



Healthy Smoothies, Healthy Drinks

Objectives

- ▶ Youth will explore the importance for healthy drinks.
- ▶ Youth will be able to make a smoothie with fruits and vegetables.

Materials needed

- Blender
- Extension cord
- Measuring cups
- Variety of fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables
- Liquid: milk, 100 percent fruit juice, water
- Yogurt (fat-free or low-fat)
- Peanut butter or alternative nut butters (optional*)
- Cups
- Spoons
- Paper towels
- Handouts (Ingredients and Vitamin/Mineral Cards)

*Some youth and adults are allergic to peanuts. It is important to know ahead of time if any youth have dietary restrictions.

Background

Smoothies are a great way for youth and adults to get closer to the recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables each day. According to the USDA Dietary Guideline, boys and girls ages 9–18 should have 4 to 6 cups of fruits and vegetables a day. Finding ways to get kids to increase their fruit and vegetable intake can be a challenge. Making a smoothie is an easy way for kids to make something they like and to experiment with various fruits and vegetables in their drink.



By selecting a variety of fruits and vegetables of multiple colors, youth can be exposed to the many benefits of various vitamins and minerals. We need vitamins and minerals to grow strong and be healthy. They also help us build a strong immune system to fight off diseases and illnesses now and in the future.

This activity gives kids the opportunity to taste fruits and vegetables blended together. Fruits and vegetables often taste different when blended together than they do on their own. Using their sense of taste, they can find the best combination for their taste buds.

BLENDER SAFETY

Remind youth about blender safety. Keep the lid on at all times when blending. Do not put fingers/hands into the canister at any time when it's attached to the blender. If the blender is not working, ask for help.

Activity with youth

1. Review the above information with the group, and explain what vitamins and minerals are important and why we need to have them every day. Print off the cards to share with groups.

Examples include:

- Calcium helps build strong teeth and bones.
 - Iron is needed to help deliver oxygen to every cell in the body.
 - Vitamin A helps with vision and promotes bone growth.
 - Vitamin K plays an important role in blood clotting.
2. Break the group into smaller groups of four to five people to a blender. Have the group look through the ingredients cards and the vitamin and mineral card to see what they might want to put together for a smoothie.
 3. All participants need to wash their hands before starting the recipe.
 4. A few members of the group should go up to the table of food with their group's blender canister and decide what fruits and vegetables to include in their smoothie. A liquid should be selected to make sure the blenders are able to function properly. Once the selections have been made, they take the blender canisters back to their groups for blending.
 5. After blending has taken place, have the team members taste test the results to see if something else is needed. Once the smoothie is at a desired taste, small cups can be used to allow all the team members a chance to enjoy the smoothie.
 6. An extra cup can be given to the leader/judge, and you can have a fun contest between groups to see which smoothie was liked the best.
 7. After the smoothies are enjoyed, rinse the canisters out and return them to the blenders.



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Questions to ask

- ▶ *What did you like about this activity?*
- ▶ *In what ways can you incorporate smoothies into your diet?*
- ▶ *Who else can you get involved in making smoothies?*
- ▶ *What did you learn about communicating with others?*
- ▶ *How did your group work together? How did you make decisions on what to put in your smoothie?*

Other important tips

- ▶ Frozen fruit will blend better than fresh fruit with ice.
- ▶ Encourage all groups to try vegetables in their smoothies; most will not affect the taste.
- ▶ Blender blades are sharp, so adults need to supervise and help younger members.

Other resources

- ▶ MyPlate – <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
- ▶ USDA Supertracker – <https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/default.aspx>
- ▶ National 4-H Healthy Living Curriculum – <http://www.4-hmall.org/Category/food-healthy-living.aspx>