

Healthy Weight

INITIATIVE

NEWSLETTER



LOAD UP ON FRUITS AND VEGGIES

Did you know that?

- Eating more fruits and veggies can mean better skin, fewer wrinkles, healthier teeth and gums, and healthier weight!
- Many foods today have high salt and high sugar content which kids can get used to and even crave.
- Fruits and vegetables are a natural source of energy and give the body many nutrients you need to keep going.

Let your kids know that

- Calcium helps them grow taller
- Iron will help them do better on tests
- Fruits and veggies are energy boosters!
- They can have 7-9 servings per day!

What is a serving size?

- Fruits
 - 1 banana 6 strawberries
 - 2 plums 15 grapes
 - 1 apple 1 peach
 - ½ cup of orange or other 100% fruit juice
- Vegetables
 - 10 baby carrots
 - 1 roma tomato
 - ¾ cup tomato juice
 - ½ baked sweet potato
 - 1 ear of corn
 - 4 slices of onion

How do I get children to eat more Fruits and Veggies?

- Try making smoothies or slushes.
- Put some grapes or bananas in the freezer.
- Serve raw vegetables with ranch dip or salsa

Timely Tips

- Add veggies or fruit to the baked goods your family already loves. Blueberry pancakes and carrot muffins are tasty and healthy.
- Serve your soups, stews and sauces with extra veggies.
- Serve apple slices or grapes with peanut butter. Or maybe a peanut butter and banana sandwich? Or stuffed celery?

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YOU AND THE FLU

The question continues - should my family and I get a flu shot?

Many parents are confused whether or not to get the flu shot. One minute they hear that if you get the flu shot, you are more likely to get the flu, while others seem to swear by the flu shot.

Here we will address some of the flu myths once and for all.

MYTH 1: The flu shot will give you the flu.

No, getting a flu shot cannot cause you to get the flu. The flu viruses that are in the flu shot are inactivated, or killed which means that it can't cause infection.

MYTH 2: It is better to get the flu than the flu vaccine.

No. Flu is a serious disease, especially among young children, older adults, and anyone with certain chronic conditions like heart disease, asthma, diabetes, or someone with cancer who is undergoing chemotherapy. Any variation of the flu can pass on dangerous complications, hospitalization or even death, even amid healthy adults and children. Getting vaccinated is definitely the safer choice.

MYTH 3: I don't need to get the flu vaccine every year.

This is not true. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) suggests getting a yearly flu vaccine for just about everyone six months of age and older. The reason for this is because a person's immune protection from vaccination declines over time.

You might wonder "how does the flu spread"? Well, people spread the flu. People that have the flu can spread it to others up to about six feet away. It is believed that flu viruses are spread mainly by droplets made when people with the flu cough, sneeze, or even talk. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others one day before symptoms begin to appear, and up to seven days after becoming sick with the flu. Children may pass the virus for longer than seven days. Symptoms begin one to four days after the flu virus has entered the body. In layman's terms that means you can pass the flu on to someone else before you even know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

The CDC recommends that every child over six months of age be given the flu vaccine, and also states that it is beneficial for the following:

- Children and infants
- Women that are pregnant
- The elderly
- People with disabilities
- People with other health conditions
- People that travel and live abroad.

The flu vaccine has been shown to prevent disease and death, both in numerous controlled studies and in painstaking scientific reviews of these studies. The CDC reports that vaccination is a cost-effective counter-measure to seasonal outbreaks of the flu.

For more information you can visit www.cdc.gov/flu



Fruits and Veggies, continued from page 1

Make sure your School supports You!

Check to see if your school has published its food policies like:

- NO food rewards
- Water and fruit served at school events
- Healthy or no food fundraisers

Make sure YOU support Your School!

