



Kinship Link

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Pro Kinship for Kids

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March is National Nutrition Month Celebrate a World of Flavors

Celebrate a World of Flavors is the theme for 2022 National Nutrition Month. Work on incorporating your cultural foods and traditions, as you “Celebrate a World of Flavors” during National Nutrition Month and throughout the year. Exploring dishes is a great way to start enjoying different flavors of the world. It is a chance to learn more about your own food culture as well as those that may be new to you. Familiar ingredients can be presented in new ways and new foods may remind you of things you already know and love. You may also come across ingredients and flavors you’ve never experienced before. Trying foods and recipes from various cultures is one way to include foods from each food group, so it’s possible to plan meals that are nutritious, well-balanced, and bursting with flavor. Trying new flavors and foods from around the world can also help you increase the variety in the foods you eat. Choosing a variety of nutritious foods from all of the food groups (fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and protein foods) and in the recommended

amounts will help you get the nutrients that are needed for good health. These are a few ways to embrace global cultures and cuisines when planning your meals and snacks.

Vary your breakfast (or first meal of the day) to include favorites from around the world. Healthful options are available, even if time is limited. These are just a few examples for on-the-go or when more time is allowed for eating.

- A smoothie with low-fat yogurt or buttermilk and tropical fruits, like papaya or mango
- Za’atar mixed with a little olive oil and spread on whole wheat pita bread, then topped with tomato slices, olives, cucumber, and fresh mint
- Scottish oatmeal or bulgur with low-fat or fat-free milk, or fortified soymilk, with a topping of fruits and nuts, or nut butter
- Congee, a Chinese rice porridge, that can be served plain or with vegetables and a protein food, such as cooked chicken, meat, or fish
- Vegetable upma, a Asian Indian dish, that can be made with semolina or rice, spiced with ginger and other seasonings.

- A Spanish omelet with potatoes and other veggies, topped with a sprinkle of cheese
- An omelet filled with fried rice, known as omurice in Japan

Choose healthful recipes to make during the week based on other cultures. Think seasonally when it comes to ingredients, as well as the temperature of dishes.

In hot weather, consider popular dishes from around the world that don’t require heating. Try different fruits and vegetables depending on what’s in season. For additional variety, choose ingredients with different textures and colors, such as:

- ◆ Gazpacho, a type of soup served cold, which can be made with tomatoes, peppers, and onions or a mixture of those vegetables with watermelon as the base.
- ◆ Salads that include different types of produce along with whole grains, dairy, and protein foods. Many options exist, such as tuna salad made with Greek yogurt, onion, celery, and whole wheat pasta.
- ◆ Spring rolls, a Vietnamese dish that’s served cold with a

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dipping sauce and includes fresh vegetables and a protein source, such as tofu, stuffed inside thin sheets of rice paper.

When temperatures drop, many people crave warm and filling foods to satisfy them - like soups, stews, roasted foods and items that are baked. Variations of these foods, which include healthful and flavorful ingredients, can be found in cultures all over the world. For example:

- * Munggo gisado is a stew native to the Philippines, featuring mung beans, leafy greens, and seafood
- * A spicy lentil and vegetable stew, known as Sambar, originates from India
- * Da pan ji is an example of a Chinese

stew made with chicken, potatoes, ginger, and garlic

- * Vegetables like cabbage, eggplant, or zucchini can be stuffed with seasoned mixtures that may include meats, grains, and sauces. One example is mahshi, a Middle Eastern dish, made of zucchini stuffed with cooked rice, lamb, and spices served in a tomato-based sauce.

There are so many different food combinations which can be flavorful and nutritious at the same time, and the same is true for snacking.

Choose healthier snacks that include foods from different food groups, such as:

- ◇ Fruit chutney eaten with bread or

cheese

- ◇ Raw veggies with hummus or tzatziki, which is a creamy yogurt-based dressing made with cucumbers, garlic, and dill
- ◇ Baba ganouj, a mixture made of roasted eggplant and tahini, which is a sesame seed paste, served with whole wheat pita bread
- ◇ For a crunchier snack whole grain tortilla chips with guacamole or a salsa made with veggies or fruit

Healthful eating remember spans the globe. Plus, many recipes can be modified based on personal food preferences or to accommodate different budgets. So, get going an “Celebrate a World of Flavors.”



Smart Tips for Personalizing Your Plate

Foods that we grow up eating are often influenced by our family’s history and culture. Many cuisines offer dishes which include a variety of foods from all of the food groups. Fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy comes in all sizes, shapes, and colors. The combination of foods and amounts will depend on you.

You can Personalize Your Plate by including foods that you prefer from each food group. Including a variety of foods can help you get all of the nutrients that are needed for good health.

These tips can help you get started:

- ⇒ Fill half your plate with fruits and veggies. Get creative with produce by trying an assortment of colors and textures.
- ⇒ Experiment with different grains. Try substituting whole grains for refined grains in recipes.
- ⇒ Choose lean protein foods. Vary your choices to include seafood, beans, peas, and lentils, as well as eggs, lean cuts of meat and poultry that are prepared in a healthful way, such as baked or grilled

- ⇒ instead of fried.
- ⇒ Complete your meal with dairy. Include low-fat or fat-free options like milk, yogurt, cheese, or calcium-fortified soymilk.

Meal Planning Tips

Eating healthy doesn’t have to be complicated or boring. Think about the food you like from each food group - mixed dishes count, too! These are just a few examples of how different foods can be eaten as a meal to personalize your plate. If a food you enjoy is not listed here, consider which food group it meets when planning your meals.

Breakfast:

- Oatmeal, amaranth, or millet with fat-free or low-fat milk or soymilk, chopped unsalted nuts, and fruit
- Beans and brown rice, salsa, cooked plantain, and a poached egg
- Low-fat yogurt with muesli and fresh fruit
- Scrambled egg with diced potato, bell pepper, and onion, served with a fresh orange

Lunch or Dinner:

- ◆ Turkey and cheese sandwich on whole wheat bread with a cup of vegetable soup
- ◆ Tabbouleh and lentil soup, with pomegranate, and low-fat yogurt
- ◆ Chana masala with naan and vegetable raita
- ◆ Ravioli with sauteed tomatoes and mushrooms, and fresh salad with pear and cheese
- ◆ Grilled chicken with steamed broccoli, baked potato, and shredded cheese
- ◆ Fish tacos with avocado and salsa, sauteed chard, and pineapple
- ◆ Shrimp gumbo with brown rice, okra, and a side of fresh fruit
- ◆ Stir-fried bok choy, pork, and brown rice with a kumquat and soymilk

Snacks:

- * Hummus with vegetables and whole wheat pita bread
- * Low-fat plain yogurt and fresh fruit
- * Cashews, almonds, or other nuts with dried fruit

Consider your nutrients needs when planning your meals and snacks! A healthful eating style can be as unique as you!

