Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

May 2018

Sauk Centre Elementary School



BEST BITES "E" is for eggplant

These healthy fritters may tempt your child to try eggplant. Slice 1 eggplant into disks, and soak for 20 minutes in 1 cup milk combined with 1 tsp. salt. Drain, and roll in 1 cup whole-wheat breadcrumbs. Bake in a single layer for 15 minutes at 425°, flipping halfway. Top each round with 1 tbsp. pizza sauce and 1 tsp. shredded mozzarella cheese, and cook 3–5 minutes more, until the cheese melts.



Happy active birthday!

To help your youngster get more exercise, consider a gift of physical activity for his next birthday. You could give him new sneakers or sports equipment like a soccer ball or a scooter. Or consider lessons in an activity, such as karate or indoor rock climbing.

DID YOU KNOW? Many youngsters tend to gain weight over the summer. One reason is that they may reach for sugary beverages like sweet tea, lemonade, or soda to quench thirst on hot days. Encourage your child to choose refreshing ice water—perhaps she'll try it with a slice of lemon or lime—to stay hydrated.

Just for fun

Q: What only gets wetter the more it dries?

A: A towel.



Have a healthy summer

Your child doesn't need to take a vacation from healthy habits over the summer—not when there are so many great things to eat and do! Try these ideas to make sure he stays active and eats right while school is out.



Community events

Together, read the newspaper or look online for outings that involve healthy foods and fitness. Aim to do at least one each week. Walk, bend, and stretch to pick blueberries or peaches, then make fresh and fruity pancakes or muffins. Or attend a health or fitness fair where your youngster might sample nutritious snacks from vendors or take part in a hula-hoop contest.

Family visits

Visiting relatives this summer? Offer to take turns cooking meals. When it's your turn, plan a nutritious menu like a chicken and vegetable flatbread, corn on the cob, and a green salad. To get exercise, explore your destination by walking around a historic district or running along the beach. If you host visitors, introduce them to your favorite local park and play tennis or go paddleboarding.

New traditions

It's always nice to create summer traditions! Consider making homemade ice cream, and use fresh fruit like raspberries or apricots to add nutrients. Another idea is to play outdoor games after dark. Perhaps your family will enjoy flashlight tag or play hide-and-seek on a night when there's a full moon.

Fun at the pool



Swimming is a great way to stay fit. Use these tips to keep your youngster healthy and safe in the pool this summer:

- Sign your child up for swimming lessons at your community pool, YMCA, or recreation center. She'll learn a life-saving skill *and* a new way to get exercise.
- Read the pool rules together, and make sure your youngster follows them. For example, show her where she's allowed to dive, and remind her to avoid horseplay.
- Watch your youngster at all times rather than relying solely on lifeguards to keep her safe. Better yet, get in the pool to swim or play with her—you'll both get a dose of physical activity.

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Be a food critic

Playing food critic can inspire your child to be mindful of what she's eating, making her less likely to overeat. It will help her motivate others to try yummy foods—and boost her writing skills, too! Here's how.



Take notes. Suggest that your youngster jot down her thoughts during a meal at home or in a restaurant. Encourage her to be specific about how the food looks, smells, feels, and tastes. Instead of saying quinoa is "good," she might write that it "looks fluffy" and "tastes kind of nutty."

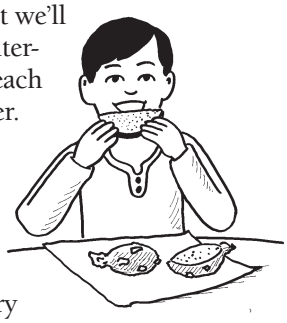
Write and share. Your child can write up her review and draw—or snap—a picture to go along with it. She could even keep her reviews in a notebook to share with friends and relatives who visit.

Idea: Let your youngster invent a scale, such as a five-star (or perhaps a "five-apple") system, to rank foods. Have her give healthy but low-rated foods another chance. Does sauteing broccoli instead of steaming it change its rating?

PARENT TO PARENT

Quirky fruit challenge

I'm happy that my son Brandon reaches for apples and bananas when he's hungry. But those are the *only* fruits he will eat. I wanted him to branch out a little, so I came up with the "Quirky Fruit Challenge."



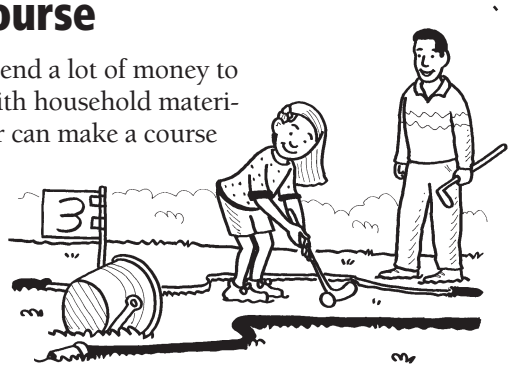
We agreed that we'll try at least one interesting new fruit each week this summer. Since Brandon loves dragons, I wasn't surprised when he picked dragon fruit at the grocery store the first week.

I cut it into cubes, and Brandon added it to a fruit salad that also included (of course) apple and banana slices. He loved the sweet flavor of the dragon fruit. Next week he wants to make fruit salad with star fruit. I'm hoping that if he's willing to taste unusual fruits, it won't be too hard to get him to eat more common ones, too, like watermelon and oranges!

ACTIVITY CORNER

Par for the course

You don't need to spend a lot of money to play miniature golf. With household materials and a little creativity, your youngster can make a course that will get everyone moving. Head to the backyard, an open space in your neighborhood, or a park, and follow these steps to get started.



1. Lay out the course. Have your child arrange pool noodles, jump ropes, large rocks, or even the garden hose on the ground to create the borders for 9 holes.

2. Add obstacles. Your youngster might remove the tops and bottoms from cereal boxes to make "tunnels." She could prop up a baking sheet on bricks to serve as a ramp. Or she can place blocks or other toys to shoot around.

3. Make "holes." Let your child lay a beach pail or an empty can on its side at each hole. She should cut flags from construction paper and number them 1–9. Help her tape each flag to a twig and stick it in the ground by a hole.

Look for a set of plastic clubs and balls at a dollar store or discount retailer. Then, your youngster can keep score as your family plays golf.

IN THE KITCHEN

Fiesta foods

Put a healthy spin on chips and salsa for a treat to enjoy on Cinco de Mayo (May 5)—and the rest of the year.

Churro chips

Brush both sides of 4 12-inch whole-wheat tortillas with 1 tbsp. olive oil or melted coconut oil. Cut each tortilla into 8 triangles, and arrange the wedges in a single layer on a baking sheet. In a separate bowl, mix 1 tsp. sugar with 2 tsp. cinnamon. Sprinkle half the cinnamon mixture on the wedges, and bake 6 minutes in a 350° oven. Flip, sprinkle with remaining cinnamon mixture, and bake 6 minutes more.



Strawberry-kiwi salsa

Chop 2 cups fresh strawberries, and peel and dice 2 kiwis. Put the fruit in a bowl, and squeeze $\frac{1}{2}$ lime on top. Stir to combine. Serve with the churro chips.

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for their children.

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Nutrition Nuggets™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.

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