

March newsletter



Nourishing the Next Generation

Practical advice for caring for your young ones with food, fun and love

For more support, contact your local extension office.

The Food Assistance Program can help people of all ages with low income buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, call 1-888-369-4777.

Material funded by USDA SNAP. USDA is an equal opportunity provider. Newsletter developed by Mary Meck Higgins, Ph.D., R.D., L.D., K-State Research and Extension Human Nutrition Specialist and Associate Professor, Dept. of Human Nutrition. Contents of this publication may be reproduced for educational purposes. All other rights reserved. In each case, credit Mary Meck Higgins, "Nourishing the Next Generation."



Dietary Fiber Makes a Difference

Eating high fiber foods, also known as roughage, helps one feel full after a meal. Eating enough fiber is also good for bowel health and heart health, and decreases the risk for type 2 diabetes, some kinds of cancer and obesity.

Serve plant foods that are good sources of dietary fiber daily. These include cooked dry beans, peas, lentils, vegetables, fruits, bran, whole grain cereals, whole grain breads, whole wheat flour and nuts. Check the Nutrition Facts label for the amount of fiber in the foods you often buy. Animal products do not contain dietary fiber.

For best overall health, give yourself and those you love enough fiber in their diets every day. Amounts recommended vary by age. Children 1 to 3 years old should get 19g of fiber, while 4 to 8 year olds should eat 25g. Girls ages 9 to 18 are advised to eat 26g of fiber. Women up to age 50 years should get 25 g of fiber. Boys ages 9 to 13 years old are encouraged to eat 31g, while older boys and men up to age 50 years should eat 38g of fiber. After age 50, women need 21g of fiber and men need 30g.





Nourishing the Next Generation

Practical advice for caring for your young ones with food, fun and love



Lead the Way: Creating a Relaxed Family Mealtime Experience

Many children and teens who eat dinner at home are seated in front of a television or computer, or text on their phones a lot. If this sounds like your house, you may want to make some changes to what you are "serving" your family for meals.

Creating a relaxed mealtime experience will help you to have healthier grandchildren and stronger family connections. Remove mealtime distractions by having family members turn off the television and computer and take phone calls and messages later. Instead, talk with each other and also focus on the meal. Encourage each family member to eat slowly and relax. Pay some attention to each family member and keep mealtime conversations pleasant. This promotes family meals that are looked forward to by everyone. They enable you to have a more positive influence on your youngsters.

On the other hand, eating meals often in front of a screen is a problem. The number of hours that children watch television or play video games is linked with their gaining excess body weight. One reason is because they ignore the signals from their bodies that they have eaten enough. Instead, they eat even in the absence of physical hunger.

Strive to enjoy relaxed family meals, free from electronic gadgets, often each week!

Source: Adapted from www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/child_feeding_page.htm

Kitchen Time Together Promotes Bonding and Fun

Meal planning, grocery shopping, cooking and cleaning up with your teens and school-aged youngsters increases relaxed conversations, teaches them lifelong skills, helps them feel confident and successful, and encourages them to try new foods and eat more healthfully. Here are two family meal ideas:

- Make pizzas personalized by each family member. Have them spread sauce on a tortilla or pizza crust, add some chopped vegetables, and top with cheese. Bake at 425 degrees F. for about 10 minutes.
- Go on a relaxing "indoor picnic." For instance, ask your grandchild to make sandwiches and wash some fresh seasonal fruit while you cut up some vegetable sticks. If desired, pop some popcorn. Place the food in a basket along with some filled reusable water bottles. Spread a tablecloth or blanket on the floor and enjoy each other's company while eating and sharing stories and jokes.

