

Welcome to Family Nutrition

From NutritionForHealthyKids.com

October: Week One

An Introduction To Family Nutrition



Parents,

Maybe you're in the camp that sees America's obesity epidemic as a crisis worth solving. Or perhaps you're simply an advocate of lifelong learning. In either case, nutrition education is key to living longer, healthier, and happier lives, both for all of us as individuals and for our society as a whole. Recognizing the need for nutrition education is the first step in learning how to eat healthier.

But it's so hard! But I can't afford those more expensive healthy foods! But I don't have time to cook! But . . . but . . . but . . .

Being healthy shouldn't be painful! Let's start this journey to better nutrition by realizing that Rome wasn't built in a day, and you can't radically transform your lifestyle and eating habits overnight, either. But as you learn more about nutrition, you'll be making more informed choices about what you put into your body. You'll also be modeling more positive eating behaviors for your kids and setting them on the right track to healthier eating.

This course is named Family Nutrition because the family who learns nutrition together eats healthier together! And YOU can be that family!

Learn big, but start small when it comes to making changes at home. Incremental change is more likely to stick. So as we go along in the course, if you find an opportunity here or there to

implement something your family has learned, go for it! Maybe you could start serving a fruit or vegetable at every meal, or cutting back on your kids' snacking before dinner, or buying organic strawberries instead of the pesticide-laden conventionally grown ones.

Perhaps a trip to the Farmer's Market could get your family motivated to eat better, or meeting a weight loss goal, or any number of other things. The point is . . . Learn. And then do what works for you. The more you do, the more your kids will do, and pretty soon all those baby steps amount to real change. Let's get started!

Nutrition Pre-Test

Take the test below and see how your nutrition knowledge ranks among your family members. Who scores the highest? (The answers will be included with next week's lesson.)

1. Which is not an antioxidant?

Vitamin C, Beta-Carotene, Aspartame, Vitamin E

2. What contains the most calories?

Protein, Fat, Carbohydrate

3. Organic foods are *not* exposed to _____.

Acid rain, chemical pesticide, air pollution, Japanese beetles

4. Which of these can *reduce* your risk of cancer?

High-fructose corn syrup, adequate fiber intake, Splenda, being overweight

5. Which is *least* likely to be genetically modified?

Salmon, high-fructose corn syrup, soy products, lettuce

Note: To get everyone started on the right foot, this week's nutrition lesson is largely directed at parents, but the whole family can try their hand at the quiz above and take part in the two activities below. Next week there will be more activities specifically for the kids!

Recipe



Pineapple-Carrot Muffins

Your older kids might enjoy being turned loose in the kitchen to make this recipe, and the younger ones will enjoy “helping” too. Cooking is such a wonderful family activity!

Did you know that you can slice off the top of a pineapple, or the top of a carrot, and plant it? Your kids might enjoy trying this recipe for Pineapple-Carrot Muffins, but what will really get them moving is the idea of re-growing the pineapple and carrot tops after they use most of the pineapple and carrot for the recipe. *What a fun way to get the kids excited about fruits and vegetables!*

Organic produce will work best because it likely hasn't been treated with anything to inhibit sprouting. You'll also need a couple of shallow bowls or flowerpots with a

layer of small, clean stones lining the bottom.

STEP ONE: Cut a section from the top of your carrot that's about a quarter to a half inch thick. Place it on top of your layer of stones, and add enough water to keep the stones and the bottom of the carrot wet at all times. For the pineapple, you'll need to slice the top off, leaving an inch or so of fruit attached, and then follow the same method of placing it on the stones with water.

Carrots are root crops, but if you keep your carrot top wet it should grow some new green leaves that will look nice in your dish. After several weeks of doing the same with the pineapple, you might have some success transplanting it into a pot filled with dirt and growing yourself a new pineapple plant. Look at this, kids: Eating healthy *can* be fun!

STEP TWO: Make some yummy, healthy muffins!

Pineapple-Carrot Muffins

1 1/2 cups white whole wheat flour
1/4 cup brown sugar
1 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/4 tsp. salt
2 Tbsp. coconut oil (or unsweetened applesauce)
1 egg (or 2 egg whites)
1/4 cup milk
1 cup carrot, grated
8 oz. can pineapple (do NOT drain) OR an equivalent amount of fresh pineapple



Use a whisk to combine flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, spices, and salt. In a separate bowl, whisk to combine coconut oil (or applesauce), egg, milk, carrot, and pineapple (and its juices). Add dry ingredients and mix until just moistened throughout.

Bake in a prepared muffin pan at 350 degrees for about 15 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Makes 12 muffins.

Next week in Family Nutrition (lesson posted October 7):

We'll learn about which sources of nutrition information are unbiased and trustworthy. We'll also discover "Food Geography" and have some fun with the term "nature-deficiency disorder."

DISCLAIMER: While all of the information presented is believed to be accurate, it is not absolutely guaranteed. Please do your own research on the topics discussed and make your own decisions for yourself and your family. Previewing the lessons before sharing them with your children is suggested. Feedback is welcome, as well as suggested corrections if you find some bit of information to be in error.

Nothing in this course is intended as medical advice or to replace the treatment or recommendations of your doctor or other health professional.

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