

February / 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.

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Preventing Kids from Choking on Foods

Children of all ages are mostly likely to choke on these foods: candy (hard candies and other kinds, including marshmallows), hot dogs, sausages, other meats (especially those with a bone), raw fruits and vegetables (such as whole grapes, carrots and apples), chewing gum, seeds (including popcorn), peanut butter, peanuts and other nuts, and shells.

Children ages four years old and younger — and especially those less than one year old — are the most likely to choke. Why? They are still learning to chew and swallow foods well. And often, they do not focus on the task of eating. Preventing choking is key. Be near your young grandchildren whenever they are eating. Discourage them from eating too quickly. Offer them right-sized bites of easy-to-chew foods. Have your youngsters sit down and avoid rambunctious playing while eating. Do not allow them to play "catch the food thrown into the mouth."



Sources: *Pediatrics* 2013; 132(2):275-81; *Pediatrics* 2010; 125(3):601-607



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Kids Eating Twice Too Many Empty Calories

Empty calories are the calories from solid fats and added sugars. Children and teens are eating twice the amount of these than what's recommended by health professionals. The top source of empty calories in the U.S. diet is sugar-sweetened beverages — such as sodas, fruit drinks, energy drinks, sports drinks, sweetened bottled vitamin water and sweet teas. The next-highest sources are full-fat and/or sweetened dairy foods and dairy desserts, grain desserts and pizza. To cut back, serve more water, unsweetened beverages, low-fat milk, reduced-fat cheeses and unsweetened fruit for dessert.

“Making meals and memories together”

Noisy Nutty Chocolate Monkey Treats

Save all of your overly-ripe bananas to use in this easy nourishing snack that looks and tastes a lot like ice cream!

Makes 2 servings, each about 1/3 cup

Ingredients:

- 1 very ripe banana
- 1 tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter (optional)

Do-Ahead Directions:

1. Peel a very ripe banana. Remove any bad spots. Place the banana on a tray or a plate and freeze it.
2. After it is frozen, remove the banana from the tray and transfer it to an air-tight reusable container with a lid, or a bag. Seal and keep frozen until ready to use.

Snack-Time Directions:

1. When you are ready for a snack, cut the frozen banana into chunks. Place the pieces into a blender or a food processor.
2. Add baking cocoa and, if desired, peanut butter.
3. Process until no large chunks are present. (This is the noisy part!) Serve immediately.

Nutrition Facts per serving, if using peanut butter: 110 calories, 4.5g fat, 1g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 0mg cholesterol, 35mg sodium, 17g carbohydrate, 3g dietary fiber and 3g protein. Daily Values: 0% vitamin A, 8% vitamin C, 0% calcium, 2% iron.

