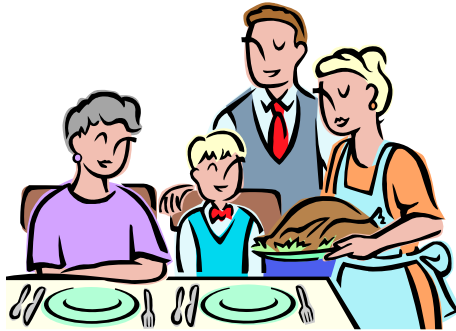


# NutritionWise

## Fall Edition

Nicole Meadow, MPN, RD

### Bringing Back the Family Meal



With today's busy schedules, it's easy to understand why the family meal may be one of the first things to fall by the wayside. And yet, family meals are not only a time for strengthening family ties and keeping track of your children's lives, they can actually lead to better physical and mental health for your children! Frequent family meals are related to better nutritional intake, and a decreased risk for unhealthy weight control practices and substance abuse, according to a 2004 survey conducted by the University of Minnesota. In addition, a study completed at Harvard in 2000 revealed that families who eat meals together "every day" or "almost every day" consumed higher amounts of important nutrients such as calcium, fiber, iron, vitamins B6 and B12, C and E, and consumed less overall fat, compared to families who "never" or "only sometimes" eat meals together. Having family meals might seem like a daunting task, but it is possible if you follow these guidelines:

- Talk with your children about new changes before implementing them.
- Include your children in the process. Have them help set the table, help plan the menu for the week, help with the grocery shopping and cooking process.
- Have one "kids choice night" where your kids can choose what the family will eat for dinner.

- Start a family ritual at mealtimes. For example, when I was growing up we all had to share "one good and one bad" from our day.
- Make sure that you are a positive role model for your children. They are watching you! Try to practice healthful eating habits... incorporate nutrient dense foods like fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy, lean protein, whole grains and "healthy sources of fat" into your meals.

When you are making new changes in any facet of your life, always start with small achievable goals. If you can start by having a family meal one night per week, that is excellent! Reach your goals and then build on them. You can do whatever you set your mind to, especially if it helps improve the health of your family.

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The information contained in this newsletter is not intended as a substitute for medical advice. See your physician and/or Registered Dietitian for individual health and/or dietary concerns.

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### 5-A-Day Everyday: The Colorful Way



Research has shown that diets rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of certain types of cancers and other chronic diseases. That's why eating FIVE of more servings of COLORFUL fruits and vegetables everyday should be incorporated into your healthful eating plan.

What's a serving, you ask? For an adult, a serving is 1 cup of raw leafy veggies; 1 medium sized fruit,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup 100% fruit or vegetable juice,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fresh or frozen fruits/vegetables or  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup dried fruit. Since children are smaller, so are their portion sizes! Until children are about 8-10 years of age (or about the size of a small adult) their portions are about  $\frac{1}{2}$  the size of an adult portion. For babies and toddlers, a general rule of thumb is 1 tablespoon per food per year of age.

Choose different colors everyday for your health...

- **BLUE/PURPLE** (decreased risk of certain cancers, urinary tract health, memory function, healthy aging): blueberries, blackberries, plums, figs, purple cabbage, eggplant, purple potatoes.
- **GREEN:** (decreased risk of certain cancers, vision health, strong bones & teeth): avocado, kiwi, honeydew, artichokes, broccoli, leafy greens, green peppers, zucchini.
- **WHITE:** (heart health, decreased risk of certain cancers): bananas, white nectarines and white peaches, cauliflower, garlic, onions, turnips.
- **YELLOW/ORANGE:** (heart health, vision health, immune system health, decreased risk of certain cancers):

apricots, mangoes, papaya, carrots, pumpkin, sweet potatoes.

- **RED:** (heart health, memory function, decreased risk of certain cancers, urinary tract health): cranberries, pomegranates, beets, rhubarb, tomatoes.

Now the big question is, how can you increase your family's consumption of fruits and vegetables? First, make sure that fruits and vegetables are always "well-marketed" in your kitchen. Have fresh fruit in a bowl on the counter or in the refrigerator in clear view, washed and ready to eat. Add vegetables to pasta sauce, quesadillas, casseroles and sandwiches. Add fruit to pancakes, cereal, oatmeal and yogurt. Serve 1-2 vegetables with dinner every night. Continue to expose your family to new tastes and textures, even if they are repeatedly rejected. Remember, it can take up to 15 exposures to the same food before it is accepted. However, if you do not expose your child to new foods, they will never have the opportunity to learn to like them! Be patient and be a positive role model. Enjoy mealtimes and the time that it affords you with your family (see article on page 1).

