



NETA

**Nutrition Education Training Academy
Newsletter
For Early Childhood Education Providers**

April - June 2005

Volume 5, Issue 3



Creating Physically Active Communities



Research shows that increased physical activity may reduce the risks and effects of chronic conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease and hypertension. On an individual level, each person is able to make decisions with regards to his/her own personal health and activity level and to some degree that of their family members. How can we contribute to physical activity improvements at a community level so that everyone benefits?

The American Heart Association (AHA) gives the following recommendations:

- **Provide safe, accessible and attractive trails for walking and bicycling and sidewalks with curb cuts.** Physical activity may be more enjoyable for everyone, including people with disabilities.
- **Involve the widest possible variety of people at all stages of planning and implementing community physical activity programs.** This includes everyone within the community, including people with disabilities.
- **Provide community-based physical activity programs that include aerobics, strength building and flexibility.** These programs should meet the needs of specific populations (including racial and ethnic minority groups, women, older adults, people with disabilities and low-income groups).
- **Provide safe places for walking in any weather.** Open schools for community recreation, form neighborhood watch groups to enhance safety; encourage malls and other indoor or protected locations to be open and available.
- **Make sure that everyone is welcome and included.** Ensure that facilities accommodate and encourage participation by people of all racial, ethnic and income groups; women; older adults; and people with disabilities.
- **Enlist healthcare providers in the effort.** Remind healthcare providers to encourage their patients to add more physical activity into their lives.
- **Involve the workplace.** Encourage employers to provide supportive worksite environments and policies that allow employees to incorporate moderate physical activity into their lives.
- **Encourage family and home support.** Include parents and guardians in physical activity instruction and in community physical activity programs. Encourage them to support their children's participation in enjoyable physical activities.

Using the above list as a starting point, what can **you** realistically do to improve and advocate for the health and physical activity environment within your community? Each small step contributes to the greater whole.

"An early-morning walk is a blessing for the whole day"
Henry David Thoreau

References:

1. American Heart Association. <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4531>

Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture have recently introduced the new *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005*, which is revised every 5 years. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* gives advice to the general population (2 years and older) to promote health and reduce risk for major chronic diseases through diet and physical activity.

"Finding Your Way to a Healthier You: Based on the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*" is a useful consumer brochure. Key recommendations and some helpful tips for each:

- **Feel better today. Stay healthy for tomorrow.**

The food and physical activity choices you make every day affect your health – how you feel today, tomorrow, and in the future. You may be eating plenty of food, but not eating the right foods that give your body the nutrients you need to be healthy. Be sure that you are getting enough physical activity to stay fit and to burn extra calories. Healthy habits may help you reduce the risk of chronic diseases (such as heart disease, osteoporosis, and certain cancers), as well as increasing your chances of longevity.

- **Make smart choices from every food group.**

Eating a variety of nutrient-rich foods every day is a great way to provide your body with a balance of needed nutrition. Be sure to stay within your daily caloric needs. Good ideas: emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products; include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs and nuts; and choose foods low in saturated fats, *trans* fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium) and added sugars. Make good food choices and watch portion sizes wherever you are – at home, or when eating out.

- **Mix up your choices within each food group.**

Focus on fruits and vegetables (select more dark green veggies) and eat a variety of them. Be sure to get your calcium-rich foods (such as low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt or cheese, calcium-fortified foods and beverages). Make ½ of your grains whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice or pasta every day. Vary your protein choices -- lean meat and poultry, fish, beans, peas, nuts and seeds.

- **Find your balance between food and physical activity.**

Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness. It also helps with body weight control by balancing calories eaten from food with the calories you expend each day. Good suggestions: be physically active for at least 30 minutes most days of the week; increase the intensity or amount of time that you are physically active if you are interested in helping control body weight and for greater health benefits; and children and teens should be physically active for 60 minutes every day, or most every day.

