



SCHOOL WELLNESS PROGRAM



HEALTHY EATING

Making healthy food choices a regular part of our day can help prevent some of the chronic diseases that affect people of all ages. Some of these diseases include Type 2 Diabetes, Hypertension, Cardiovascular Disease, Stroke, Cataracts, Macular Degeneration, some forms of Cancer, and Obesity. A key component of this is making healthy food choices. A healthy diet emphasizes fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains and fat-free or low-fat milk products. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends eating more fruits and vegetables than any other foods. A diet rich in fruits and vegetables provides vitamins and minerals, which are important for supporting growth and development and for optimum immune function. In addition, they are low in calories and help you to stay full longer. School age students should be eating at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day. Encouraging students to fill half of their plates with fruits and vegetables, and to eat these as snacks throughout the day, will help them to reach this goal. Avoid vegetables with added salt, butter, or cream sauces and eat as many fresh fruits as possible. If choosing canned fruit, avoid those that are canned in "heavy syrup" and instead pick those fruits canned in their own natural juices. Also, fruit juices should be 100% juice with no sugar added. It is important to eat a variety of these "super foods" in order to provide your body with all the different nutrients that it needs. Try dark leafy greens, fruits of varying colors different cooked vegetables including tomatoes.

Here are some quick and easy ways for families to eat more fruits and vegetables.

- Cut up fresh vegetables and keep them stored in the refrigerator for a quick snack.
- Keep a bowl of fruit out on the counter or table.
- Add fruits and vegetables to smoothies.
- Challenge your family to try a new fruit or vegetable every week.
- Add vegetables to pizza.
- Add fruits to meat and vegetable salads.
- Put fruit on your cereal.
- Add berries or bananas to pancakes and/or waffles.
- Replace pop tarts with a slice of whole grain toast with cream cheese and slices of strawberry or other fruit.
- Make fruit kabobs on a plastic straw.
- Wrap up fruits and veggies in a whole wheat tortilla and slice it into pin wheels.
- Eat with the seasons. Fruits and vegetables eaten in season have better flavor, more nutrition and are less expensive.
- Have fruit for dessert.
- Shred veggies such as zucchini or carrots into meat loaf or casseroles.



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"Working to enhance our community's total well-being"

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For more information, refer to the following websites:

www.fruitsandvegiesmorematters.org

<http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/>

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/MyPlate>

www.cdc.gov/