



# Family Nutrition In Action

Family Nutrition Program Vol. 6 No. 3  
May/June 2001

This program is brought to you thanks to the support in funding from the Florida Department of Children and Families and USDA Food and Nutrition Services, in collaboration with state, county, and local agencies.



## May is National Osteoporosis Prevention Month

Osteoporosis, or brittle bone disease, affects millions of Americans every year. Osteoporosis makes bones weak and susceptible to fractures. The first step in prevention is to identify if you are at risk for developing osteoporosis. Think about the following questions that relate to risk factors for osteoporosis.

- How old are you? As one grows older, the bones become weaker and less dense.
- Are you a female? Women have a higher risk for developing osteoporosis because they have less bone mass.
- Do you have a family member that has osteoporosis or weak bones? Osteoporosis is not hereditary, but the susceptibility to fractures can be.
- What is your race? Caucasian and Asian women are more likely to develop osteoporosis.

- What type of body structure do you have? Small-boned and thin women (under 127 pounds) are at greater risk for osteoporosis.
- Have you been through menopause? Normal or early menopause increases the risk of developing osteoporosis.

There are also lifestyle practices that can affect bone density increasing the chance of bone weakening. Cigarette smoking, drinking too much alcohol, consuming an inadequate amount of calcium, or physical inactivity increases the chances of developing osteoporosis.

### Tips for building strong bones.

- Cut back on salt. Salt causes more calcium to be lost in the urine.
- Cut back on coffee and soft drinks. The caffeine in these products can promote calcium loss. Limit coffee to not more than 2 cups per day.
- Get the majority of your protein from vegetable sources. Excess animal protein (meats) causes an increase in calcium loss.
- Get plenty of calcium and vitamin D.

<b>Calcium-rich foods</b>	<b>Vitamin D-rich foods</b>
Dairy products: milk, cheese and yogurt	Fish: herring, salmon, sardines, shrimp
Fortified soy foods, orange juice, and cereals	Fortified cow's milk
Collards and turnip greens	Fortified breakfast cereals

And don't forget that regular exercise plays an important part in building strong bones. Two types of exercises are important for bone health: weight-bearing and resistance exercises. Jogging, walking, stair climbing, dancing and soccer are examples of weight-bearing exercises. Weight lifting is considered a resistance exercise. Every day physical activity combines both types of exercise and helps build strong bones.

For more information visit the National Osteoporosis Foundation website <http://www.nof.org>

### **National Physical Fitness and Sports Month**

Being physically active every day not only gives you more energy and helps you manage your weight. It can help decrease the chance of developing heart disease, high blood pressure (hypertension), and type 2 diabetes. Other benefits of physical activity include:



- Decrease blood pressure in people with hypertension.
- Improve bone health and flexibility.

**Reach the goal of at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day!!**

- Lower anxiety and stress.

### **Advice for Adults and Older Adults:**

Being physically active can be part of the daily routine or it can be more structured. Physical activity can improve strength and flexibility. This is especially of benefit for older adults because it can help them reduce the chance of falling and breaking bones. People that have been sedentary, are frail or have health problems need to visit their health care provider before starting any exercise program or vigorous activity.



- T Go out for a walk during your lunch break.
- T Take up gardening, bowling, or join a neighborhood walking club.
- T Clean your house to the rhythm of lively music.
- T Carry your groceries.
- T Go up the steps instead of using the elevator.

**Advice for Youth:** Limit passive activities such as watching TV and playing video and computer games. Be active for at least 1 hour every day.

- T Play actively during school recess.
- T Play tag with your friends.
- T Walk, skip, or run.

## ***Food Allergy Awareness takes place in May.***

### **What is a food allergy?**

Food allergy is a reaction of the body's defense system to something in a food or an ingredient in a food. Even though we think food allergies are common, only 1 to 2 % of adults and 5 to 8% of children have a true food allergy. This condition should be diagnosed by a board-certified allergist.

### **Which foods cause reactions in people with food allergies?**

More than 90% of all food allergic reactions are caused by these foods:

- milk
- tree nuts
- fish
- eggs
- soy
- shellfish
- peanuts
- wheat



Treatment includes eliminating the offensive food from the diet. Eliminating the offensive food without taking special care to consume other foods that provide similar nutrients can cause an imbalanced diet. A registered dietitian (RD) can assist in planning meals that meet the nutritional needs and personal preferences of the individual.

Reading ingredient lists on food labels is very important because some of these foods are added to processed foods.

Peanut butter is used as a “glue” to hold together egg rolls; some low-fat peanut butter and some hot dogs have soy; most egg substitutes are made of egg whites.



### **What are the symptoms of food allergies?**

Food allergy symptoms vary from individual to individual. Common symptoms include swelling, hives, skin rash, stomach cramps, nausea and vomiting, sneezing, runny nose, and trouble breathing. Some food allergic reactions can be life threatening, causing an anaphylactic situation that needs medical attention, immediately!

