

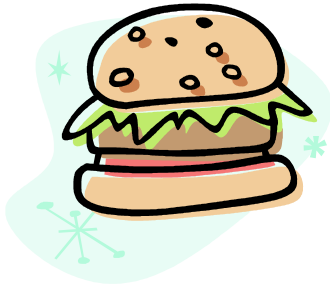
Eat Healthy...Be Active

Jump into Healthy Living

A quarterly newsletter from the Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition

Fall 2007

Welcome to this issue of *Eat Healthy, Be Active*-- the Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition's quarterly newsletter. Through this newsletter we hope to provide you and your family with quick, practical ideas for eating healthy and staying active. We hope you enjoy it, and please...share it with a friend



Fast + 3



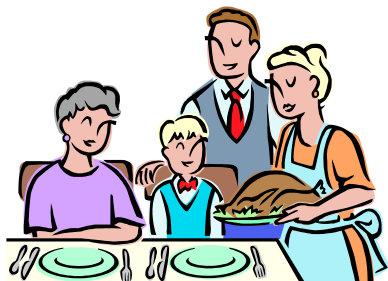
With our fast paced, busy lives Americans are eating out at fast food restaurants an average of 3-6 times each week. Unfortunately, many fast food meals can be high in calories and fat—especially when you super-size them! How then can you make them a part of a healthy diet? Follow Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition members' advice and try the **Fast + 3 Plan**. What is the Fast + 3 Plan??

1. Purchase an entree for each family member at your favorite fast food restaurant. Remember to choose regular size entrees rather than double or triple size items to keep portion sizes healthy. Rather than eating at the restaurant—take your entree home
2. Once you've gotten home, pair the entree with these 3 items:
 - o **veggies** (Try prepackaged raw veggies such as baby carrots, celery or pepper sticks)
 - o **fruit** (try prepackaged cut fruit or canned fruit in its own juice for a fast side dish)
 - o **low fat milk** (1% or fat free)
3. Fast + 3 requires minimum preparation & helps you put a meal on the table in minutes. Need some sample menus to get started??

Fast Food Entrée	Veggie	Fruit	Milk
Cheeseburger	Celery sticks	Sliced canned peaches	1% Chocolate Milk
Cheese pizza	Tossed salad with Low fat dressing	Mixed fruit cocktail	1% or skim milk
Taco	Fat free refried beans	Pineapple chunks	1% or skim milk



Want the latest info on your favorite fast food? Go to www.fastfoodbook.com for the nutritional information from 68 different fast food restaurants.



Let's Hear it for Family Meals...

Twenty years ago families sat down together in the evenings and on weekends to share meals. Today, our fast paced lifestyles, work schedules and limited interest in cooking combine to make family meals a thing of the past in many households. But, sitting down together to share a meal (be it breakfast, lunch or dinner) has many benefits.

- ♥ *Family connections...* When families share a meal they have the opportunity to talk and connect with one another. Conversations around the dinner table enable family members to share their achievements, understand one another's perspectives and promote closeness between family members. It is also a great place to teach younger members about their culture as well as expectations especially when it comes to table manners!
- ♥ *Saves money...* Just remember, when you hire someone to perform a service for you, it will generally cost more money than if you do it yourself! When you eat out...and we are doing so more and more...you are hiring someone to prepare your food and clean up afterwards. Experts suggest that meals eaten away from home often cost 2 to 4 times as much as similar meals prepared at home.
- ♥ *Improved health...* Meals eaten at home tend to have more fruits, veggies and dairy products in them and fewer fried foods, pop or salty side dishes. Controlling the size of your food portions is also easier because you decide what and how much to put on your plate rather than the restaurant. Because of this, managing your weight becomes easier.
- ♥ *Better mental health...* Eating with other family members fosters emotional well-being and in teens in particular reduces depression. Family meals can help unify a family and provide that important support children need to feel secure.
- ♥ *Self Sufficiency...* As we eat out more our ability to prepare our own food decreases. This means we are more reliant on restaurant food or prepared meals. In addition, if children don't see parents preparing food they don't learn this important skill. An important gift parents can give their children are the skills to help them learn to become independent adults. Being able to prepare their own food is one of these skills!
- ♥ *Better academic performance...* Researchers have found that teens who eat dinner with their families 5 or more times/week do better in school than teens who eat with their families two or fewer times each week. Why? They believe the exposure to adult conversation helps as well as the structure family meals adds to a child's day.

So how do busy families build family meals into their day or week?? Try one or more of the following tips...

1. Plan. Build family meals into your day or week. Planning is the first step to making it happen. If evenings are too crazy try having breakfast together. Maybe during the week it's too difficult, so try planning for a meal together on Saturday & Sunday.



2. Use labor saving devices. Slow cookers and grills can help put dinner on your table in a hurry! Coming home to the aroma of soup or stew in the crockpot and knowing dinner is done is a wonderful feeling!

