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# HEALTHY CHOICES

## FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

### FOCUS ON

## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



**S**tart a garden — in the yard or a pot on the deck — for fresh, low cost, flavorful additions to meals. Herbs, cucumbers, peppers or tomatoes are good choices for beginners.

**Plan and cook smart.** Make and freeze vegetable soups, stews, or other dishes in advance. Add leftover vegetables to casseroles.

**Fire up the grill!** Use the grill to cook mushrooms, carrots, peppers, or potatoes on a kabob skewer. Brush them with oil to keep them from drying out. Grilled fruits such as peaches, pineapple, or mangos add great flavor to a cookout.

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## PARENT'S POW-WOW

Snacks can help children get the nutrients needed to grow and keep a healthy weight. Prepare single-serving snacks for younger children to help them get just enough to please their hunger. Let older kids make their own snacks by keeping healthy foods in the kitchen. Save time by slicing veggies. Store sliced vegetables in the refrigerator and serve with dips such as hummus or low-fat dressing. Top half a whole-wheat English muffin with spaghetti sauce, chopped veggies, and low-fat shredded mozzarella and melt in the microwave. Grab a glass of milk. A cup of low-fat or fat-free milk is an easy way to drink a healthy snack.



## BASIC BUDGET BITES



- **Convenience costs, so go back to the basics.** Convenience foods such as frozen dinners, pre-cut veggies, and instant rice, oatmeal, or grits will cost you more than if you were to make them from scratch yourself. Take the time to prepare your own — and save!
- **Go easy on your wallet.** Certain foods are typically low-cost options all year round. Try beans for a less costly protein food. For vegetables, buy carrots, greens, or potatoes. As for fruits, apples and bananas are good choices.



## FOOD FACTS

### WATER: THE NUTRIENT

**W**ater is one of the six vital nutrients needed for life. We cannot survive without water. Many people don't know the big part water plays in the body and diet.

Water should be your main drink choice. It is cheap and freely available. It not only serves to satisfy thirst, but it does so while adding no extra calories, fat, cholesterol, sodium or caffeine.

#### Benefits of Drinking Water

- Prevents dehydration
- Carries nutrients and oxygen to cells
- Lubricates body tissues
- Regulates body temperature
- Helps strengthen muscles
- Helps prevent constipation
- Gives the feeling of fullness when consumed before or during a meal

We lose water each day so it is

important to balance that loss with intake. The body has a plan in place to maintain water balance. Thirst is the trigger that reminds us that we need to take in more water.

As adults age they may go through a decrease in their thirst sensation. If this happens, you may not notice you are thirsty until it is too late. The body has already begun to dehydrate once a person realizes they are thirsty.

Another factor that causes dehydration for seniors is that the amount of body water decreases with age, which raises your risk of becoming dehydrated.

Remember that fluid intake is not limited to water only. Fluid can come in the form of juice, milk, or soup, too.

Source: LSU AgCenter



## COOKING WITH KIDS

### YOGURT POPS

- **6 ounces yogurt, fat-free, flavored or plain**
- **$\frac{3}{4}$  cup fruit juice**

1. Put the yogurt and juice in a bowl.
2. Stir together well.
3. Pour the mix into paper cups.
4. Stick a popsicle stick in the center of the mix in the cup
5. Place the yogurt pops in the freezer until they turn solid.

**Yield:** 4 servings

**Nutrition Facts:** 45 calories; 0 g total fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 20 mg sodium; 10 g total carbohydrate; 0 g dietary fiber; 9 g sugars; 1 g protein.

Source: USDA Recipe Finder



## RECIPE

### FARMERS MARKET SALSA

- **$\frac{1}{2}$  cup corn (fresh cooked or frozen)**
- **1 can black beans (15 ounce, drained and rinsed)**
- **1 cup tomatoes (fresh diced)**
- **$\frac{1}{2}$  cup onion (diced)**
- **$\frac{1}{2}$  cup green pepper (diced)**
- **2 tablespoons lime juice**
- **2 garlic cloves (finely chopped)**
- **$\frac{1}{2}$  cup picante sauce**

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Chill until serving time.

2. Drain before serving.
3. Serve with low-fat baked tortilla chips or fresh vegetables.

**Yield:** 8 servings

**Nutrition Facts:** 70 calories; 0 g total fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat; 0 mg cholesterol; 230 mg sodium; 13 g total carbohydrate; 3 g dietary fiber; 2 g sugars; 3 g protein

Source: USDA Recipe Finder

# LOCAL EVENTS

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## SMART TIPS: MAKE ACTIVE CHOICES

- Take a walk (10 minutes)
- Choose the stairs instead of the elevator (5 minutes)
- Park farther away and walk (5 minutes)
- Dance with your children (10 minutes)
- Move More

Source: Eat Smart, Move More, NC



**If you are interested in nutrition classes, contact your extension office.**

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