- **Get the most nutrition out of your calories.**

Depending on your age, activity level, and whether you are trying to gain, maintain, or lose weight, there is a right number of calories for you to eat daily. Choose the most nutritionally-rich foods you can from each food group every day – those that are lower in calories and packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients. Foods to select more often: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.

- **NUTRITION: to know the facts...use the label.**

Most packaged foods have a Nutrition Facts label. Look for foods that are lower in saturated fats, *trans* fats, cholesterol and sodium. Be sure to get enough potassium, fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium, and iron. Use the % Daily Value (DV) column as a guide: 5% DV or less is low, 20% DV or more is high. (Note: 2,000 calories is the value used as a general reference on food labels).

- **Play it safe with food.**

Know how to prepare, handle, and store food safely to keep you and your family safe. Wash hands! Clean food-contact surfaces, fruits and vegetables. Separate raw, cooked, and ready-to-eat foods while shopping, preparing or storing. Cook meat, poultry and fish to safe internal temperatures to kill microorganisms. Chill perishable foods promptly and thaw foods properly.

- **About alcohol.**

If you choose to drink alcohol, do so in moderation (1 drink a day for women and up to 2 drinks for men). 1 drink is equal to: 12 ounces of regular beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1-1/2 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.

These are the basic guidelines for eating a healthy diet and being physically active. For more information about the food groups and nutrition values, or to pick up some new ideas on physical activity, go to www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines.

The booklet, "Finding Your Way to a Healthier You: Based on the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*", as well as the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 2005, 6th Edition, may be viewed and downloaded from the Internet at www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines.

References:

1. The United States Department of Health and Human Services <http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines/>

Farmers' Market News

Seasonal Ethnic Fruits & Vegetables: Artichokes

Here's an interesting, healthy and nutritious vegetable – a source of Vitamin C and potassium -- that you may find at your local Farmers' Market this Spring.

Artichokes are native to the Mediterranean. The part of the vegetable that is consumed is actually the plant's flower bud. California artichokes are available throughout the year – peak season is March through May and at a smaller degree in October.

When selecting artichokes, look for ones that are dark green, heavy for their size and free of blemishes. Avoid artichokes that are beginning to open; they should be tight and compact. Washed and dried artichokes may be placed in a plastic bag and refrigerated for about 2 weeks.

Most people cook the whole artichoke and then pull off each leaf petal to eat the delectable heart by slipping it through their teeth. This is a fun and delicious finger food for all ages.

To prepare artichokes, wash them under cold running water. Pull off lower petals that are small or discolored. Trim off the stem near the base (this will help it to 'stand'). Cut off top quarter and trim the thorny tips of the petal from the remaining leaves. In a large pot, cover and cook the artichoke in water that is about 3 inches deep. Cook for about 30-45 minutes, depending on the size of the artichoke. It's ready when a leaf can be easily pulled from the artichoke. Drain it upside down. Remove the fuzzy inedible center by spreading the leaves apart carefully and pulling out the light green and purplish-colored cone, which exposes the hairy choke (this may be scraped out with a spoon). At the bottom is the prized and edible 'heart'.

Artichokes may also be added to stir-fry and pasta dishes.

Try the yummy artichoke recipe below!

References:

1. <http://www.artichokes.org>
2. <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/vegetables/globeart.html>



Nutritious Seasonal Recipes

Artichokes With Light Honey Mustard Dip

Ingredients:

- 4 medium California artichokes
- ½ cup light mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons honey
- ½ teaspoon mustard
- ½ teaspoon lemon juice



Method:

1. Wash artichokes under cold running water. Cut off stem at base; remove small bottom leaves. If desired, trim tips of leaves and cut off top two inches. Stand artichokes upright in deep, non-reactive saucepan large enough to hold snugly.
2. Add 1 teaspoon salt and two to three inches boiling water. Cover and boil gently 35 to 45 minutes or until base can be pierced easily with a fork. (Add a little more boiling water, if needed.)
3. Turn artichokes upside down to drain.
4. Serve immediately or cool completely; cover and refrigerate to chill.
5. Combine light mayonnaise, honey, mustard and lemon juice; mix well. Makes about 1/2 cup.

