

W I C *Tribune*

Onondaga County Health Department WIC Program Newsletter

Nutrition Spotlight: **Childhood Obesity**

Childhood obesity is a growing health concern. In the U.S., obesity is defined as a body mass index (BMI) at or above the 95th percentile for children 2-11 years of age. For children under age 1, obesity is defined as a weight for length that is at or above the 95th percentile. Ask your WIC nutritionist more about childhood obesity.

There are several factors that play a role in the cause of obesity. Some of those include genetics, behavior, and environment, but in essence, obesity is the result of eating more calories than are burned off. Obesity rates for children 2-5 years of age have risen sharply from 5% in 1980 to 10.4% in 2008 with nearly 20% of children 6-11 years of age classified as obese, more than triple since 1980!

Some consequences of childhood obesity

Children who are obese or overweight are more likely to be obese as adults. In addition, research has shown that many obese children already have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, high triglycerides (fat that is found in blood) and type 2 Diabetes, which are all risk factors for developing heart disease. In fact, evidence shows that heart disease may already be present in obese children, a disease previously only seen in adults, until recently. Research also suggests that obese children are more likely to have asthma, sleeping problems, bone and joint conditions (arthritis) and psychosocial problems, such as low self esteem and depression. All of these concerns only worsen as obese children become adults who remain obese or overweight. Some health problems that they could face include not only heart disease, but also many different types of cancer, type 2 Diabetes, stroke and arthritis.

Some ways to prevent childhood obesity

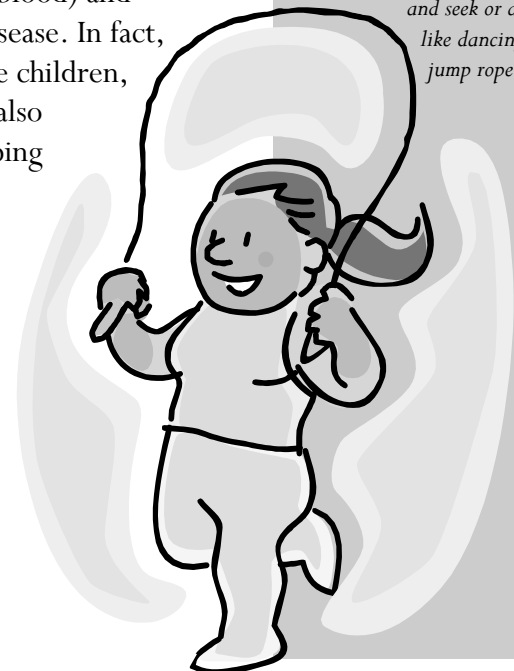
- Reduce “junk foods” such as fast food, chips, candy, baked goods, ice cream, etc. to no more than once per week. These offer little nutritional value and are often high in fat and sugar.

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Nutrition Tidbits:

- *Make physical activity fun!
Play games like tag and hide
and seek or activities
like dancing and
jump rope.*



- Offer more fruits and vegetables: children need at least 3 cups of fruits and vegetables each day to stay healthy. See “estimating portion sizes” below.
- Have family meals together: aim for at least once per day with the TV off.
- Limit sweetened beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, aides, and other sugary drinks to no more than twice per week.
- Limit juice to 4-6 ounces per day: although juice is healthy, it is high in sugar and very low in fiber, so choose whole fruits over juice. Also, try diluting juice with water to lower the sugar content. See “estimating portion sizes” below.
- Offer more water: children do not need to sip on juice or milk constantly throughout the day. Instead try giving your child more water between meals.
- Get kids moving: Encourage your child to play instead of watching television. Make physical activity fun by playing games like tag and hide and seek or activities like dancing and jump rope.
- Reduce screen time (television, video games, and computer): try to limit this to no more than two hours per day.
- Avoid using food as a reward, bribe or punishment; instead use stickers, toys, compliments, hugs, etc.
- Be a good role model: let your child see you eating fruits and vegetables and being active. Children often copy what parents do.

Estimating portion sizes:

Even if your child is eating healthy foods, large portions could be to blame for added weight gain. It can be very tricky for many people to estimate the portion sizes of the foods they eat, even for some health professionals. Let’s take a look at some easy ways to estimate common portion sizes using just your hand.



