Welcome to Warren County Visions!

Welcome to the Fall 2009 edition of County Visions, Warren County’s quarterly newsletter from the Family & Community Health Sciences department of Rutgers Cooperative Extension.

Contact us at FCHS@co.warren.nj.us for questions or suggestions and be sure to visit us at our website for up to date class offerings at http://warren.njaes.rutgers.edu.

Wishing you and yours a bountiful fall!

Sherri Cirignano, MS, RD, LDN
FCHS Educator/Assistant Professor

Join us for a “Pink Tea Party” in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month!

A Tea Seminar: Drink to your Health

❖ Brief lecture followed by Afternoon Tea and Lunch
❖ Learn about the history, culture and health benefits of tea
❖ Enjoy tea tasting, recipes and more
❖ Breast Cancer Information and Door Prizes available too!

Presented by Sherri Cirignano, FCHS Educator

Thursday, October 22, 2009 @ 11:30 a.m.
NORWESCAP
350 Marshall Street
Phillipspur, NJ 08865

Registration is required
Call 908-387-9888 to reserve your space!

Share and Learn in Your Neighborhood

Join us for the evening for good food and a bi-lingual conversation about Colon Health.

St. Joseph Church Community Room
200 Carlton Avenue
Washington, NJ 07882

Free Dinner Provided

Thursday, October 29, 2009
6:00 PM

Speaker: Dr. Ana Gomes

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What’s Inside?

❖ Looking for ways to make your family meals chock-full of healthful choices for your growing family? Eating Together - Eating Well: Nutrient-Rich Family Meals is attached to help. Try this delicious family-friendly recipe too.

❖ If you have preschool-aged children at home, the updated MyPyramid for Preschoolers website is a must see. There are great suggestions for parents and caregivers. Take a look at some ways to Make Your Job Easier by checking out the website www.mypyramid.gov and clicking on Preschoolers.

❖ Learning positive money management techniques can help you and your family adapt to tough economic times. eXtension is a great new website that can provide you with a wealth of information on this and other topics. Check it out at http://www.extension.org.
Eating Together - Eating Well: Nutrient-Rich Family Meals

Fact Sheet FS110

Sherri Cirignano, MS, RD, Warren County FCHS Educator

Eating together as a family as often as possible is important for growing families. The list of benefits of family meals continues to grow and includes promoting a healthy weight in young children and nurturing healthy lifestyles in older children. Studies also show that children who eat regular family meals eat more of what is good for them: fruits, vegetables, grains, and calcium-rich foods. Family meals seem to be on the upswing, increasing 11% between 1998 and 2005, according to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA). Despite this good news, childhood obesity rates are still climbing, and teens in particular are eating less than the recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables. As a result, planning and making family meals that are nutrient-rich is as important as ever.

What is a Nutrient-rich Meal?

There are six groups of nutrients in food that provide what our bodies’ need for energy and good health. These nutrients are carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals and water. A nutrient-rich food is one that has a significant amount of vitamins and minerals, yet a reasonable amount of energy, or calories. Examples include plant foods such as vegetables, fruit, legumes and whole grains, and protein foods such as fish, poultry, lean meat, and low-fat milk products. The opposite of a nutrient-rich food is an energy-rich or energy-dense food. These foods supply a lot of calories, but few vitamins or minerals. Examples include candy, cakes, pies, fried foods and snack foods such as chips and soft drinks.

Nutrients Needed for Growing Children

To meet the needs of growing children, and all healthy Americans ages two years and above, include a variety of nutrient-rich foods and healthy beverages in your family’s meals everyday, while limiting saturated fats, trans fats, and added sugar and salt. This, along with regular physical activity, is important in promoting the future health of our children. Meeting these needs can be done with ease at family mealtime by focusing on the foods that are recommended: a variety of whole plant foods and lean protein foods, with sensible fat and beverage choices.

Choosing Whole Plant Foods

Include whole plant foods as a significant part of your family’s diet by choosing a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes. These foods provide a large variety of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients that contribute to growth and overall health. Fruits and vegetables provide an array of health-promoting nutrients. Think color when choosing them, the more color, the better! Create your child’s plate as a new palette every-day that is filled with dark green, orange, red, white and purple fruits and vegetables. They will love the colors and you will enjoy knowing that they are eating these nutrient-rich jewels from the garden. For ease of mealtime prep, choose fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits and vegetables, all of which provide similar nutrient values. Aim for approximately two cups of fruit, and 2 1/2 cups of vegetables each day, choosing whole fruits and vegetables over juice for children more often.