Prep: 10-15 min. Cook: 35-45 min.

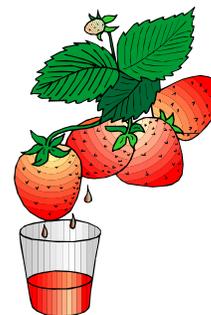
Servings: 4

<http://www.artichokes.org>

Strawberry Shake

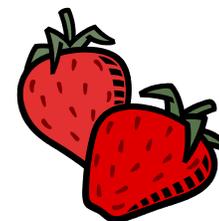
Ingredients:

- 1-1/2 cups strawberries, stemmed
- 2 cups 1% lowfat milk
- 2 tablespoons sugar



Method:

1. Place all ingredients in a blender container.
2. Blend until smooth.
3. Pour into glasses. Serve.



Prep: 10 min.

Servings: 2

Healthy Latino Recipes Made with Love,

California Latino 5 a Day Campaign.

www.ca5aday.com

Physical Activity Corner



Maybe you've had an exercise-related injury and want to get back into your routine, but are a bit hesitant due to a fear of re-injury. Or, perhaps you've wanted to begin a regular physical activity program, but don't know where to start. Regardless of your personal reasons to increase physical activity in your life... *Congratulations!* You've taken the first step!

The Center for Disease Control's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion shares these tips to help prevent common activity-induced injuries:

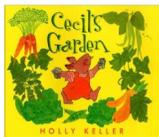
- *Listen to your body* – Monitor your heart rate, fatigue level and any physical discomfort.
- *Be aware of signs of overexertion* – Such as breathlessness and muscle soreness.
- *Be able to recognize warning signs and signals of a heart attack* – Such as sweating, chest and arm pain, dizziness and lightheadedness.
- *Wear appropriate clothing and use proper equipment for the activity.*
- *Properly warm up your muscles through increasingly more intense activity* – Allow 3-5 minutes at the beginning.
- *Cool down by decreasing the level of intensity* – Allow your body to reduce the pace near the end of the activity.
- *Start at an easy pace* – Gradually increase time or distance.
- *Drink plenty of water throughout the day* – Replenish lost fluids by drinking at least 8-10 cups per day (Note: 1 cup = 8 ounces). Drink a cup of water before the activity and another ½ cup every 15 minutes that you remain active.

Reference: http://www.cdc.gov/nccdcph/dnpa/physical/life/avoiding_injury.htm

Gardening Storybooks

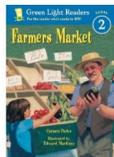


1. *Cecil's Garden* by Holly Keller, Greenwillow Books, 2002.



It was time for Cecil's family to plant the garden, but nobody could agree on what to plant! After visiting the neighbors, Cecil has the answer. This book brings a fresh look at family relations, and helps children see peaceful conflict resolution.

2. *Farmers Market* by Carmen Parks, Green Light Readers, 2002.



This is a story about a girl who goes to a farmers' market to sell delicious fruits and vegetables from her parent's farm. This would likely be a good story for many city children who buy most of their food from supermarket chains.

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Nutrition Tidbits



Tips for Parents: A trip to the farmers' market is a terrific outing for everyone. Fresh produce can be bought for the week's meals and snacks. Children's natural curiosity can be applied to exploratory learning by touching, feeling, smelling and tasting. With the many different varieties of seasonal fruits and vegetables available, *each* and *every* trip to the farmers' market can be a new and exciting adventure!

Some Practical Ideas: Fun activities for children to do while at the farmers' market include feeling the texture and describing the smell of different fruits and vegetables; counting the number of unfamiliar vegetables (or fruits) that they see; finding all the produce that is of the same color; identifying the first letter of the fruit or vegetable's name; and selecting at least one unfamiliar fruit or vegetable to purchase and taste-test at home.

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NETA Program Funded by:

