

MARPLE NEWTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

NUTRITION NEWS

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MAKE IT A WHOLE GRAIN DAY

by Eileen M. Bellew, MA, RD, LDN

Have you wondered why there is a big push for whole grains into our Child Nutrition Programs (CNP)? The Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods in Pennsylvania Schools for the Nutrition Incentive recommends in school year 2008-2009, at least 50% of grains offered will be whole grains. By increasing your intake of whole grains in your daily diet, you can reduce the risk of chronic diseases and may help maintain a healthy weight. This recommendation holds true for both adults and students.

WHAT IS A WHOLE GRAIN?

A whole grain is the entire edible part of any grain. These include and are not limited to wheat, corn, rice, oats, barley, millet, spelt, and amaranth. The whole grain consists of 3 layers; the bran, the endosperm, and the germ. Each of these components is rich in nutrients. The outer layer of the whole grain is called the bran. The bran contains most of the minerals, including iron, copper, zinc, magnesium, fiber, and some B vitamins. The middle layer, called the endosperm, holds most of the protein and carbohydrates, along with small amounts of B vitamins. The smallest component of the grain, the germ, is a rich source of unsaturated fats, B vitamins, antioxidants, and phytonutrients.

For centuries, whole grains have been the cornerstone of the human diet. Whole grains were cultivated, stored, and eaten to provide the essential vitamins and minerals needed by the body. Gristmills evolved and were used to grind grains between stones, crushing the whole grain while keeping the bran, endosperm, and germ. With advances in newer technology, whole grains could now be separated. Using just the endosperm, a softer, refined, textured grain with a longer shelf life was created (1). However, many of the nutrients that the whole grain could offer, were removed.

Today, some of the health consequences related to removing the bran and the germ are better recognized and understood. The grain, as a whole, is a key source of fiber, minerals, vitamins, and phytonutrients.

THE BENEFITS OF WHOLE GRAINS

Dr. Joanne Slavin, of the University of Minnesota, has reviewed and compiled scores of recent studies on whole grains and health, to show how whole-grain intake is protective against cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity (2). The benefits of whole grains are mostly documented by repeated studies and include: stroke risk reduced 30-36%; type 2 diabetes risk reduced 21-30% ; heart disease risk reduced 25-28% ; better weight maintenance.

WHOLE GRAINS AS PART OF YOUR DAILY DIET

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) defines a product as whole grain when it contains 51% or more whole grain by weight. In addition, the FDA stated that *"the agency considers "whole grain" to include cereal grains that consist of the intact, ground, cracked, or flaked fruits of the grains whose principal components- the starchy endosperm, germ and bran- are present in the same relative proportion as they exist in the intact grain"* (3). Products that do not contain the above- that is all 3 components- in the correct proportion cannot be labeled as whole grain.

The 6th edition of the Dietary Guidelines for American stated that "consuming at least three or more ounces-equivalents of whole grains per day can reduce the risk of chronic disease and may help with weight maintenance. Thus, intake of at least three ounces-equivalents of whole grains per day is recommended by substituting whole grains for refined grains" (4).

A serving size of an ounce-equivalent can be considered as 1 slice of bread; 1 cup of ready to eat cereal, or ½ cup of cooked rice, cooked pasta, or cooked cereal. All age groups should eat at least half of all grain servings as whole grains. Empower yourself and your family by encouraging whole grain consumption in the daily diet. Make it a "Whole Grain" Day!

References:

1. Bell Institute of Health and Nutrition. (2007, March 15). Whole Grain & Health: Get the Whole Story, Bell Institute of Health and Nutrition. Retrieved April 1, 2008 from <http://www.bellinstitute.com/wholegrain>
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3. Food and Drug Administration. Whole-grain foods authoritative statement claim notification. Docket 99P-2209. Washington, DC; July 1999.
4. Dietary Guideline Committee. Report of the dietary guidelines committee on dietary guidelines for Americans. 2000. Retrieved April 18, 2008. www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines.dgac

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Healthy Eating for Busy Parents on the Run:

- Think ahead and plan where you will eat. Consider what meal options are available.
- Order regular or child portion sizes.
- Boost the nutrition in all types of sandwiches by adding tomatoes, lettuce, peppers or other vegetables.
- Think ahead of your food choices for the entire day.
- Try a smoothie made with juice, fruit, and yogurt for a snack.
- Remember, you set the example for your child/ children.