3. Involve your kids... Even young children can help with dinner! Older children can often start on dinner preparations before you get home. Young kids can help set the table or tear lettuce for a salad. By involving the kids in meal preparation they are learning valuable skills that will serve them well in the future!



Stay Active this Fall



In October...



Try picking apples with your kids, not only are apples a healthy snack but visiting an orchard keeps them moving & active!

Halloween is coming. Visiting a pumpkin patch to choose a jack o lantern can be an exciting and fun outing!



Take a hike or walk with your kids and enjoy the sites and sounds at Hixon Forest. More information can be found at www.amethyst-dragon.com/hfnc/index.htm. There are maps of the Marsh trails as well as of Hixon. In addition, Hixon Nature Center sponsors Wild Walks for Kids! And Hixon's Enchanted Forest on October 20 and 21, and 27 and 28.



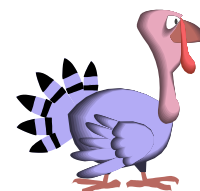
Interested in doing a family fun run or walk? October 28th is the Trick or Trek a 1.5 mile run/walk, and 5K run/walk to benefit the Physical Activity Mentoring Program. This event is for all ages and all abilities. Race begins at the University of Wisconsin - La Crosse. More information can be found at www.uwlax.edu/activeandhealthylifestyles

In November...



Its football season - did you ever consider playing a family football game????!! If your family is not big enough to make a team, invite some neighbors. The rules can change since body size may be a factor. This is a great way to enjoy a great fall day.

Maybe you and your child have been walking or running together - why not challenge yourselves and participate in the Turkey Trot - November 17th, sponsored by the University of Wisconsin - La Crosse Rec Sports Department. This is a 5K run/walk and a 1 mile fun run.



In December... While the weather is getting a bit colder but that shouldn't stop outdoor activities!



If by chance we have an early snow fall, snowshoes and sleds can be rented at the University of Wisconsin - La Crosse Outdoor Connection. Sledding is fun and a good activity, especially when you have to go uphill in order to sled down.



If you loved the Turkey Trot why not try the Jingle Bell Run sponsored by the YMCA on December 8th. This is a 5K run/walk that begins at the North YMCA in Onalaska.

Holiday Help for the Harried

Written by: Mary Hoeft-Leithold, Nutrition Educator WNEP

It is that hustle and bustle time of year again! Along with the wonderful time of good food with family and friends is the stress of the holiday season. Fighting crowded stores to purchase last minute gifts and food, finding activities for children home from school, and cleaning the house for guests leaves little time for planning nutritious meals and snacks. If you usually feel frazzled during the holiday months, consider these tips:

- **Turn the dial-** and use your crock- pot to make a delicious meal while you are on the go. Cut up meat into chunks to assure that the meat is safely cooked. If possible, turn the crock-pot to high in the morning for the first hour and then turn it down for the rest of the day.
- **Push the buttons** and use your microwave for more than reheating and defrosting food. Did you know that you could make meatloaf, homemade chicken nuggets, and apple crisp in the microwave? Check out recipes online, at the library or local extension office.
- **Use leftovers** to make a *new* meal! Leftover cooked chicken can be used in a stir-fry, soup, wrap, and casserole or on a salad. When you do have time to cook, freeze extra portions to use at a later date.
- **Put it all together** in a one-dish meal. Combine foods that you have on hand— protein, grain, vegetable, and milk to make a delicious casserole with little clean up. Bake in the oven at 350°F for 45 minutes.
- **Call in the kids** to make edible crafts. Children enjoy making necklaces made with whole grain cereal or creating “butterflies” by spreading peanut butter on celery and adding two raisins for eyes and two curly pretzels for the wings. Children can mold (with clean hands) no bake cookies made with non-fat dry milk, honey, peanut butter and cereal into their favorite shape.
- **Sneak in extra nutrition.** Finely grate vegetables like carrots, onion, and even spinach and add a little to your favorite meatball or meatloaf recipe. Add non-fat dry milk to spaghetti sauce, pudding, pancake batter, and ground meats. Add a little canned pumpkin or applesauce to pancake batter and muffin mixes.

Peanut Butter Kisses



1 cup nonfat dry milk
1/3 cup honey
1/3 cup peanut butter
1 cup crushed flakes cereal

Combine dry milk, honey and peanut butter in a bowl.
Form 1” balls from mixture. Roll balls in cereal.
Serve!

This newsletter is brought to you by the Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition. Our goal is to prevent childhood overweight & obesity. Members include:

Family Resource Center
 La Crescent School District
 School District of La Crosse
 Holmen School District
 Viterbo University

Gundersen Lutheran
 La Crosse County Health Dept.
 School District of Onalaska
 University of WI-Extension

Head Start
 La Crosse Day Care Centers
 School District of Bangor
 UW-La Crosse