

Healthy Meals Healthy Children

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Family Meals

Dear Parents,

Let me continue with the theme of Parental Involvement this month. I can't say enough about how important your role is in the development of appropriate eating habits in your children. Establishing good eating habits and an active lifestyle now will develop a pattern that can last a lifetime! And these good habits can help reduce the risk of overweight, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and other chronic diseases later in life. So, be a sweetheart and set a good example for children when planning, preparing, and serving meals! Check out this link for some additional thoughts on family meals. <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/yf/foods/fn1530.pdf>

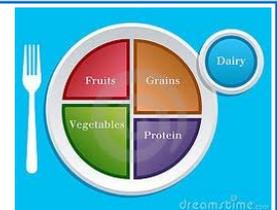


Abigail Pritchard

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MyPlate Tip of the Month:

**make half your plate veggies
and fruits**



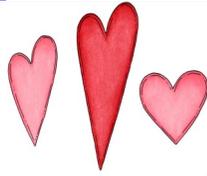
Vegetables and fruits are full of nutrients and may help to promote good health. Choose red, orange, and dark green vegetables such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, & broccoli.

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet7BuildAHealthyMeal.pdf>

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The Family That Eats Together...



A family meal is two or more people eating together. Whether a family is small or large, eating together is important for children from preschool through high school. Kids who eat more often with family members have better communication skills, better school performance, better social adjustment and better nutrition.

Start by talking with your family about why family mealtime is important to you. Ask their opinions on what time is best for being together, ideas for table conversation, ideas for food they'd like to help prepare, and what table manners are acceptable. After the discussion, parents make the final discussion on making family meals a priority, rules for keeping table talk fun, and what food to serve.

VEGETABLE OF THE MONTH: Spinach

Spinach is a dark colored, leafy green that is rich in Vitamins A and C and is a good source of calcium, folate, and magnesium. Spinach contains phytochemicals that are believed to protect against cataracts and macular degeneration and the magnesium content may help reduce the risk of Type II diabetes.

Choose fresh, crisp, green bunches with no evidence of insect damage. Store it loosely wrapped in damp paper towel. Refrigerate in plastic bag for use within 3-5 days.

<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/spinach>

Warm Bean & Spinach Salad

4 servings

Ingredients

- 1 10 oz pkg fresh spinach, washed & dried
- 1 15 oz can white beans, rinsed & drained
- 1 large bell pepper, chopped
- 1/3 C fat free Italian dressing
- 1/4 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp ground black pepper
- 1/2 C shredded low fat cheese

Directions

- ♥ Wash your hands & clean your cooking area
- ♥ Clean tops of canned food items before opening them.
- ♥ Wash & dry spinach and tear into bite size pieces
- ♥ Add spinach & white beans to a bowl
- ♥ In a 1 qt saucepan, heat bell pepper with dressing until dressing starts to bubble.
- ♥ Lower heat, cook for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- ♥ Add spices and mix well
- ♥ Pour bell pepper dressing over spinach and beans. Mix dressing with vegetables
- ♥ Sprinkle with cheese and serve immediately.

This material is provided by the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed)

Adapted by Abigail Pritchard from Better Living for Texans (BLT) & Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) Vegetable Recipes online

http://fcsagents.tamu.edu/food_and_nutrition/blt-enp-recipes/blt-recipes/Vegetables/Warm-Bean-and-Spinach-Salad-BLT.pdf

Retrieved 1/29/2015



Did you know...

- ♥ Spinach was first cultivated over 2,000 years ago in Iran.
- ♥ By 1806, it had become a popular vegetable in America and in the 1920's the U.S. pushed spinach commercially, with the Popeye the Sailor cartoon becoming a great advocate for spinach consumption.
- ♥ Spinach is eaten raw in salads and also as a cooked green much like turnip greens or collard greens.