

August: Kids Eat Right Month

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Planning meals ahead of time can improve your health while saving you time and money. Getting children involved in planning and cooking meals can have benefits for the whole family too. August



is Kids Eat Right Month, a new nutrition education, information sharing and action campaign created by Kids Eat Right, an initiative of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and its Foundation.

Kids Eat Right Month spotlights healthy nutrition and active lifestyles for children and families, offering simple steps to help families shop smart, cook healthy, and eat right.

Tips to shop smart, cook healthy & eat right:

Shop smart. Kids can have a big influence on family food spending, but as a family shopper, you control what makes it home. Some ways to get the family involved with grocery shopping are to create the grocery list together and get food-group snacks they like such as fruit, crunchy vegetables, string cheese, yogurt, or pudding cups.



Shop supermarket aisles together and read food labels. Compare Nutrition Facts labels to make healthier choices. Review the serving size and total number of servings in the container.

Cook healthy. Involve children in the cutting, mixing and preparation of meals. Kids love control and creativity. Any way they can be included in meal planning or preparing will increase the likelihood of a successful dinner. Younger kids can put plates on the table, pour beverages, or fold napkins. Older kids can get ingredients, wash produce, mix, and stir.



You could even have your teens be the cook for a night and you could be their helper in the kitchen.



Another way to make meal time more appealing is to add variety to staple dishes by varying the ways you cook them. Grill or broil the chicken you usually bake, mash the potatoes you typically roast, and steam the vegetables you normally sauté.

Eat right. Sit down together as a family to enjoy a wonderful meal and the opportunity to share the day's experiences with one another. Dinner-time conversations have a huge impact, as you share ideas and pass along family values. Pick topics that are positive and allow everyone to talk.



TV and mobile devices can create distractions that can throw off any family's mealtime. Declare mealtime a TV and phone-free zone, except for emergencies. While finding time to enjoy meals together gets trickier for families every day, research continues to demonstrate that family meals are a great way to promote healthy family eating habits. Putting together a family meal does not have to be complicated. Let everyone choose a favorite item and build simple, delicious meals around them.



Learn more about how you can shop smart, cook healthy and eat right at

<http://www.eatright.org/kids/>. For more food,



nutrition and health information from UNL Extension go to www.food.unl.edu or scan the QR code with your smart phone or other electronic device to go directly to the website.

Additional Resources & Links:

- **Basic Foods for Cupboard, Fridge and Freezer: Create Your Own List!** Are you tired of all the planning, hunting and gathering needed to find the ingredients required for many recipes? Would you like to go to your cupboard, refrigerator or freezer and already have most -- if not all -- the ingredients needed to make a meal? This list of foods can be combined and recombined in a variety of new, delicious ways. They are offered as a starter list to help you begin developing a list that works for you. <http://food.unl.edu/fnh/basic-list>.
- **Recipe Central from UNL Extension.** Enjoy healthy cooking from your own kitchen. Use recipes from the following Recipe Central collections to get started! <http://food.unl.edu/fnh/recipe-central>.
- **Food Fun for Young Children.** Serving up quick, healthy meal & snack ideas for younger children at <https://food.unl.edu/fnh/food-fun-for-young-children>.
- **UNL Extension Calendar** – National Food Days, Weeks, and Months for August. <http://food.unl.edu/web/fnh/august>
- **Nutrition for the School-Aged Child, UNL Extension NebGuide.** When you send your child off to school, your job related to healthful meals for your child isn't over. During the school years, many nutrition lessons still need to be taught. Check out this resource at <http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/epublic/pages/publicationD.jsp?publicationId=484>.
- **Fun with 4-H Foods.** Tab through these recipes for some tasty treats to cook up with your kids. Remember, adult supervision is

always recommended when kids do any cooking in the kitchen! <http://food.unl.edu/youth/recipes>.

Sources:

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Updated: July 2014