

NutritionWise Quarterly

Spring Edition 2007

Nicole Meadow, MPN, RD



Step into Shape... with a Pedometer

So by now you know that it is extremely important to be physically active on a daily basis... the next question is how is it possible to fit this in to your family's busy schedule? Recent statistics compiled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System data suggests that approximately 35% of adolescents do not participate in regular physical activity; 45% of children do not play on any sports teams; and only 29% of high school students attend daily PE classes. So... how can you increase your family's activity level and therefore improve their overall health? Try using a pedometer! Pedometers easily measure the steps (called "lifestyle steps") that each of us take throughout the day. Walking is a great way to stay in shape and can be a fun way to increase your entire family's level of physical activity. Start by purchasing pedometers for all members of the family. The first week, simply record the amount of steps taken by each member. The following week make a goal of how many steps you want to increase your daily total by. (Adults should aim to take 10,000 steps per day to maintain a healthy weight status. A study published in the June 2004 "Prevention Medicine" revealed that children ages 6-12 should aim to take approximately 12,000 (girls) to 15,000 (boys) steps per day to maintain a healthy BMI.)

Try the following ideas to increase your daily steps:

- Take the stairs, rather than the elevator whenever possible
- Park at the far end of the parking lot
- Hide the TV remote and get up to change the channels
- Return the shopping cart all the way to the market
- Walk the dog
- When talking on the phone, walk around instead of sitting or standing
- Before or after dinner, make a family routine of taking a 15-20 minute walk together

(FYI: 1 mile= 2000 steps; 10 minutes of walking= 1200 steps on average; bicycling or swimming= 150 steps for each minute; rollerblading= 200 steps per minute)

*Increasing the steps that you take each day will benefit the physical and mental health of both you and your family. Now let's get moving!

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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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Let's Get Messy... Why Cooking with Your Children is Important



Each edition of "NutritionWise Quarterly" includes a section called "Kids in the Kitchen" that features a recipe in which your children can help prepare recipe. There is a reason for this... in fact, there are many reasons for this. Cooking has been shown to help build children's self-esteem. When children are allowed to help with tasks in the kitchen, it builds their confidence levels and early skills of independence. Children feel proud when they are able to share in family tasks and see the fruits of their labors on the family table. Cooking is also a very important teaching tool. Just think about all of the areas in your kitchen and in the cooking process where your children can apply what they are learning in school. This is true from preschool children though teenagers! Younger children can master fine motor skills by measuring and pouring liquids; older children can practice counting and more advanced math skills using measuring cups (fractions) and by counting the ingredients in a recipe; language skills are continually developed by reading words in recipes and on food labels; cleaning up teaches children of all ages about responsibility since it is part of many creative, messy things that we do! Research has shown that children are more likely to taste foods that they have helped to prepare. When they know how foods have been prepared and cooked, they feel more secure about eating them. Cooking together offers a special parenting opportunity.

It is a time when you and your children can create special memories and also a time to share about the day's events.

A great way to get started is to give your "little chef" their own set of cooking utensils and a place to keep them. Start with a low drawer in the kitchen or a large plastic box... a starter set could include plastic measuring cups, plastic spatula, plastic measuring spoon set, wooden spoon, apron, small cutting board, a plastic knife (depending on the age of your child) and anything else that you would like to include in your child's special cooking tool box! Next step... let's get cooking!

So if you think that cooking with your kids will take extra time or be too messy... it might, but keep in mind all of the positive reasons to share this experience with your children. Now, let's get messy!

Kids in The Kitchen: Pineapple-Orange Chicken

Ingredients:

4 chicken breasts (with bone)

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup orange juice

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup raisins

1 (8 ounce) can crushed pineapple in juice

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Season chicken with garlic powder and ground pepper.
2. Mix orange juice, raisins and crushed pineapple.
3. Place chicken breasts in a shallow baking dish. Spoon mixture over chicken breasts.
4. Bake, uncovered, about 45-55 minutes. (Chicken breasts should reach an internal temperature of 170°F)
5. Remove from oven and serve with a side of quinoa and broccoli. (Remember to remove the skin from the chicken before eating.)

*Children can help measure the orange juice and raisins; pour the juice raisins and pineapple into the mixing bowl and mix the ingredients together. They also help season the chicken...