The Role of Nutrients in School Lunch

By Eileen M. Bellew, MA, RD, LDN

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) began during the World War II recruitment. During physical examination, physicians' discovered that a large majority of young men were undernourished and unable to pass the entrance exam. At the same time, farmers within the United States had an over abundance of commodities not being used and going to waste. Through a coordinated effort, these products were purchased by the United States Department of Agriculture and distributed to families in need. Another source of food distribution began as a pilot program in selected schools serving school lunch. Where else to lay a good nutrition foundation than in schools? With much success in the pilot programs, the National School Lunch Program was founded.

The United States Department of Agriculture continues to provide commodities products for school meals. Some of the government commodities received include green beans, peas, cheese, turkey, chicken, beef, canned fruits, fresh fruits, and dried milk. Do these foods sound familiar? You will find most of these items on our school menus.

Today, the focus of good nutrition continues. Research has indicted a crucial relationship between nutrition and health, and nutrition and learning. The role of School Food Service is to provide healthy, affordable meals. School Food Service provides these healthy meals according to the guidelines established by the United States Department of Agriculture

The guidelines are based on the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) and the recommendations of the Dietary Guideline for all Americans. A basic premise of the Dietary Guidelines is that nutrient needs should be met primarily through consuming foods. The National School Lunch Program encourages the nutrients the students need for proper growth and development. Each nutrient contributes to

good health.

Carbohydrates: This group supplies energy and spares protein, which is used for growth and maintenance of body tissue. Carbohydrates provides fiber and can be found in whole grains, breads, cereals, rice, pasta, and starchy foods, such as potatoes, corn, and lima beans. Simple carbohydrates, which are quickly broken down within our bodies include sugar, honey, candy, and soft drinks, and should be limited.

Proteins: Often found in meats, milk, fish, and dairy, this nutrient helps build and repair body tissue. This nutrient also serves in functional roles within the body, specifically, working to form amino acids. Protein can be broken down and serve as an energy source when energy intake, in particular carbohydrate intake, is inadequate.

Fats: Your body needs fat! This nutrient helps carry the fat-soluble vitamins such as A, D, E, and K throughout the body. Fat adds flavor to meals and provides a feeling of fullness since fats take longer to digest. Consumption of saturated fats and *trans* fats should be limited.

Vitamin A: Not only does this vitamin promote growth, keep skin healthy, and promote eye health, but it also keeps the body resistant to infection. This fat-soluble vitamin can be found in liver, broccoli, carrots, sweet potatoes, winter squash, and other leafy greens; milk and fortified butter and margarine. Of all the vitamins one should get daily, this is the most challenging to meet. Be sure to include these items, not only on the school menus, but also in your daily diet.

Vitamin C: Another vitamin that aids against infection, this water-soluble nutrient can be found in most fruits and vegetables. Vitamin C or Ascorbic Acid helps strengthen blood vessels and promotes healing of wounds. This

nutrient also helps in absorption of iron.

Iron: Iron deficiency is the most common nutritional deficiency in the United States. The role of this nutrient is to combine protein in the blood to form hemoglobin. Rich foods include enriched breads and cereals, liver, organ meats, egg yolks, dried legumes and leafy green vegetables.

Calcium: Drink your milk! Food sources include milk, yogurt, cheeses, kale, collard greens, and turnip greens. This nutrient helps in bone formation, assists in blood clotting, and aids in muscle contractions and normal nerve functions.

Now that we have an overview of the nutrients our student body requires, it's your turn. Taking care of yourself, allows you to take care of your students. For a healthier you, here are a few suggestions:

- Consume a variety of nutrient dense foods and beverages among the basic food groups while limiting intake of saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars and salt.
- Maintain your body weight in a healthy range by balancing your intake with your output.
- Engage in regular physical activity to promote healthy, psychological well being, as well as a healthy body weight.
- Be sure to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables while staying within energy needs.
- Consume less than 2300mg (1 teaspoon of salt) of sodium per day. Remember, sodium occurs naturally within foods.

For more information on health and daily intakes, visit www.eatright.org

“Meatless In Marple” By Alex Jamison (MN Senior High Student)

My name’s Alex, and I’m a vegetarian. Being a vegetarian is not a fad or a quick way to shed pounds, but a big decision and a way of life. There are many factors that lead to this decision and many different options, which make every vegetarian unique. Some reasons one might choose to live without meat include: religion, humane reasons, (wanting to protect or save animals), dieting, or for health reasons, like me. Although we typically get stereotyped into one category, “herbivores”, there are many varieties and forms of vegetarians. There are: pesco-vegetarians who eat fish, pollotarians, who eat chicken, lacto-ovo vegetarians, who don’t eat meat, but do eat their products (eggs, milk, cheese etc..) and the strictest type, **vegans**, who don’t eat any meat, any products (including honey and gelatin) and typically do not wear silk, wool, leather or suede.