- Help organize a Family Fun night
- Start a school garden or help with an existing one
- Share health snack recipes with other parents thru school newsletter
- Give teacher's healthy options

Lots of schools are working to engage parents and students in healthy behaviors. Some ideas we have seen include family fun nights, where parents are invited to school to see what their kids are doing in PE, taste some samples from school meals and meet community groups that can help make being active and eating healthy easy and fun.

Many schools have started school gardens, a great way to teach kids where foods come from, they can use math and science skills and ultimately they will get to taste what they have grown!

There are many options, so be creative and come up with your own, or visit the Action for Healthy Kids website to find more!

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN THE WINTER

Winter weather is notorious for extending an invitation to spend evenings inside on the couch with cozy blankets and mugs of hot cocoa. Physical activity may fall off of our schedules, as we succumb to the slump of winter. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, only 29.3% of adults in Alabama meet the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines of 150 minutes of moderate activity each week.

Physical activity is beneficial for our health in many ways. It can reduce our chances of developing certain diseases, such as Type 2 Diabetes, help us maintain a healthy weight, reduce the risk of colon and breast cancers, improve our mental health, and strengthen our bones and muscles.

While cold weather may make it difficult to enjoy time spent being physically active outside, winter offers an opportunity to spice up our indoor activities:

- Family game night. Dig up the old Twister mat and twist up your evening routine with this classic game. It will keep you and your family entertained while stretching and strengthening your muscles.
- Dance parties. Whether you are spending your evening alone or have a family of five, dancing is an activity that can be enjoyed by anyone and anywhere! Turn up your favorite tunes, slip on your dancing shoes and get moving!
- Commercial breaks. Love to watch TV? No problem. Each time a commercial comes on, find an activity to do until your show begins again. This could be

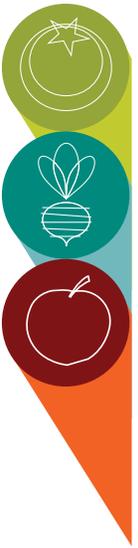
as simple as walking in place, lifting weights, or doing jumping jacks. A program lasting one hour could have up to 15-20 minutes of commercials, allowing you to complete half of the recommended 30 minutes of physical activity per day!

- Make a meal. Ordering in can be tempting, especially when the weather is dreary. However, cooking meals yourself can save you from consuming unhealthy calories and gets you up and moving in the kitchen. Try some comfort food recipes or winter soups and stews from www.eatingwell.com.

Physical activity can be done anytime and anywhere - the trick is to be creative and have fun!



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NEWS AND EVENTS

SCALE BACK ALABAMA 2014

Scale Back Alabama is a statewide contest held in January each year to encourage Alabamians to lose weight, exercise, and have fun while doing it. The 2014 contest begins soon! We encourage you and your school to participate. There is no cost to take part in Scale Back Alabama. The contest is for adults age 18 and older. Visit www.scalebackalabama.com for more details.

When: January 18- 24, 2014

Where: Statewide, weigh in locations will be on the website in January.

OBESITY TASK FORCE TASK FORCE

Attend the state obesity task force meeting to network with partners from across the state who are working on obesity issues in adults and youth. Learn about programs and strategies that create healthier lifestyles and environments. Task force meetings are open to the public.

When: February 2014, for date check on www.adph.org/obesity.

Where: Alabama Power Company, Clanton
What time: 9:00am until noon

LEARNING ALL DAY, EVERY DAY!

Beyond School Hours XVII Annual Conference
Foundations for a Bright Future, Inc is having their annual conference on February 12-15, 2014 at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta, Atlanta Georgia. BSH is the only event of its kind offering the latest tools and insights for improving outcomes for young people across the entire day. To register or for more information contact Foundations, Inc. 888-977-5437 or visit www.foundationsinc.org/beyond-school-hours-xvii.

NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

“Eat Right, Your Way, Every Day”

National Nutrition Month is a nutrition education and information campaign held annually by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. Contact: [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics nm@eatright.org](mailto:nm@eatright.org) or visit www.eatright.org.

When: March 2014