#### 5 A Day Parfait

(makes 1 serving)

- **Ingredients:**

- 2 tbsp. strawberries
- 2 tbsp. blueberries
- 2 tbsp. blackberries or raspberries
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup lowfat plain yogurt
- 2 squares cinnamon graham crackers, crushed

- **Directions:**

Place graham crackers in a baggie and have children crush them into very small pieces. Spoon layers into clear plastic cup: strawberries, yogurt, blueberries, yogurt, blackberries (or raspberries) yogurt and top with graham crackers. This is great for breakfast or for an after school snack.

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### To Buy or Not to Buy...Organic



Organic is a labeling term indicating that a certain food was produced in accordance with the U.S. Organic Foods Production Act. Rather than describing any particular characteristic of the food itself, the label "organic" actually describes the methods used to produce the food product. In order to be labeled "organic", a food must be grown and/or processed without the use of chemical herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers and must not have been treated with hormones, antibiotics, coloring agents, preservatives or artificial ingredients of any kind.

Organic foods are popping up in every aisle of the supermarket from fresh fruits and vegetables to baby foods, cereals, milk, meat... you name it! The number one reason that people eat organic foods is because they believe that they are more healthful. The nutritional value of organic foods is the same as their non-organic counterparts, except the organic foods are free of chemicals. The research on the actual long term effects of pesticide residue is inconclusive at this time. More studies need to be completed in this area in order for it to be more fully understood. The effects of the types of toxins are much more powerful on the systems of children since they receive a larger dose relative to their body weight and their developing organs are more vulnerable and less able to detoxify harmful chemicals. The US Center for Disease Control reports that one of the main sources of pesticide exposure for children is from the foods that they eat. In addition, in a sample of children aged 2-4 the concentrations of pesticide residues were six times higher in children eating conventionally farmed produce compared with those eating organic produce.

Our children are our most treasured resources, and we have the opportunity to protect them. By reducing toxic exposure,

organic products can help us raise healthy, strong children. Through tending to the soil and keeping toxic and persistent chemicals out of the environment, organic agriculture is one thing we can support to help us pass along a healthy and safe planet for future generations.

The choice "to buy or not to buy organic" is yours. The cost may be a little more, but the value for you and your family may be far greater. You don't have to buy everything organic... but start trying to incorporate at least some organic foods into your family's diet (especially fruits and vegetables, since they are more likely to absorb the pesticides and toxins). Always wash fruits and vegetables well, even if they are organic. Awareness and education give you the power to make healthful decisions for you and your family.

The "Dirty Dozen" (contain the most pesticide residues):

apples, bell peppers, celery, cherries, imported grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, potatoes, raspberries, spinach, strawberries

\*Try to prioritize, and buy these organic whenever possible\*

### What's in Season:

\*Fruits: apples, figs, dates, citrus (oranges, lemons, grapefruits, tangerines), melons (cantaloupe, honeydew), pomegranates, persimmons, grapes, plums, prunes, tomatoes, raspberries \*Vegetables: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, cucumber, celery, eggplant, green beans, peas, peppers, potatoes, corn, sweet potatoes, winter squash

### Websites Worth the Surf...

- [www.bohemian-baby.com](http://www.bohemian-baby.com) (fresh, organic baby food delivered to your doorstep!)
- [www.5aday.org](http://www.5aday.org) (recipes, fruit and veggie information and more)
- [www.lafamilynetwork.com](http://www.lafamilynetwork.com) (a group of leading experts for LA families)

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### Beating the Freshman Fifteen

Research has shown that some, not all, of college freshman gain weight during their first year at school. College is a time of change, and the stress associated with these changes can lead to overeating. In addition, exercise levels often decrease during the first year away at college.

Why should you be concerned about the weight? Rapid weight gain caused by poor dietary and exercise habits in college can start teenagers on a path that can lead to heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and may increase risk for certain cancers (all associated with obesity).

The big question is, how can you avoid gaining the "Freshman 15"? Try the following strategies:

- Make it a rule to have time for eating and time for other activities. Avoid eating when watching TV, studying, or when stressed.
- Slow down at meals. Put your fork (or sandwich) down between bites. Enjoy your food.
- Eat 3 meals per day (and 1-2 healthful snacks).
- Limit empty calorie beverages (soda, lemonade) and drink water instead.

Lastly, don't freak out if you notice that you have started to gain a few pounds. Look at your intake and activity habits. Try to make small changes (an extra 125 calories per day can equal one pound weight gain per month). Start with small changes and take it day by day. You can do it!

### Read it Before you Eat it!

There are thousands of items for sale in the supermarket, how can you possibly make healthful choices for everyone in your family? It might seem overwhelming (and often times it is) but the food label is a tool that can help you. It is easy to use, even when your shopping trip gets a little hectic.

The Nutrition Facts Label can tell you a lot about the foods that you purchase in the market and can be a tool that you use to decide which foods are more healthful for your family. (HINT: Always go to the market on a full stomach and with a grocery list!)

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 470mg	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g	<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A 4%	Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 20%	Iron 4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
Calories: 2,000 2,500	
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g

### About the Author:

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