Whole grains, on the other hand, cannot always be identified by color. The proof is in the ingredient list. For most whole grain products, the words “whole” or “whole grain” will appear before the grain ingredient’s name, ideally with the whole grain listed first. Some well-known whole grains include whole wheat, wild rice and brown rice, but did you know that popcorn is also a whole grain? With little added fat, popcorn is a great snack that
Choosing Fats

Fat in the diet has received a great deal of attention over the years about not only how much fat is “ok” but also what types of fat to eat or to avoid. It can be confusing. Simply stated, saturated and trans fats are fats that should be limited in the diet of most healthy family members. An exception for this is for children under the age of two who need important fatty acids in their diets for development, so their fat intake should not be limited.

When choosing food items with fat, it is helpful to know that saturated fats are found in animal-based foods including meat, poultry and dairy products and in some tropical oil such as coconut, palm kernel and palm oils. Trans fats are also found in animal products, but the majority of them come from fats that have been changed from a liquid fat to a solid. Saturated fats also tend to be solid. As a result, a simple rule of thumb when choosing a fat is to choose those that are liquid at room temperature. Examples of these include vegetable oils such as canola or olive oils, which contain mostly monounsaturated fats and safflower or soybean oils, which contain mostly polyunsaturated fats. Aim for these primarily mono- and polyunsaturated fat choices.

For more information on nutrient-rich meals, visit:
www.getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu
www.mypyramid.gov
www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org

Choosing Beverages

For all ages, water is the recommended beverage of choice. It is important to limit sweetened beverages and juices, even 100% fruit or vegetable juice, for the benefits of water. Beverages with a high sugar content are energy-dense, with limited other benefits. On the other hand, water is an essential nutrient that quenches our thirst without the added energy that is best saved for whole food choices. Aim for 50 fluid ounces, or approximately eight cups of water each day.

Providing nutrient-rich family meals are well worth the effort to promote the health and well being of growing children. Besides being nutritious and tasty, family meals that spotlight healthful foods are setting the foundation for the choices that your children will make when they set out on their own someday.

Try these tips to make your family meals nutrient-rich:

• Keep frozen vegetables and canned beans on hand to add to casseroles, low sodium soups and stews.
• Add dried fruit to whole grains such as breakfast cereals, brown rice and couscous.
• Substitute legumes such as chickpeas, black or white beans for ground beef or poultry in recipes.
• Switch to whole grain pasta for all of your favorite pasta recipes by trying different brands to find the one your family likes.
• Serve fresh, canned or frozen fruit with low-fat yogurt from the dairy case to make “sundaes” as a quick and fun dessert.
• Ask to include a salad and/or fruit instead of fries or chips when family meals take place in a restaurant.

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Barley, Turkey and Butternut Squash Casserole

Try this quick casserole recipe to provide a nutrient-rich and crowd-pleasing dish for your next family meal.

Cooking spray
2 small butternut squash
2 tsp. olive oil
1 green bell pepper, seeded and diced
1/2 cup minced onion
1 tsp. dried sage
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
2 cups fat-free, reduced sodium chicken broth
3/4 cup quick-cooking barley*
1/2 lb. cooked turkey breast, cubed or diced
1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat a 4-quart baking dish with cooking spray.

In a large pot of rapidly boiling water, boil squash halves 5 minutes or until not quite tender. Drain. When cool enough to handle, scoop flesh from each half and dice. Set aside.

In a large saucepan, heat oil over medium heat. Add green pepper, onion and diced squash. Sauté 3 minutes. Add sage and pepper and stir to coat. Add broth and bring to a boil. Add barley and return to boil.

Reduce heat to low, cover and cook 10 minutes, until barley is tender and liquid is absorbed. Mix in diced turkey. Transfer mixture to prepared baking dish and top with feta cheese. Bake, uncovered, 30 minutes, or until cheese is golden.

*Most supermarkets and health food stores carry quick-cooking barley.