Woman’s palm
or deck of cards =
3 oz cooked meat



Length and width
of a thumb or 3
stacked dice =
1 oz. of cheese



Closed fist
or baseball =
1 medium piece of fruit
or dry cereal



Tip of your thumb =
1 teaspoon of oil or butter

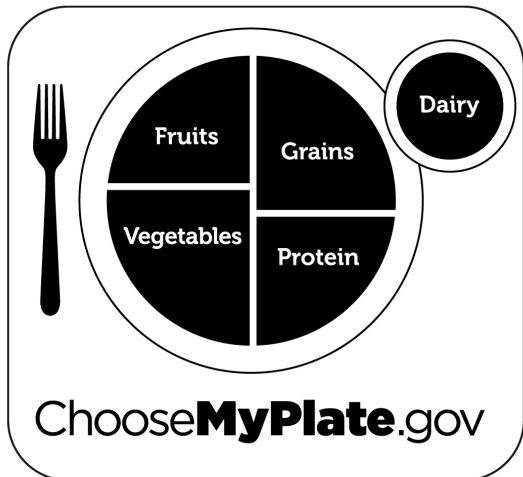


Cupped hand or half of
a baseball =
½ cup of pasta, rice
or vegetables



Choose Your Plate!

On June 2, 2011 First Lady Michelle Obama and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack unveiled the federal government's new food icon, MyPlate, to serve as a reminder to help consumers make healthier food choices. MyPlate is a new icon to help consumers to think about building a healthy plate at meal times and to seek more information to help them do that by going to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov. The new MyPlate icon emphasizes the fruit, vegetable, grains, protein and dairy food groups.



The website www.ChooseMyPlate.gov gives practical information to individuals, health professionals, nutrition educators, and the food industry to help consumers build healthier diets with resources and tools for dietary assessment, nutrition education, and other user-friendly nutrition information. As Americans are experiencing epidemic rates of overweight and obesity, the online resources and tools can allow people to make healthier food choices for themselves, their families, and their children. Later this year, USDA will have an exciting “go-to” online tool that consumers can use to personalize and manage their dietary and physical activity choices.

Originally identified in the Child Obesity Task Force report which noted that simple advice for consumers is needed, MyPlate will replace the MyPyramid image as the government's primary food group symbol. It is an easy-to-understand visual cue to help consumers adopt healthy eating habits which go along with the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. MyPyramid will remain available to interested health professionals and nutrition educators in a special section of the new website.

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, launched in January of this year, form the basis of the federal government's nutrition education programs, federal nutrition assistance programs, and dietary advice provided by health and nutrition professionals. The Guidelines messages include:

Balance Calories

- Enjoy your food, but eat less.
- Avoid oversized portions.

Foods to Increase

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains

Foods to Reduce

- Compare sodium (salt) in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals, and choose foods with lower numbers.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

For more information, visit www.ChooseMyPlate.gov. Additional resources include: www.DietaryGuidelines.gov and www.LetsMove.gov.

Information taken from USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) Press Release.

Is Your Home Poisoning Your Child?



Childhood Lead Poisoning is still a concern for parents with young children in the City of Syracuse. In some neighborhoods, over 1 in 10 children who are tested have high blood lead levels. The most common source of lead poisoning is lead paint and/or lead dust. You can not see lead dust. Lead dust is created when lead paint is damaged or starts to chip or peel. Many parents are unaware that their children may have been in contact with lead paint or lead dust.

Young children are especially at risk because they put their hands and nonfood items into their mouth. Children with lead poisoning usually do not look sick. If lead poisoning is left untreated, it can cause learning, growth, and behavioral problems. New York State requires doctors to test all children at age one and again at age two with a blood test to check for lead poisoning.

The Onondaga County Health Department's Lead Program is offering FREE home inspections to families to prevent lead poisoning before it happens.

Families are eligible for a FREE home inspection, if they:

- Live in the City of Syracuse,
- Rent a home that was built before 1950 (we can check the age for you),
- Have a child under the age of 7 who lives at or regularly visits the property or there is a pregnant woman living in the home.

