

SPRING
2015



NUTRITION NEWS


WHAT'S NEW IN SCHOOL FOOD?

Fruits & Veggies: Center of the School Plate

Did you know? Every school breakfast and lunch must include fruits and/or veggies, such as:

- Greens: Spinach, broccoli, collards, kale
- Red and orange veggies: Red peppers, carrots, sweet potatoes
- Legumes: Chickpeas, lentils, kidney beans
- Fruit: Fresh fruit and frozen, canned or dried fruit with minimal added sweeteners.

The new school meal standards mean students:

- Have access to a wider variety of fruits & veggies 
- Are offered larger fruit and vegetable portions
- Are required to take at least ½ cup of fruits or veggies with every reimbursable school breakfast and lunch

And during lunch, veggies are becoming the star of the plate in menu items such as:

- Vegetarian Picadillo Burrito
- Southwestern Mixed Vegetable Salad
- Mediterranean Vegetable Wrap

These new guidelines appear to be positively affecting fruit and vegetable selection and consumption among students. In a recent study of over 1,000 school children, significantly more students selected fruit and more students were eating vegetables than prior to the 2012 introduction of the new school meal standards¹.

And beyond the cafeteria, fruits and vegetables are becoming the star now more than ever as school garden programs continue to grow.

Garden program benefits include:

- Students learning real-life gardening skills
- Classroom lessons focusing on nutrition and the environment
- Increased fruit and vegetable consumption. Children who garden are more likely to eat fruits and vegetables and have healthier lifestyles.

Want more information?

To find out which fruits and vegetables are being served at your school, check out the weekly menu or talk to your school cafeteria manager.

¹ Cohen JF, et al. "Impact of the New USDA School Meal Standards on Food Selection, Consumption and Waste." American Journal of Preventive Medicine 2014; 46(4):388-



Since everyone's health history and nutritional needs are so different, please make sure that you talk with your doctor and a registered dietitian to get advice about a diet and exercise plan that's right for you. [visit myhealthyforlife.com](http://www.myhealthyforlife.com)



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FRESH & HEALTHY

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE TIPS

Fruits & Veggies: Center of the Family Plate

Did you know that everyone in your family should be eating at least two cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables every day?


While that may seem like an impossible task, there are many ways you can get everyone in your family into the habit of eating and enjoying fruits and veggies more often.

Whether they are fresh, frozen or canned, fruits and vegetables deserve to be the star on your family's plates.

Top 10 Ways to Get Your Family Excited About Eating More Fruits & Veggies:

- 1) Serve chopped tomatoes, lettuce, peppers and beans to stuff burritos or top tacos.
- 2) Add diced cooked carrots, onions or zucchini to tomato sauce and blend.
- 3) Make fruit-infused waters with berry ice cubes or chunks of watermelon or cantaloupe and fresh mint. (Or blend and freeze to make popsicles!)
- 4) Make individual veggie pizzas with mushrooms, olives and peppers using whole wheat pita bread or English muffins as the crust.
- 5) Visit a "pick-your-own" fruit or veggie farm or your local farmers market each week.
- 6) Grow your own in an outdoor garden or use potted plants for small spaces.
- 7) Whip up fruit smoothies with frozen fruit, low-fat plain yogurt and milk in a blender.
- 8) Make different veggie "chips" of kale or thinly-sliced sweet potatoes or turnips.
- 9) Top breakfast pancakes, waffles, cold cereal and oatmeal with chopped apples, pears or berries.
- 10) Dip raw broccoli, cauliflower, snap peas and carrot sticks into hummus,

When serving veggies, let the kids decide how much they want. Suggest a "try it" or "tasting" bite but avoid making them eat a certain amount before they can leave the table or have dessert. That just gives vegetables a bad name and we want vegetables to be the superstars at mealtime!

And remember, if your child sees you loving your fruit and  veggies, they are more likely to do the same.



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ASK THE DIETITIAN

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Q. What are the beverage choices in my child's school?

A. Under the new federal regulations, your child will have multiple options, including:

- Access to free water during meal periods
- 1% low-fat unflavored milk and flavored or unflavored fat-free milk
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice

There are maximum serving sizes for most beverages depending on your child's grade. Only water, milk and juice may be sold to students in grades K-8.

Q. I've always heard adults should drink eight glasses of water a day. Is this true for kids, too?

A. Yes. Younger children should drink at least seven glasses while teens need eight to ten glasses (or more if they are very active) each day. Hint: Get your kids into the habit of bringing a water bottle with them to school to encourage consumption throughout the day.

Q. My child doesn't really like to drink water. Is juice okay for hydration?

A. In small amounts, 100% fruit and/or vegetable juice is fine, but should not be the main contributor to your child's total beverage intake. Instead, try to make water more appealing by:

- Adding orange, lemon or lime slices
- Freezing berries in ice cubes and adding to the water
- Mixing seltzer with a few splashes of juice
- Using a favorite cup or straw

Many fruits and vegetables have high water content so they also can contribute to hydration – one more reason to eat more fruits & veggies!

Q. Do kids need to drink sports drinks if they are very active or participate in sports?

A. When it comes to outdoor play or organized team sports, plain water is the best beverage for hydrating the majority of kids. Taking regular water breaks every 20 minutes is a good rule of thumb. Your child's age, weight, the intensity of the sport and weather conditions all play into whether or not sports drinks are necessary.

For example, a teen male running cross-country for more than an hour on a hot day may benefit from the carbohydrates and electrolytes in a sports drink. For the most part, however, frequent drinks of water before, during, and after activity are the best way to go.