For additional information contact:

*The Food Allergy Network*  
<http://www.foodallergy.org>

*International Food Information Council*  
<http://ificinfo.health.org>

### **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month in June**

If you are wondering why health officials continue to encourage people to eat a lot of fruits and vegetables, take a look at some good reasons for eating at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables:



1. **Prevent Cancer.** Fruits and vegetables are rich in antioxidants and phytochemicals. These are groups of natural substances that protect the body cells from harmful cancer-causing substances.
2. **Prevent Heart Disease.** Fruits and vegetables are rich in soluble fiber which helps lower blood cholesterol. The antioxidants and phytochemicals in these foods can help prevent fat build-up that clogs blood vessels. For a healthy heart

choose a diet rich in fruits and vegetables while limiting high-fat meats and dairy products.

3. **Bring Blood Pressure Down.**

People that have high blood pressure benefit from low-salt diets and weight management. It seems that the potassium and magnesium found in fruits and vegetables also play a role in controlling blood pressure.

4. **Love Your Eyes.** Eating fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin C and carotenoids can lower the risk of developing cataracts or macular degeneration. These two are the major causes of blindness in Americans.

5. **Help for Diabetes.** The fiber in fruits and vegetables can slow the absorption of sugar into the blood. The body can handle better the slow rise of blood sugar. Even though fruits and vegetables have carbohydrates, they seem to raise blood sugar very little.

*Source of information: American Institute for Cancer Research Newsletter, Issue 65, Fall 1999.*

- Select fresh fruits and vegetables at different ripeness levels ... some ready to eat immediately and some ready in 3-4 days.
- Add one new fruit or vegetable to your shopping cart each week.



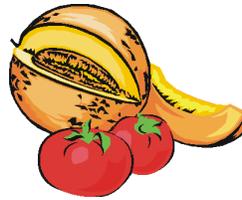
**Extra nutritious fruits and vegetables:**

Fruits and vegetables give us a variety of nutrients needed for good health. There

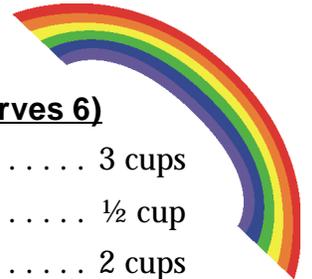
are some, though, that are extra nutritious because they give us several of those nutrients in one crunchy, juicy bite!

**Rich in all three: vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber:**

Bok choy cabbage	Greens
Broccoli	Spinach
Cantaloupe	Tomato



Pick brightly colored fruits and vegetables in dark greens, oranges, yellows, reds, and purples. These have more good-for-you nutrients than their less colorful counterparts.



**Rainbow Pasta Salad (Serves 6)**

Cooked macaroni . . . . .	3 cups
Red onion, chopped . . . . .	½ cup
Tomato, chopped . . . . .	2 cups
Red or green bell pepper, chopped	1 cup
Cooked black beans . . . . .	1 cup
Cooked corn . . . . .	1 cup
Vinegar . . . . .	1 Tbsp
Black pepper . . . . .	to taste
Italian seasoning . . . . .	2 tsp

Combine all ingredients in large mixing bowl. Refrigerate until ready to serve, up to 24 hours. Optional garnish: sprinkle with Parmesan.

Each 1 ¼ cup serving: 182 calories, 1.5 g fat, 5 g fiber.

(Source: Communicating Food for Health, July/August 2000)

# Kids Corner

With kids spending more time playing outside this summer, make sure they drink often to keep their bodies hydrated. Offer milk, fruit juices, and water as sources of liquids. Water is the best thirst-quencher, while milk and fruit juices are packed with nutrients that growing children need.



Fruit juices are nutritious and taste good, which makes it easier to over-consume. Too much juice, like too much of any food, can throw children's diets off balance and lead to some problems like:



- ! Poor appetite because of filling up with juice while crowding out other foods.
- ! Unnecessary weight gain due to excessive calories from large amounts of juice.
- ! Intestinal problems (cramps, diarrhea) because of the sorbitol in some types of juices. Sorbitol is a type of sugar that cannot be absorbed by the gut. Prune juice and pear juice have sorbitol.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that fruit juice should provide no more than half of a child's daily fruit needs. Children under 4 years need 2 servings of fruit every day. Older children need up to 4 servings.

One fruit serving =	6 ounces of fruit juice ½ cup of chunks of whole or canned fruit
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- ! Offer your child 4 to 8 ounces of fruits juice a day, in addition to a variety of fresh and canned fruits.
- ! Offer juice only in a cup and as part of meals or snacks.
- ! If children are thirsty in between meals, offer only water.

Source of information: USDA/ARS Children's Nutrition Research Center at Baylor College of Medicine.  
Website accessed on 5/22/01.

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## Local Family Nutrition Program:

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