



Family Nutrition In Action

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A Healthy Start to a New School Year

A new school year brings new teachers, new books, and a new chance for good grades! Help your child have a successful school year with good nutrition and physical activity.



Good nutrition starts with a healthy breakfast. Children who eat this important meal are more alert and perform better in school. They also have less behavior problems than kids who skip breakfast. Breakfast is important for adults, too, so be a positive role model and eat breakfast with your child.

Increased physical activity also helps kids perform better in school with higher test scores and improved behavior. Encourage your child to take part in school physical activity programs. After school, set a positive example and play actively with your child. Your health will benefit, too!

Source: *Nutrition, Physical Activity and Achievement Fact Sheet.*
www.actionforhealthykids.org.

What's for Breakfast?

Offer a variety of healthy foods for breakfast and let your child choose what to eat. If you're short on time, have some quick-to-make foods on hand. Try ready-to-eat cereals, milk, yogurt, fruit, string cheese, English muffins, or bagels.

Don't worry if your child doesn't like traditional breakfast foods. Breakfast can be anything your child likes, even a burrito or a grilled cheese sandwich!

If your child isn't hungry first thing in the morning, offer something light such as fruit, fruit juice, or milk. Then pack a healthy mid-morning snack such as a bagel and cheese.

The School Breakfast Program offers free or reduced-price meals at many schools. Check with your child's school for more information.

Fall Harvest

Fall is a wonderful time to try some colorful Florida squash. From acorn to zucchini, Florida grows a variety of squash from September through June.

Squash is fat-free and full of nutrients. Hard-shell winter squash, like acorn and butternut, are good sources of vitamins A and C. Soft-skinned summer squash, like zucchini and yellow, are good sources of vitamin C.

Selecting, Storing, and Preparing

Choose winter squash that has a hard, tough skin and feels heavy for its size. Store in a cool, dark place up to 3 months. Only the flesh is edible and must be cooked. Try baking, microwaving, or boiling and mashing like potatoes. Or add squash cubes to soups or stews.

Choose firm summer squash with shiny and tender skin. The entire summer squash is edible. Enjoy it raw or cooked. Cover with plastic, refrigerate in the produce drawer, and use within 5 days.

Visit a farmers market to buy fresh, low-priced produce from the people who grew it. You can even talk with the growers to learn how to prepare your new purchases! Check with your county Cooperative Extension agent or local newspaper to find a farmers

Baked Acorn or Butternut Squash

Serves 4

2 acorn or butternut squash
2 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons margarine, melted

Rinse squash and cut in half. Place cut side down in baking dish with 1/4 inch of water. To microwave, cover with plastic wrap and cook on high until squash is tender (about 10-15 minutes). To bake, cook at 350° F until tender (about 45-60 minutes). When fully cooked, remove seeds with spoon, then add margarine and brown sugar in the seed cavity. Bake for another 5 minutes or microwave another 2 minutes and serve. Caution: squash will be very hot!



Source: *Produce for Better Health*, www.aboutproduce.com.

Potato and Squash Soup (Serves 6)

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 cup onion, finely chopped
3 cups potatoes, cleaned and diced
3 cups butternut squash (or zucchini), diced
5 cups chicken stock
1/4 cup green onion, sliced
salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil in large saucepan over medium heat. Add onions and cook until softened. Stir in potatoes and squash. Add chicken stock and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until vegetables are tender (about 20-30 minutes). Stir in green onions and season to taste.

Source: *Produce for Better Health/Prince Edward Island Potato Board*, www.aboutproduce.com.

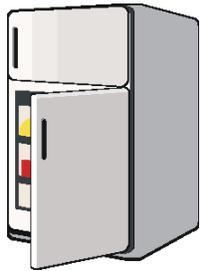
Molds on Food: Are They Dangerous?

Some molds cause allergic reactions and lung problems. And a few molds produce poisonous substances that can make people sick. Is it safe to cut off the moldy part of food and eat the rest? Read on to find out!

What are Molds?

Molds are tiny organisms with roots and branches like very thin threads. By the time you see mold on food—like the gray fur on forgotten bologna—tiny roots are deep within the food. Sometimes poisonous substances called toxins spread throughout the food.

How Can You Control Mold Growth?



- Clean the inside of the refrigerator every few months. Use 1 tablespoon baking soda mixed in a quart of water. Rinse with clear water and dry.
- Scrub visible mold (usually black) on refrigerator rubber casings. Use 3 tablespoons bleach mixed in a quart of water.
- Keep dishcloths, towels, sponges, and mops clean. Throw away items you can't clean.

How Can You Protect Food From Mold?

- Keep foods covered.
- Empty opened cans of perishable foods into clean storage containers and refrigerate right away.
- Don't leave perishable food out of the refrigerator more than 2 hours.
- Don't give mold a chance to grow—use leftovers within 3-4 days.

How Should You Handle Moldy Food?

- Don't sniff the moldy food.
- If the food is covered with mold, put it in a small paper bag or wrap it with plastic and throw it away.
- Clean the spot where the food was stored. Check nearby foods since mold can spread quickly.

Mold usually cannot reach deep into hard or dense foods like hard cheese and firm vegetables like cabbage, carrots, and bell peppers. It's OK to cut small mold spots off these foods and use the rest. Cut off at least 1 inch around and below the mold spot. Keep the knife out of the mold itself so it will not cross-contaminate other parts of the food.

Source: USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline fact sheet, Molds on Food: Are They Dangerous? April 2002. <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/pubs/molds.htm>.

Local Family Nutrition Program:



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