Dear Parents:

This month, our Family Nutrition Program will be teaching your child about the fruit group. Fruits bring a wide range of color to our meals. Along with color, comes vitamins and antioxidants which keep the body’s cells in good condition. A diet rich in plant foods, both fruits and vegetables, is strongly recommended by nutrition experts. We should eat 2-3 different fruits each day.

Sincerely,

Beth Brinson
Extension Program Assistant
Family Nutrition Program

Diann Douglas
Extension Agent IV
Family and Consumer Sciences

WHAT INFLUENCES YOUR CHILD’S GROWTH?

Health experts will tell you, a child’s growth rate, both height and weight is a picture of the child’s health. Ideally, a child will fit within a range and not become too heavy or too light. Although children continue to grow in height throughout childhood, growth is uneven.

Your child’s appetite is a good indication of a growth spurt. You may see a period of time when your child can’t get enough to eat and always seems hungry—this is a time of growth. Several months later, it may seem like your child has no appetite at all—this is an indication that growth has slowed down. There are a number of factors that influence a child’s growth:

- **Family History**—Tall parents tend to have tall children. Short parents have short children.
- **Gender**—Preschool boys end to be taller than girls, while their weight is similar until the teenage years.
- **Sleep**—Preschoolers need 11-14 hours of sleep a day, including naps and nighttime sleep.
- **Nutrition**—Healthy food choices are necessary for your child’s growth.
- **Health Status**—Chronic illness or other special needs can affect growth.

SHOPPING TIPS TO SAVE FOOD DOLLARS

Groceries can be costly, but with planning, you can keep your grocery bills from draining your wallet.

$ Keep paper and pencil in the kitchen to list foods you need.

$ Plan meals to use seasonal foods—right now, citrus fruits like oranges and grapefruit are in season and are better prices; during the summer months peaches and watermelons are in season.

$ Check out dollar stores. Canned fruits can be purchased at a bargain.

$ Shop only once a week. The more trips to the store, the more money you spend. It’s hard to purchase only a few items on any trip to the grocery store.

$ Don’t go down every aisle when you shop.

$ Shop early when the store is not crowded. You will get through the store faster and spend less.

$ Smaller-sized fruits and vegetables may be cheaper than larger ones.

$ Instead of buying canned fruits and vegetables in larger pieces, buy these foods canned in smaller pieces. For example, pineapple chunks and diced tomatoes usually cost less than pineapple rings and whole tomatoes.

$ When buying canned fruits, select fruit packed in 100% juice rather than syrup.
IDEAS TO GET MORE FRUIT INTO YOUR MEALS

Fruits are low in sodium and calories and provide dietary fiber, vitamin C, potassium and folic acid in our diets. Many people think fruits are too expensive to eat every day, but they are a nutritional bargain. Whether fresh, frozen or dried, they are part of a healthy meal plan. Here are some ideas to help you serve a variety in your diet.

Snacks
- Spread apple slices with peanut butter for a snack. (one apple will make 4 child size servings)
- Mix dried fruit with cereal, add broken pretzels for a trail mix.
- Cut up seasonal fruit and store in the refrigerator.
- Serve fresh fruit in season. Apple slices, orange wedges, watermelon chunks taste good and are refreshing.

Breakfast
- Top cereal with banana slices, peaches or blueberries.
- Drink a 6oz glass of orange juice.
- Make a smoothie with milk, 100% juice and fruit. (find a recipe or create your own)

Main Dish
- Try main dishes that use fruit as an ingredient such as chicken with apricots.
- Make grilled kabobs. Alternate 3” cubes of pork, beef or chicken with your choice of fruit such as pineapple or peaches. Serve with rice and you’ve got a meal.
- Add fruit to coleslaw. Try mandarin oranges, apples or grapes.

Source: MyPlate, Alabama Extension, Snap recipes

HOW MUCH FRUIT DOES A CHILD NEED EACH DAY?

Children 4-8 years old need 1-½ cup each day.
Offer ½ servings 3 times a day like ½ cup sliced fruit, ½ cup 100% juice, ½ banana or 4-5 strawberries.

RECIPES OF THE MONTH

Easy Fruit Salad
Serving Size: 14 servings

Ingredients:
1 can fruit cocktail (16 ounce, drained)
2 bananas (sliced)
2 oranges (cut into bite-size pieces)
2 apples (cut into bite-size pieces)
8 ounces yogurt, low-fat pina colada

Instructions:
1. Mix fruit in a large bowl.
2. Add yogurt and mix well.
3. Chill in refrigerator before serving.

Costs:
Total Cost: $3.61
Serving Cost: $0.26

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size ½ cup, 1/14 of recipe (109g)
Servings Per Container
Calories 70

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrition Facts</th>
<th>% Daily Value*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>0g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
<td>0g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans Fat</td>
<td>0g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>0mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>10mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate</td>
<td>17g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>2g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars</td>
<td>13g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>1g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vitamin A 4%
Vitamin C 25%
Calcium 2%
Iron 2%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>Less Than</td>
<td>65g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
<td>Less Than</td>
<td>20g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>Less Than</td>
<td>300mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>Less Than</td>
<td>2400mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate</td>
<td>300g</td>
<td>375g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>25g</td>
<td>30g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calories per gram:
Fat 9
Carbohydrate 4
Protein 4

Sources:
University of California, Cooperative Extension, Fresno County, Easy and Nutritious Family Recipes
USDA Gov http://www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/recipes

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.