Makes 6 servings. Per serving: 275 calories, 5 g. total fat (2 g. saturated fat), 42 g. carbohydrate, 18 g. protein, 10 g. dietary fiber, 368 mg. sodium.

Recipe adapted from AICR Recipe Corner, www.aicr.org
MyPyramid for Preschoolers is for parents and caregivers of preschoolers ages 2-5. We encourage professionals to share this in-depth resource. Here are a few highlights of the site.

**Addresses Common Concerns**

“Michael won’t eat anything green, just because of the color” or “Ebony will only eat peanut butter sandwiches!” Combines expert guidance and real-life suggestions for parents and caregivers about their important role in helping their children develop healthy eating habits. “Mom-tested” messages communicate the information effectively to parents and caregivers.

*Cook together. Eat together. Talk together. Make mealtime a family time!*

**Body Mass Index and Height-for-Age Calculators**

Users simply enter the child’s height, weight, and age to receive a user friendly graph. It’s ready to print and bring to their preschooler’s next doctor’s appointment.

**Customized MyPyramid Plan**

Parents and caregivers enter age, gender, and activity level to get a customized eating pattern of MyPyramid Plan for their preschooler. Serves as a guide for what and how much to offer from the food groups each day.

**Sample Meal and Snack Patterns**

Each MyPyramid Plan calorie level has two different sample Meal and Snack Patterns. These give examples of how the MyPyramid Plan can be divided into meals and snacks. Also provides ideas to help plan meals for preschoolers.
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<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MyPyramid Plan for Preschoolers</strong></td>
<td>Gives parents a customized eating plan for their preschooler, based on the child’s age, gender, and physical activity level. Includes a colorful, personalized printout of the MyPyramid Plan and links to information about each food group, snacks, beverages, salt, and “extras” (solid fats and added sugars).</td>
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<td><strong>Growth during the Preschool Years</strong></td>
<td>Provides information about influences on growth and an option to enter the child’s height, weight, and age to obtain a customized growth chart. Both Body Mass Index and Height-for-Age charts can be selected, viewed, and printed.</td>
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<td><strong>Developing Healthy Eating Habits</strong></td>
<td>Offers a wealth of advice to answer common questions from parents. Topics in this section include:</td>
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<td>• Setting a Good Example</td>
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<td>• Offering a Variety of Foods</td>
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<td>• Helping Children Know When They’ve Had Enough</td>
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<td>• Follow a Meal and Snack Schedule</td>
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<td>• Making Mealtime a Family Time</td>
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<td>• Coping with Picky Eating</td>
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<td>• Helping Children Eat New Foods</td>
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<td>• Kitchen Activities Preschoolers Can Help With</td>
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<td>• Behavioral Milestones Related to Eating</td>
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<td><strong>Physical Activity</strong></td>
<td>Helps parents identify what types of physical activity are appropriate for preschoolers and why physical activity is important at this age.</td>
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<td>Stresses that parents need to serve as role models not just in healthy eating behaviors, but in physical activity as well. Lists ideas for family activities, age-appropriate activities, and indoor activities.</td>
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<td><strong>Food Safety</strong></td>
<td>Provides both general food safety advice and specific messages for preschoolers. Includes information on the importance of hand washing, foods that should be avoided, and foods that can be choking hazards.</td>
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<td><strong>Sample Meal and Snack Patterns</strong></td>
<td>Shows two examples of a meal and snack pattern to demonstrate how a MyPyramid Plan (which gives daily amounts) can be divided into three meals and two snacks. These are presented as amounts from each food group in the meal or snack.</td>
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<td>For each pattern, includes three menu ideas for each meal or snack in the pattern.</td>
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Sponsored by the Warren County Cancer Education and Early Detection Program (CEED) and the Warren County Cancer Coalition. The Warren County Cancer Coalition is made possible by a grant from the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services' Office of Cancer Control and Prevention. The mission of the Warren County Cancer Coalition is to implement the New Jersey Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan in Warren County. For more information on Comprehensive Cancer Control in NJ, please visit: www.njcancer.gov
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This project is funded by: The Novartis Outreach and Education Project of The Cancer Institute of New Jersey
The program is provided in partnership with: NORWESCAP, Inc., The Warren County Health Department, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Warren County, Hackettstown Regional Medical Center, Warren Hospital, East Stroudsburg University, and the Warren County Cancer Coalition.