



Nutrition Edition

Your Guide to Child Health and Nutrition



Nutrition Edition
Issue 92

CCFPRoundtable.org

Eat Your Way to a Healthier Planet

EATING A PLANT BASED DIET is not only good for our own health, it is also good for Mother Earth. The environmental benefits of a plant based diet include slowing deforestation, lowering pollution and reducing water use, among other things. With 7 billion people to feed, approaching 9 billion by 2050, it is now more important than ever to shift the way we produce and consume our food. Using land to grow crops for human consumption is by far more efficient than raising livestock; it takes almost 20 times less land to produce a plant based diet because the food is consumed directly rather than being used to feed animals. More than half of the water used in the United States is for animal agriculture; in order to produce 1 pound of beef, 2,400 gallons of water are used, whereas producing 1 pound of wheat only requires 25 gallons.

Plant based diets are also nutritious. Benefits such as lowering risk for obesity, heart disease and Type 2 diabetes can be achieved by focusing on foods primarily from plants. Include fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, whole grains, legumes and beans as well as healthy fats such as olive oil, nut and seed



butters and avocados. With so much delicious variety you may not even miss meat!

Follow these suggestions for a more healthful you and your planet.

VEGGIE SUPERSTARS

If you look at your plate and see a super-sized serving of meat and a scant few vegetables, this is the perfect opportunity to make a change. Choose My Plate recommends at least half your plate to be fruits and veggies. Another strategy is to add a veggie at snack time; try crunching on bell pepper strips or carrots rather than high sodium, processed

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DID YOU KNOW...

- **Earth Day is April 22, 2019**, a day to teach our children about how to care for the earth.
- Meat production is responsible for more greenhouse gases than all the world's transportation systems combined.
- **April is Child Abuse Prevention Month**
- More than 70% of the children who died as a result of child abuse or neglect were two years of age or younger. More than 80% were not yet old enough for kindergarten.
- **Screen time Awareness Week is April 29–May 5.** Screen time for children under three is linked to delayed language acquisition and time at screens increases rapidly between their 1st and 2nd birthday.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no screen time for children under 2 years of age.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, ChildHelp.org, American Academy of Pediatrics, National Safety Council

Quotable Quotes

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

– Maya Angelou

INSIDE:

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- Recipes
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- Food Funny

Eat Your Way to a Healthier Planet

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crackers or chips. Aim for a minimum of five servings of fruits and veggies per day. More is always better.

WHOLE GRAINS OFFER THE WHOLE PACKAGE

Experiment with “real” whole grains that are still in their “whole” form and haven’t been stripped of their valuable nutrients in the refining process. They are packed with fiber which has the added benefit of helping you feel full longer. Quinoa cooks up in just 20 minutes; toss with chickpeas and your favorite sautéed veggies for a great weeknight meal. Bulgur is full of fiber and is filling; pair it with sautéed mushrooms for a hearty, satisfying dish. A hot bowl of oatmeal is perfect for breakfast; add fruit or nuts for a healthy way to start the day. Even popcorn is a whole grain—keep it healthy by opting for air-popped corn and forgo the butter (try a drizzle of olive oil instead). Try switching your other main staples such as bread and pasta to the whole grain variety. Look for the term “whole” or “whole grain” on the food package and in the ingredient list—it should be listed as the first ingredient. If you struggle with replacing your refined favorites, try slowly phasing in a whole grain every other week. Alternate your shopping cart with whole wheat bread or pasta this week and get your favorite refined grains next week. You may be surprised to find your body and taste buds prefer the more nutritious variety!

GO NUTS FOR PROTEIN

Nuts are a Mediterranean diet staple for a good reason. Nuts contain more protein, fiber and minerals than processed snack foods and are packed full of healthy fats. Grab a handful of almonds, cashews or pistachios for a satisfying, on-the-go snack. Replacing standard snack foods such as chips, crackers, fruit roll ups, snack mix and cereal bars, with nuts can lower our intake of empty calories, added sugar and sodium and help us feel full longer than traditional snack foods, thanks to their higher protein content.



ADD FISH

Fish is a much healthier animal protein option for our bodies and the planet because of its lower carbon footprint and higher omega-3 fatty acid content. Due to mercury and other toxins, certain fish: tilefish, swordfish, shark and king mackerel, should be avoided, especially by children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. Wild caught salmon, sardines, herring, tilapia and anchovies are all great choices for their low mercury content. Limit fish to no more than 3 servings a week. If you currently don’t get a lot of fish in your diet, try to designate one day each week as “fish” night. Cooking fish in foil packets is a simple no-fuss, no-mess way to create a delicious dinner. Try incorporating fish into some of your favorite foods like tacos, stir-frys, salads and soups.

Consider making a commitment to the earth and yourself by taking steps to move toward a more healthful and sustainable diet. Don’t feel overwhelmed by the idea of a dietary overhaul. Start small and make changes gradually with the goal of upgrading your food choices over time. Becoming a “flexitarian”, eating a primarily plant based diet with the occasional added meat, could be a healthy compromise for you and the planet. To start, try one meatless day per week, gradually working up to more. Also, limit the serving size of meat on your plate and instead make vegetables the star attraction!

— Rachel O’Neal
Child Health and Nutrition Specialist

KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

THIS MONTH recognizes the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse and neglect and the role we can all play to support parents and strengthen families. Parenting is hard work; in fact, it may be the toughest job you'll ever love.



