafeteria

There are so many ways to be creative with food. We teach our WIC moms fun ways to get their kids to fall in love with new foods through things like cooking classes and health fairs, and our cafeterias are continuing this movement. Every month, Jechow's school district hosts "Fun Food Friday" where the kids get to try a new food. The free samples range from quinoa and jicama to new fruit like blood oranges. Once they get some positive feedback from these samples, a future Friday will be used to try out a new entrée using that new food. Besides creativity, Jechow sees the lunch room as a learning opportunity. She likes to provide nutrition education for her district in fun and memorable ways. "Every time a student goes through the cafeteria line, there is a chance to teach. We show our students how to build a health tray — adding foods from each food group and teaching them how much to put on their plate." As school lunches continue to evolve to best meet our children's health needs, WIC and schools can partner to teach our children the importance of nutrition. It's no secret that healthy lifestyles start with good nutrition, and these school meals will continue to offer the education and healthy foods that WIC first introduced.

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How Children Develop Taste

by Kristin Bates
Texas State DI Intern

Introducing new foods to young children can be challenging for many parents. But by providing information about the many factors contributing to the development of taste preferences (like exposure, modeling, reward, etc.) you can help arm parents with strategies to create healthy lifelong eating habits for their children.

Exposure

Early exposure to new foods is the key to acceptance later in childhood. Food preferences developed in the early years remain later in childhood and continue on into adulthood. Parents may find that children will reject some new foods, but it is important to explain that a child may need to be reintroduced to a food as many as 10-15 times before accepting it. Ask parents to remain patient, positive, and supportive of their child's new experiences. If they don't love broccoli the first time they try it that is ok, try again the following week. Explain to the parents how tastes change throughout our lives so giving children ample opportunities to try new foods is key.



Parents can engage their children at meal and snack times by talking about the new foods, like the different tastes, textures, colors, and shapes. Additionally, presenting food in a fun and playful way generally makes children more likely to try new foods. Making faces, cutting foods into fun shapes with cookie cutters, or making a picture on their plate are all great ways to inspire children. For example, create a sea of blueberries with orange slices as boats or watermelon cut into stars.

Modeling

Parental consumption of particular foods is a strong predictor of a child's consumption of certain foods. Children have a tendency to mimic the behaviors of their parents or other important family members. If a family member does not like or will not eat an introduced food, it

is likely the child will not want to eat the food either. Children are more likely to be open to new foods if healthy eating behaviors are exhibited by family members.

Parents can get the whole family involved in modeling. Perhaps each night a different person can choose their favorite vegetable to have for dinner. While the family is eating, they can talk about what they love about that vegetable, whether it be the brilliant colors, the interesting flavors, or the health benefits. Parents can also use a child's favorite superhero or cartoon character. For example, Popeye eats spinach to stay big and strong. Getting kids thinking and talking about these foods will help them make more connections with the food.

Reward

Parents may feel that the easiest way to get a child to eat a new food is through a reward system. However, research has shown that when a child is rewarded for trying a food they

dislike with food that they like, this can cause the opposite effect. For example, giving a sweet dessert for trying a less likeable food such as broccoli can actually cause the child to have a decreased liking for broccoli, and an increased liking for that sweet dessert.

Parents can use verbal praise instead of rewards since children respond more favorably to praise. Family members can tell the child how proud they are of the child for trying something new or how it takes courage to try new things. If you feel a reward is necessary, use a non-food reward. For example, you could give them a hug or a sticker.

Breastfeeding

A mother's eating habits during pregnancy and lactation have an effect on their child's future food preferences. Flavors from the foods mom eats during pregnancy are present in amniotic fluid where the baby grows and develops. When these same foods are introduced after birth, the infant recognizes them. Infants also recall flavors present in breastmilk during breastfeeding. For example, if a mom ate carrots while pregnant (and/or breastfeeding) the infant will have a happier facial expression when the carrot is given as a solid food.

Encourage pregnant and breastfeeding mothers to eat healthy foods not only to provide important nutrients for the baby's growing body, but also to set baby up for lifelong healthy eating habits.

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