



What's for Dinner?



Eating healthy foods is key to promoting health and wellness, but knowing that and doing that are sometimes two different issues! The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has a new program to try to simplify knowing what we should be eating: **Choose My Plate**. The graphic reminds us to fill half our plates with fruits and vegetables, and the other with healthy grains and proteins.

Making Fruits and Veggies Fun

So how do you get kids to eat more of the “good stuff”? Research shows that it can take 10-20 times of being exposed to a new food for a child to like it—that includes seeing it on the table, watching Mom or Dad eat it, even playing with it! Here's a tip sheet on “Kid-Friendly Veggies and Fruits” with 10 fun ideas for encouraging kids to eat more fruits and veggies. Here's a few to get you started:



- **Smoothies**—Blend fat-free or low-fat yogurt or milk with fruit and crushed ice.
- **Delicious Dippers**—Dipping foods is fun! Try mixing yogurt with seasonings or garlic and serve with raw veggies. Mix cinnamon or vanilla with yogurt for fruit dipping.
- **Fruity Peanut Butterfly**—Use a carrot or celery stick as the body. Make wings with thinly sliced apples “glued” on with peanut butter, and add grape halves or dried fruits as decorations.

For 7 more fun ideas, go to: www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet11KidFriendlyVeggiesAndFruits.pdf

It's Not Always That Easy...

For many children with special health care needs, other challenges make following these guidelines difficult. A good nutritionist can often help find ways to ensure that your child gets the best nutrition possible. Ask your health care provider for help, too.



I'm Thirsty!

Here's a question for you: What's the cheapest healthy beverage you can give a thirsty child (or adult)? Answer: Water. Most of us don't drink enough water, and it is a far better choice than a sugar-laden soft drink or fruit juice. Keep some cool in the refrigerator, and let your kids catch you choosing water instead of a sweetened beverage!

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