Every family has strengths and every family faces challenges. Protective factors are the strengths and resources that families draw on when life gets difficult. These are some simple ways to build on these strengths to keep the family strong:

- Establish a daily routine so your child knows what to expect.
- “Catch” your child being good.
- Teach your child to resolve conflicts peacefully.
- Join a Girl Scout or Boy Scout troop with your child.
- Get outside...Start a parent-child walking or hiking club with neighbors.
- Make a play date with friends who have children the same age as yours.
- Host a potluck dinner with neighborhood families to swap parenting stories.
- Hold, cuddle and hug your children often.
- Have a family game night.
- Create some arts or crafts with your child.
- Volunteer at your child's school.
- Reflect on the parenting you received as a child and the impact on how you parent.
- Find and join a local parenting group, check out MeetUp.com.
- Set goals for yourself and list the steps you will need to take to accomplish them.
- Talk to a trusted friend when you feel stressed, overwhelmed or sad.

- Organize a “Clothes Swap Potluck” to swap children's clothes.
- Sign up for classes offered at the library or community center.
- Make time for something YOU enjoy.
- Treat yourself to a spa day at home; enjoy a bubble bath, facial mask & paint your nails.

Parents want to do their best but might need some help along the way. Resources available to help build safe, stable and nurturing relationships with your child, as you become a more confident parent.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Website “Essentials for Parents” addresses common parenting challenges and positive parenting techniques, with videos and activities to help reinforce new skills in parenting.

Zero to Three and **First 5 California** support early development and connect families to the services and support they need to give their children a healthier tomorrow.

Child Abuse Prevention Council in your county promotes the safety of children by providing support programs such as parenting classes and comprehensive parent resource guides.

Dial 2-1-1 or visit 211.org for free referral services to supplemental food programs, food banks, SNAP, WIC, clothing closets, shelters, rent assistance, support groups, health insurance programs, Medicare and Medicaid, employment and educational opportunities. Every day thousands of people nationwide turn to this free, confidential referral helpline that connects people to the essential health and human services they need, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Prevention efforts build on family strengths and foster confident, positive parenting. This month and throughout the year, through prevention activities, families can find the support they need to stay together and meet their child's emotional, physical and developmental needs.

— Adapted from *ChildWelfare.gov, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Spinach Gratin

Spinach, fresh 3 pounds (or 24 ounces of frozen spinach, thawed and drained)	Nutmeg 3/4 tsp
Salt and pepper to taste	Pepper 1/8 tsp
Milk 2 cups	Gruyere cheese, grated 2 ounces
Butter 2 Tbsp	Eggs, hard-boiled 8
Flour 2 Tbsp	Bread crumbs, seasoned 4 Tbsp
	Olive oil 1-2 Tbsp

1. Blanch fresh spinach in boiling water for 1 minute, drain, cool, press out water and chop. Place in a large bowl. Season to taste and set aside.
2. To make béchamel, heat milk in saucepan until steamy. In a separate saucepan, melt butter, sprinkle in flour, whisking mixture until smooth. Slowly pour in the hot milk, and simmer, whisking constantly. Sauce will thicken as it cools. Season with nutmeg, pepper and stir sauce into spinach.
3. Grease a 2-quart oblong, baking dish. Pour spinach mixture into pan, sprinkle with grated cheese. Slice hard boiled eggs in half and arrange, cut side up, on spinach mixture, pressing so that cut side of eggs are level with the spinach. Sprinkle with bread crumbs and drizzle with olive oil. (You can make the gratin a day ahead to this point and chill.)

Bake, uncovered in a 375°F oven for 25–30 minutes, until browned.

Yield: 10 servings

Meets requirement for meat/meat alternate and vegetable — *Adapted from Simply Recipes*

Moroccan Vegetable Soup with Chickpeas & Lentils

Olive oil 4 Tbsp	Chick peas, dried, soaked overnight 1 cup
Onion, diced 1	Parsley, chopped 1 bunch, <i>divided</i>
Celery, diced 3 stalks	Cilantro, chopped 1 bunch, <i>divided</i>
Carrots, sliced 3	Lentils, green 1 cup
Turmeric 1/2 tsp	Pepper 1 tsp
Cumin 1 tsp	Flour 2 Tbsp
Harissa or dried red chile flakes (optional) 1/2 tsp	Egg 1
Salt to taste	Lemon juice 1/4 cup
Tomatoes, crushed 1 (15-ounce) can	Water 2 cups
Chicken or vegetable stock 7 cups	

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet and sauté the onion, celery and carrots until tender and just starting to brown. Add turmeric, cumin, harissa, salt, tomatoes, stock, chickpeas and 1 cup each of the parsley and cilantro. Simmer for 25 minutes, then add the lentils and continue simmering until chickpeas and lentils are cooked, about 20 minutes more.
2. Whisk the flour, egg and lemon juice into water and stir into the soup. Simmer the soup about 5 minutes more. Serve with reserved parsley and cilantro.

Yield: 10 servings

Meets requirement for meat/meat alternate and vegetable — *King Solomon's Table*

ACTIVITY CORNER

Bunny Activity and a Snack

Hopping Through the Hoops

Preschoolers will have a good time jumping (hopping) from one hoop to the next on both feet, just like a bunny. This is a good way to challenge your group's boundless physical energy and a fun time to share together. You will need several hula hoops to set on the floor in any design that you like, about one foot apart. Encourage the children to hop on both feet from one hoop to the next.

Egg Hunt

Hiding, finding and re-hiding eggs can be an active sport, especially when you open it up to the backyard and use colorful plastic eggs.


Deviled Egg Bunnies

For a healthy snack make deviled eggs with yolks, mayo and mustard. Add radish or carrot slice ears, capers for eyes and a little parsley, cauliflower or broccoli for a tail.



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This Nutrition Edition is brought to you by:

and is produced by:



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Food Q. How do you know carrots are good for your eyes?
Funny A. Have you ever seen a rabbit wearing glasses!