It is important to understand that deciding to become a vegetarian should not happen over night. Since you give up an entire food group, it is best to research the topic, try vegetarian reci-

pes to ensure you like them, buy vitamins and supplements (including vitamin B, prominent in meat), and discover ways to make sure you will get enough protein through other foods. Once you become a vegetarian, it is easy to splurge on junk foods like chips and pizza, but keep in mind this is a special opportunity to take care of your body, filling it with healthy, not empty calories!

At first it will seem difficult to eat out at restaurants, and in cafeterias, but generally there are always options for vegetarians. Marple’s cafeteria has a salad and sandwich bar in which you can be meat-free: granola, cereal, and on occasion, vegetarian soups, and pastas. And remember, when buying lunch, try to skip over French fries and soft pretzels, and seek out the fruits and veggies!

Becoming a vegetarian is a difficult decision, and is not for everyone. It takes discipline to ignore the craving for turkey on Thanksgiving, burgers on the Fourth of July, or a Philly cheese steak, but becoming a vegetarian opens the door to a very healthy life style, a

way to be unique, and generally an interesting conversation starter!

THANKS ALEX !



Quite often the intake of too many sugary foods, caffeine beverages, and candy can leave children feeling sluggish, and even ill by the end of the school day.



LET’S CELEBRATE !

MARPLE NEWTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT FOOD SERVICE HAS THE SOLUTIONS TO YOUR CELEBRATIONS!

Let us assist you in making celebrations fun and easy! Instead of scrambling around the night before trying to get a treat together for a class party, why not let us provide it for you? Don’t worry about napkins.

We will take care of everything. All items meet the Wellness Guidelines and items will be individually wrapped.

Your celebration items are delivered right to the classroom at the time specified by our faculty. Please check the Food Service Website for selections. In addition, pricing is very reasonable. Just print and complete the form. Forward this form along with payment to your School Food Service Manager and enjoy the ease of your “celebration” ! Questions, please call 610.359.4275.

*Wanted.....Part time
Food Service Staff
\$8.00 substitute rate
Call 610.359.4275
for more info*



Healthy Foods: Making Good Choices

Here are your best bets for eating well. These 5 health foods are some of the healthiest because they meet at least three of the following criteria:

- Are a good or excellent source of fiber, vitamins, minerals and other nutrients
- Are high in phytonutrients and antioxidant compounds, such as vitamins A and E and beta-carotene
- May help reduce the risk of heart disease and other health conditions
- Are low in calorie density, meaning you get a larger portion size with a fewer number of calories
- Are readily available

Why eat apples? Apples are an excellent source of pectin, a soluble fiber that can lower blood cholesterol and glucose levels. Fresh apples are also good sources of vitamin C — an antioxidant that protects your body's cells from damage. Vitamin C also helps form the connective tissue collagen, keeps your capillaries and blood vessels healthy, and aids in the absorption of iron.

Why eat blueberries? Blueberries are a rich source of plant compounds (phytonutrients). As with cranberries, phytonutrients in blueberries may help prevent urinary tract infections. Blueberries may also improve short-term memory and promote healthy aging. Blueberries are also a low-calorie source of fiber and vitamin C — 1 cup of fresh blueberries has 84 calories, 3.6 grams of fiber and 14 mg of vitamin C.

Why eat broccoli? Besides being a good source of calcium, potassium, folate and fiber, broccoli contains phytonutrients — a group of compounds that may help prevent chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes and some cancers. Broccoli is also a good source of vitamins A and C — antioxidants that protect your body's cells from damage.

Why eat sweet potatoes? The deep orange-yellow color of sweet potatoes tells you that they're high in the antioxidant beta-carotene. Food sources of beta-carotene, which are converted to vitamin A in your body, may help slow the aging process and reduce the risk of some cancers. Sweet potatoes are also good sources of fiber, vitamins B-6, C and E, folate and potassium. And like all vegetables, they're fat-free and relatively low in calories — one small sweet potato has just 54 calories.

Why eat spinach? Spinach is high in vitamins A and C and folate. It's also a good source of riboflavin, vitamin B-6, calcium, iron and magnesium. The plant compounds in spinach may boost your immune system and may help keep your hair and skin healthy.

For more information, please visit www.mayoclinic.com.