

Food News For Parents

April, 2017

Dear Parents:

This month, we are coming to your child's classroom to teach a lesson on the protein food group. This food group includes meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, and eggs as well as nuts and seeds. In this letter, we are sharing information on the health benefits of protein foods and give ideas on selection and preparation.

Have a good month.

Sincerely,

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Protein Food Group

This food group was known as the meat group, but the name was changed a couple of years ago because it includes more than meat. All foods made from meat, poultry, seafood, beans and peas, eggs, processed soy products, nuts, and seeds are considered part of the protein food group.

Foods in this group supply many nutrients to help the body grow and maintain health. The main nutrients in protein foods include:

Protein—An essential nutrient, it functions as building blocks for all of the body's cells.

B Vitamins—They help the body release energy and aid in red blood cell formation.

Iron—Carries oxygen in your blood to all parts of your body.

Magnesium—Used in building bones and releasing energy from muscles.

Zinc—Help the immune system function properly.

Source: MyPlate

Saving Money at the Grocery Store

Protein foods can be the most expensive part of your grocery bill. Meat, poultry and fish are known as complete protein foods, and are costly. To cut spending try the following tips:

- Serve casseroles using small amounts of meat with rice or pasta and vegetables.
- Read weekly food ads and plan meals around the sale items for the week.
- Purchase large cuts of meat on sale, cut into several pieces for different meals. Cook one piece then wrap the rest and store in the freezer.
- Try the planned over method of food preparation. Cook one meat, like a chicken or roast and then use leftovers several more times changing the way you serve it. For example, roast a whole chicken; serve chicken one night, second meal make a chicken casserole and a third meal shred the rest, and make a chicken pot pie.

The combinations are endless. You can do this with beef, pork or chicken.

What's a Serving of Protein

Children ages 4 to 8 years of age, need to eat 3-4oz of protein foods each day, older children and adults need 5-6oz. A child size serving at a meal is about 2oz of meat or other protein. Add foods from the other groups from MyPlate to provide a balanced meal for a young child. This allows you to offer a protein source a couple of times a day. Two ounces of a protein serving is equal to:

- ½ cup of dried beans
- 2 tablespoons of peanut butter
- A piece of meat the size of two match boxes (Not very big)

Source: MyPlate

COMBINE PLANT PROTEINS FOR INEXPENSIVE MEALS

Plant sources of protein, (usually less expensive) are incomplete, but if you combine dried beans with a grain or a dairy product, it makes a complete protein and is just as nutritious as a serving of meat.

Serving meatless meals several times a week will help keep your grocery bill down and still provide your family with high quality meals. Here are a few combinations:

GRAINS OR DAIRY + DRIED BEANS = MEAT SUBSTITUTE

- Red Beans + Rice
- Black-Eyed Peas + Corn Bread
- Lentil or Pea Soup + Bread
- Bean Tacos or Burritos (the shell is the grain)
- Bean and Cheese Casserole
- Lima Beans + Milk served in the same meal
- Bean or Peas + Macaroni and Cheese

To complete the meal, add a salad or vegetable, a fruit and milk.

Source: EFNEP

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Breakfast Burrito with Salsa

Yield: 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 4 eggs (large)
- 1/8 cup corn (frozen)
- 1 Tablespoon milk (1%)
- 1/8 cup green pepper (2 Tablespoons, diced)
- 1/4 cup onion (minced)
- 1 Tablespoon tomatoes, fresh (diced)
- 1 teaspoon mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic (granulated)
- hot pepper sauce (optional)
- 4 flour tortillas (8 inch)
- 1/4 cup salsa (canned)

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large mixing bowl, blend the eggs, corn, milk, green peppers, onions, tomatoes, mustard garlic, hot pepper sauce, and salt for 1 minute until eggs are smooth.
2. Pour egg mixture into a lightly oiled 9x9x2 inch baking dish and cover with foil.
3. Bake for 20-25 minutes until eggs are set and thoroughly cooked.
4. Wrap tortillas in plastic and microwave for 20 seconds until warm. Be careful when unwrapping the tortillas. The steam can be hot.
5. Cut baked egg mixture into 4 equal pieces and roll 1 piece of cooked egg in each tortilla.
6. Serve each burrito topped with 2 Tablespoons of salsa.

Cost: Per Recipe: \$1.67 Per Serving: \$0.42

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 burrito, 1/4 of recipe
Amount Per Serving

Calories	247
Total Fat	9g
Saturated Fat	3g
Cholesterol	212mg
Sodium	506mg
Total Carbohydrate	30g
Dietary Fiber	3g
Sugars	3g
Protein	11g
Vitamin A	78mcg
Vitamin C	6mg
Calcium	105mg
Iron	3mg

Source: USDA What's Cooking Recipe Finder
<http://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/>
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Food Family Fun

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1-866-762-2237. TTY/TTD/FRS dial 711. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP. The USDA and the University of Florida IFAS Extension are equal opportunity providers and employers.