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Ironing Out Iron Nutrition



Iron is an essential mineral required for both children and adults. Iron has many functions in the body. A key attribute is its ability to both take up and release oxygen atoms therefore helping to transport oxygen to tissues all over the body. Children need sufficient iron from their diets to support their rapid rates of growth, to replace the iron that the body uses up when forming new muscle and tissue, and to have enough energy to learn and play. Adults also need sufficient iron from their diets to feel good and to stay healthy, especially women who lose iron stores on a monthly basis. Iron-deficiency anemia is a common nutrition problem for young children, which your pediatrician will check for during their regular physical exams. By including iron-rich foods in your family meals and snacks, you can be a step ahead of the game. Both you and your children will benefit.

Good dietary sources of iron are:

- *Lean meat (beef, chicken, turkey, pork)
- *Iron-enriched whole grain breads and cereals
- *Cooked dried beans (black, navy, lima, kidney, pinto, edamame)
- *Greens (collard, spinach, kale, mustard, turnip green)
- *Dried fruit (raisins, apricots, prunes)
- *Egg yolks

Try to incorporate these foods into your family meals and snacks on a daily basis for optimal iron status. Foods that are good sources of Vitamin C help to the body to better utilize the iron in the foods listed above.

Try combining foods rich in iron with foods rich in Vitamin C.

- *Breakfast cereal with berries or juice
- *Chili with beans with tomato sauce
- *Chicken with an apricot sauce
- *Pasta salad with chicken and bell peppers or tomatoes
- *Hard-boiled egg with calcium fortified orange juice
- *Turkey sandwich with a tangerine

If iron supplements are prescribed by your child's pediatrician, make sure that they are taken only as prescribed and kept out of reach...

Growing a Family Garden



It's Spring... the weather is warming up and your kids are itching for activities to do outside. How about growing a family vegetable and herb garden? Gardening is an activity that allows you to spend time with you children being active and relaxing all at the same time. Growing the vegetables and herbs will teach your children responsibility as they learn that they need to water and feed their plants in order to stay healthy. It also helps children learn about new foods because research has shown that children are more likely to taste foods that they have helped to grow. Children can be involved in all steps of the gardening process: picking the veggies/herbs to grow; preparing the soil; planting the seeds; watering the plants; measuring the plants as they grow; removing weeds; pick veggies/herbs when they are ready; washing food; cooking food and finally eating and enjoying what they have worked so hard to grow! (Easy foods to grow: carrots, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, herbs, onions, zucchini, and lettuce.)

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100% Fad Free! Eating Healthfully From A to Z



That's right, it's March and you know what that means! Every year, since 1973, March has been designated as National Nutritional Month® (NNM). It started as a week long event but due to an overwhelming public interest, it became a month long observance in 1980. The theme for National Nutrition Month® 2007 is 100% Fad Free.

The key messages (provided by the American Dietetic Association) for National Nutrition Month® 2007 are: * Develop an eating plan for lifelong health. Instead of trying out the latest food fad, let the words variety, moderation and proportionality guide your daily choices. *Choose foods sensibly by looking at the big picture. A single food or meal does not make or break a healthful diet. *Learn how to spot a food fad. Exaggerated and unreasonable claims that eating or not eating certain foods or supplements will result in weight loss are key features of fad diets. *Find your balance between food and physical activity. Aim for at least 30 minutes (for adults) and 60 minutes (for children) where you are sweaty each day. This is important for your physical and mental health.

Take the time to make some spring resolutions for your family that begin this March with NNM®. Think globally in terms of health instead of quick fixes. Anything that promises a quick fix will not have a lasting effect, and is not safe for children. All foods can be incorporated in a healthful diet as long as there are no underlying medical conditions or allergies. Let the concepts of moderation, variety and proportionality be your guide. It is

important for both you and your children to understand that there are certain foods that are consumed more often than other foods. For example, we need 3 servings of calcium rich foods every day to maintain optimal bone and teeth status. However, having 3 servings of ice cream would not be appropriate. Having ice cream once or twice per week and having low fat dairy products, leafy greens and other calcium rich foods the majority of the time is a more healthful and well-balanced approach. Children, and adults, can then understand that their favorites are a part of their regular intakes. This teaches children lifelong healthful eating habits that they can feel good about. Keep food and eating positive so that they can feel good about their bodies and grow to love who they are. Make physical activity a part of your daily routine. This is just as important as having a healthful diet! Start with small steps.... A 10 minute walk, jumping jacks during TV commercials, a yoga video, take a family bike ride, walk the dog together. Increase your daily activity once it has become an established part of your routine. Ditch the fads and stick with maintaining healthful habits for life... you and your family will be a step ahead of the game! That's what NNM® 2007 is all about.

Websites Worth the Surf...

- www.eatright.org official site of the American Dietetic Association
- www.hotmomsclub.com Check out my monthly article in the Health and Fitness section!

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