



Grandparents Corner

March 2012

Nutrition for Growing Bodies

All of us want to raise happy, healthy and successful kids. Children and teens need the right foods for growing, learning and developing. Providing them with foods and beverages that contain plenty of nutrients at every meal and snack time is very essential.

It is important to have choices from every food group. When children fill up on high-quality nutrition for their bodies and brain, they will have less room for the nutrient poor choices such as chips, soft drinks, candy and desserts.

Below is general information on the four food groups.

Whole-Grain Foods with Carbohydrates, Fiber, B-Vitamins and More - The explosion of new grain products on grocery shelves with more options makes it hard to know which ones to pick. Choose items that list whole grain as the first or second ingredient on the label. Whole grain cereals, white whole wheat bread for sandwiches, whole grain crackers for snacks, and whole-grain pastas for dinner.

Fruits and Vegetables with Antioxidants, Vitamins A and C, Potassium and Fiber Choosing any fruits and vegetables fresh, frozen, canned, dried or with 100 percent juice is a choice you can not go wrong with. For children and adults, eating more fruits and vegetables at every meal is important for health.

Low-Fat Dairy Foods with Protein, Calcium, Potassium, Magnesium and Phosphorus Most children in America do not get enough calcium or potassium even though the nutrients in this group are so important. Fortunately, it's easy to obtain the three daily dairy servings they need in products such as an 8-ounce glass of low-fat milk at all meals, yogurt parfaits at breakfast or snack, or string cheese for an energy snack.

Lean Meat/Poultry/Fish/Eggs/Beans/Nuts with Protein, Iron Zinc and B-Vitamins While most children eat plenty of protein at lunch and dinner, they usually do not with breakfast or snacks. Just starting their day with eggs, bean burritos or last night's leftovers could help with growing muscles or active brains. Good snack ideas include nuts, peanut butter or sliced deli meats.

Healthy eating, at any age, raises energy levels, boosts the immune system and protects the body against illnesses. People in an advanced stage of illness will require special nutritional attention. Read the issue and answer True or False to the questions below.

1. A senior will not enjoy meals if dentures are uncomfortable. T F
2. We eat with our eyes before we ever touch our food, so make sure eye glasses fit correctly. T F
3. Excessive liquids during meals will not cause older adults to lose their appetite.
T F
4. An older adult's body absorbs fewer nutrients, so they must eat high-nutrient foods to maintain good health. T F
5. Refined food lacks fiber and contributes to constipation. T F
6. Sometimes, emotional, physical or medical conditions cause a person to lose their desire to eat. T F
7. Older adults are more likely than younger adults to contract foodborne illnesses.
T F
8. As long as you wash your hands, you can still prepare food for others if you have diarrhea or have been vomiting. T F
9. It is important to check with the doctor before starting any special diets, especially for the person with a swallowing impairment. T F
10. Use a food thermometer to ensure that foods are cooked to a safe internal temperature. T F

KEY: 1. T 2. T 3. F 4. T 5. T 6. T 7. T 8. F 9. T 10. T