

School Wellness News

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Distribute copies to interested staff:
Superintendent
Principal
Business Manager
School Food Service
School Counselor
FACS, PE, Health,
Elementary Teachers
Wellness Committee
Members
Teacher Break Rooms
Parent Committees

Getting Kids to Eat More Whole Grains

The research is clear about the many health benefits gained from eating whole grains. These benefits include:

- ◆ Stroke risk reduction by 30-36%
- ◆ Type 2 diabetes risk reduced 21-30%
- ◆ Heart disease risk reduced 25-28%
- ◆ Better weight management.

Getting kids to eat whole grains now leads to a lifelong habit of whole grain intake. At least 3 servings per day provide the most pronounced health benefits. Whole grains are rich in phytonutrients, antioxidants, fiber, vitamins and minerals. (Resource: www.wholegrainscouncil.org)

University of Minnesota Extension has available a training CD for school foodservice staff entitled *Keeping Kids from Falling Short: Introducing Whole Grain Foods in the School Cafeteria*. To order the CD, shop Extension at

<http://shop.extension.umn.edu/ProgramList.aspx?CategoryID=23>.

Ten tips to get kids to eat their whole grains:

1. Serve whole wheat bread and buns. Make a sandwich with 1 slice whole wheat bread and 1 slice white bread.
2. Serve only whole grain cereals for the breakfast program. Limit cereals with sugar content to 10 grams or less.
3. Serve oatmeal with toppings.
4. Purchase pizza with a whole grain crust using whole wheat flour.
5. Use whole wheat pasta in salads.
6. Serve whole grain pancakes using whole wheat flour.
7. Serve oatmeal cookies, rather than other types of cookies.
8. For vending, offer multi-grain chips or granola bars.
9. Promote whole grains in the cafeteria by hanging posters from the Whole Grain Council or other resource.
10. Let kids know you think whole grains are tasty and delicious.

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Stability Balls in the Classroom

Stability balls are now being used in school classrooms to enhance the learning environment and provide ergonomic seating. A good resource to learn more about stability balls is the WittFitt Company: www.wittfitt.com. The benefits given by WittFitt for students using stability balls:

- ◆ Assists in improving posture
- ◆ Allows for “active sitting” with little to no disturbance
- ◆ Enhances attention and concentration
- ◆ Promotes learning through movement
- ◆ Improves balance and coordination
- ◆ Strengthens core muscles
- ◆ Improves blood circulation

Balls instead of chairs in the classroom are sure to be a hit with students.



March Campaign 09 for Food Shelves

What is the March Campaign?

It is the largest food and fund drive in the state for food shelves. The March Campaign is responsible for more than half of the food distributed each year at food shelves in the state of Minnesota.

There has been a 13 percent increase in visitors to Minnesota food shelves and less than a three percent increase in food donations. The goal of this year’s campaign is **10 million pounds and dollars**. The need is rising but the donations are not keeping up. Many families with children depend on food shelves for food.

To learn more about the March Campaign visit the website at:

www.gmcc.org/foodshare/marchcampaign or call 1-888-315-7390.

How can schools help?

- ◆ Organize a food and/or fund drive for your local food shelf during the month of March. Contact your food shelf to talk to them about what kind of donations you should collect.
 - ◆ Classrooms can forgo a party in lieu of bringing in items for the food shelf.
 - ◆ Encourage cash donations—Food shelves can stretch donations of cash further than donations of food because of their access to discount products and programs.
 - ◆ Use the campaign as an opportunity to teach students about hunger issues in your community, in the country, and globally.
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Great Reasons to Serve Carrots

Carrots are one of those vegetables that you should always have on hand. Adults and kids like them for their sweet taste and crunchy texture. They have excellent nutrient content and are economical to serve.

Carrots are an excellent source of antioxidant compounds and the richest vegetable source of pro-vitamin A carotene. Carrots' antioxidant compounds help protect against cardiovascular disease and cancer and also promote good vision, especially night vision.

To get the most nutritional value from your carrots, slightly cook them. Over cooking results in significant nutrient loss.

Carrot Nutrition Facts

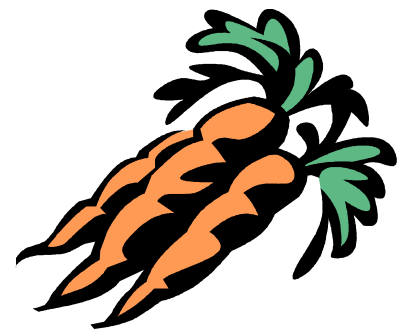
1 cup of carrots provides the following:

- ◆ 428% Daily Value of Vitamin A
- ◆ 21% Daily Value of Vitamin K
- ◆ 13% Daily Value of Vitamin C
- ◆ 12% Daily Value of Potassium
- ◆ 14% Daily Value of Fiber

Baby Carrots

Ever wonder how baby carrots are grown? Baby carrots actually are made from regular carrots. To make baby carrots, large carrots are cut every two inches and then peeled in a spinner.

Today, 70% of carrots eaten are baby carrots. The popularity of baby carrots is no doubt due to their convenience and economical cost.



Apple Carrot Salad

Servings: 6

Serving Size: 1/2 cup

Ingredients

1 cup shredded carrot
 3 (medium) unpared and diced apples
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1/2 cup low-fat mayonnaise

Directions:

Combine all ingredients. Chill thoroughly.

Recipes from Fruits and Veggies Matter, CDC

Carrot Raisin Salad

Servings: 4

Serving Size: 1/2 cups

Ingredients

4 carrots (medium) shredded
 1/4 cup raisins
 2 teaspoons sugar
 Juice of 1 lemon or 3 tablespoons lemon juice

Directions

In a medium bowl, thoroughly mix carrots, raisins, sugar and lemon. Serve chilled.

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University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

University of Minnesota Extension connects research-based resources to communities. This newsletter provides information to help implement your local school wellness policy and teach kids and families about nutrition and active living.

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Teaching Students About Whole Grains

It is fun to tie teaching about whole grains to reading, geography, science, family consumer science, and health subject matter.

For reliable evidence-based information about Whole Grains search the Whole Grains Council website www.wholegrainscouncil.org.

Curriculum Resource

Power of 3: Get Healthy with Whole Grain Foods is a free school-based curriculum available from the University of Minnesota Extension. It is designed to increase intake of whole grain foods by elementary school students in grades 3 through 6 and is downloadable from Extension's website: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/Health>.

Ideas to teach about whole grains at any grade level:

- ◆ Name the parts of the grain kernel and nutritional content of the different parts of the grain kernel.
- ◆ Find whole grains that we eat locally and globally.

- ◆ Read food labels to look for whole grains, especially cereal and bread choices.
- ◆ Plan meal scenarios using whole grain food items.
- ◆ Taste test whole grains. For example, try different cereals in a trail mix or compare 100% whole wheat bread to white bread.
- ◆ Cook whole grains in the classroom. Hot oatmeal makes a winter treat when served with fun toppings.

Community Resource for Whole Grains

County Extension—Nutrition Education Assistants are able to teach about whole grains and other topics in schools with 50% free and reduced lunch participation. Contact your local County Extension Office and talk to a Nutrition Education Assistant about availability.

National Go Red Day is February 6, 2009. Wear red to show support of women's heart disease awareness. The red dress is the national symbol for women and heart disease awareness.