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Jump Into Foods and Fitness Family Newsletter

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High Five for Good Health!

Did you know fruits and vegetables are nature's original fast foods? They're tasty and delicious and provide important vitamins, minerals and fiber. We can eat fruits and vegetables at any time – and they make great snacks! Eating fruits and vegetables with every meal and snack is important to help us stay healthy.

Today, during the Jump Into Foods and Fitness (JIFF) program, the children learned about the importance of eating more fruits and vegetables in a rainbow of colors every day. Add fruits and vegetables to your favorite dishes, such as pizza, lasagna casseroles, soups and desserts.

In general, recommended daily amounts for the vegetable group range from 1½ to 3 cups for children aged 8 to 11 where 1 cup of raw or cooked vegetables or 100 percent vegetable juice, or 2 cups of raw leafy greens are equal to 1 cup. Recommended daily amounts for the fruit group range from 1½ to 2 cups for children aged 8 to 11 where 1 cup of fruit or 100 percent fruit juice, or ½ cup of dried fruit, are equal to 1 cup. Amounts are based on age, gender and activity level. You can visit <http://www.mypyramid.gov> to get specific recommendations for your child.

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The Food Safety Zone:

Wash Before You Bite!

Wash fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly before cutting them to help remove any dirt or dust from their surfaces. Use a soft brush on potatoes, cantaloupes and other hard-surfaced fruits and vegetables. Soak fragile fruits and vegetables such as grapes and spinach in water for a few minutes, then rinse.

Cut vegetables with a sharp, clean knife. Dull knives can bruise and damage the food, which can make it spoil faster.

Store fresh fruits and vegetables (except for bananas and potatoes) in the refrigerator after cutting to maintain freshness and slow spoiling.

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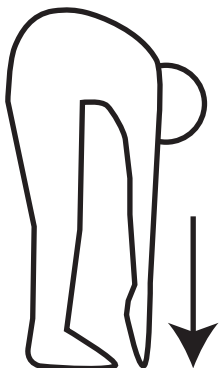
Family Fitness Fun

A proper warm-up before exercise helps to stretch muscles and prevent injury. Try doing some fun warm up exercises with your child before they begin vigorous activity.

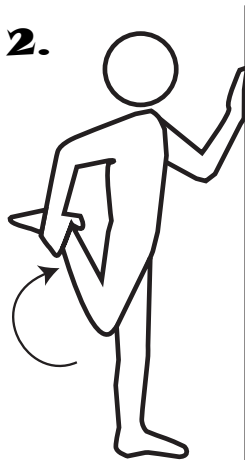
1. Stand with your legs about shoulder-width apart. Slowly reach toward the ground (without bending your knees) and hold for 5 to 15 seconds.
2. With your right arm, reach back and pull your right ankle up toward your back. Use a wall to keep yourself balanced. Switch sides.

3. Place your left hand on the under side of the upper part of your right arm and pull it across your chest. Hold for 8 to 12 seconds. Repeat on the other side.
4. Slowly walk for 5 minutes to get your heart rate up before running or jogging.
5. Cooling down is just as important as warming up. A 5-minute cool down allows heart rate and breathing to return to normal. Repeat the same activities that you did in the warm up for an effective cool down.

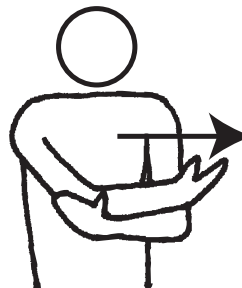
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RECIPE FUN:

Stuffed Baked Sweet Potatoes*

* Adapted from the North Carolina Sweet Potato Commission Inc.

Children can help with this recipe by scrubbing the potatoes and helping stuff them with the sweet potato-pineapple mixture.

Ingredients:

- 6 medium sweet potatoes
- ½ cup orange juice
- 3 tablespoons margarine
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 1 eight-ounce can crushed pineapple, drained

Equipment:

- Oven
- Vegetable brush
- Paper towels
- Paring knife
- Lightly greased baking sheet
- Liquid measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Serving spoons
- Can opener
- Medium mixing bowl
- Paper plates
- Disposable flatware
- Disposable napkins

Procedure:

1. All food preparers must wash their hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds before starting to prepare this recipe. Be sure that all work surfaces are clean.
2. Preheat oven to 375 °F. Use a vegetable brush to scrub sweet potato skins under running water. Towel the sweet potatoes dry.
3. Place sweet potatoes on lightly greased baking sheet and bake for 1 hour or until tender.
4. Remove the potatoes from the oven and allow to cool slightly. Cut a 1-inch strip lengthwise out of the top of each potato. Use a serving spoon to carefully scoop the potato pulp from the shells.
5. Combine the sweet potato pulp, orange juice, margarine and salt in a medium mixing bowl. Beat until fluffy. Stir the pineapple into the mixture.
6. Stuff the potato shells with the sweet potato-pineapple mixture.
7. Place the potatoes back on the baking sheet and bake at 375 °F for 10 minutes.
8. Remove from the oven and serve.

Makes 6 servings.

As Your Child Grows

This is a good time to help your child develop or improve his or her communication skills. One idea is to ask open-ended questions, instead of yes-or-no type questions. (For example, ask your child to “Tell me about what you did today during your foods and fitness activities” or to “Describe the most interesting thing you did.”) Also, wait a few seconds so the child has a chance to gather his or her thoughts before speaking. Encourage your child to talk about his or her successes.

Go to the library and find children’s books on foods and fitness topics that interest your child. Encourage your child to read at least 3 hours a week for pleasure. Turn the television off and read a book to your children or have them read one to you!

On the Web

- Check out these Web sites with your child:
- CDC’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Program: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/>
- 5 a Day the Color Way <http://www.5aday.com>
- National Cancer Institute Eat 5 to 9 a Day for Better Health: <http://5aday.nci.nih.gov/>
- President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports: <http://www.fitness.gov>
- Activate: <http://www.kidnetic.com>