Remember that childhood lead poisoning is preventable. To find out if your home needs to have a lead inspection, to check if your child needs a lead test, or to find out how you can make your home lead safe, call the Onondaga County Health Department's Lead Program today at 435-3271.

Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women!

Did you know there is a Breastfeeding Support Group at WIC? Come join in!

What: A Breastfeeding Support Group

Where: The WIC Office, 375 West Onondaga Street

When: The 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

WIC News

- The WIC Program will be closed on Monday, September 5th for Labor Day.
- The WIC Program started issuing Farmers Market Checks on June 1, 2011. You can begin to cash your Farmer's Market checks beginning July 1, 2011 through November 15, 2011. Please ask WIC staff for your Farmer's Market check folder which has the current list of eligible Farmer's Markets available to cash your Farmer's Market checks. Remember to cash ALL of your Farmer's Market checks!!
- The Mobile Farmers Market will be in the West Onondaga WIC clinic parking lot every Wednesday from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. starting on July 6, 2011 through September 28, 2011. This is a convenient way to use your Farmers Market coupons for delicious New York State grown fresh fruits and vegetables.
- All WIC infant formula checks with "Not-Good-Before" (NGB) dates of July 1, 2011, and later for Gerber® Good Start® Soy Plus formula will be replaced with Enfamil® Prosobee® formula. If your infant currently receives Gerber® Good Start® Soy Plus formula, talk to your WIC Nutritionist about this change.
- For every WIC appointment you must have your WIC ID or photo ID. If you or your child is being enrolled in WIC or recertified there are a number of other documents needed for your WIC appointment so make sure you bring everything you need to your WIC appointment.
- The WIC Program can no longer accept verification of income eligibility for free or reduced school lunch or Head Start/Early Head Start to determine income eligibility for WIC. Please ask WIC staff what can be used to determine that you or a family member are considered income eligible for WIC.

Fruits and Veggies for Toddlers

Eat fruits and vegetables with your toddler. Children who like vegetables usually have parents who eat vegetables. Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables to your 1 to 2 year old toddler—your child is more likely to like fruits and vegetables if he eats them early in life. Be patient with your toddler when offering new foods. He may not like a new food when he eats it for the first time. He may need to try it 8 to 10 times before he accepts it. Never force your toddler to eat a food—you cannot force your toddler to like a food. No one likes to be forced to eat.

Eating habits start early in life. Help your toddler learn to enjoy eating a variety of healthy foods:

- Try dark green, orange and yellow fruits and vegetables. Colorful fruits and vegetables have the most nutrition.
- Offer broccoli, spinach and other leafy green vegetables.*
- Offer carrots, cantaloupe, oranges, tomatoes, sweet potatoes and squash.*
- Potatoes are a vegetable. However, we eat most of our potatoes as French Fries which have very little nutrition.

Eat with your toddler. Pull his highchair up to the table. Put food in his bowl or on his tray. Put food on your plate. Talk to your toddler while you eat your food together. Eat the same foods that your toddler eats. Your toddler learns to like foods that he sees you and others enjoying.

*WIC Foods

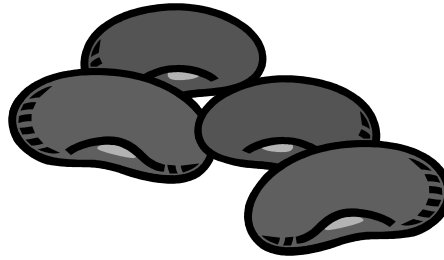
Here's What's Cooking

Red Beans and Brown Rice

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1 cup uncooked brown rice*
- 2 cups water
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 onion, chopped*
- 1/2 green bell pepper, chopped*
- 1 (15 ounce) can kidney beans, drained*
- 1 (14.5 oz) can crushed tomatoes, undrained*
- 1/8 teaspoon chili powder, add to taste
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cumin (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste



How to Prepare

1. Bring the rice and water to boil in a pot. Cover, reduce heat to low, and simmer about 30 minutes.
2. Add oil to pan over medium heat. Stir in onion and green bell pepper, and cook until tender. Stir in spices till fragrant. Mix in beans and tomatoes, and continue cooking until heated through. Serve skillet mixture over the rice.

* WIC Foods

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Standards for participation in the WIC Program are the same for everyone regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, political beliefs or sex.



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