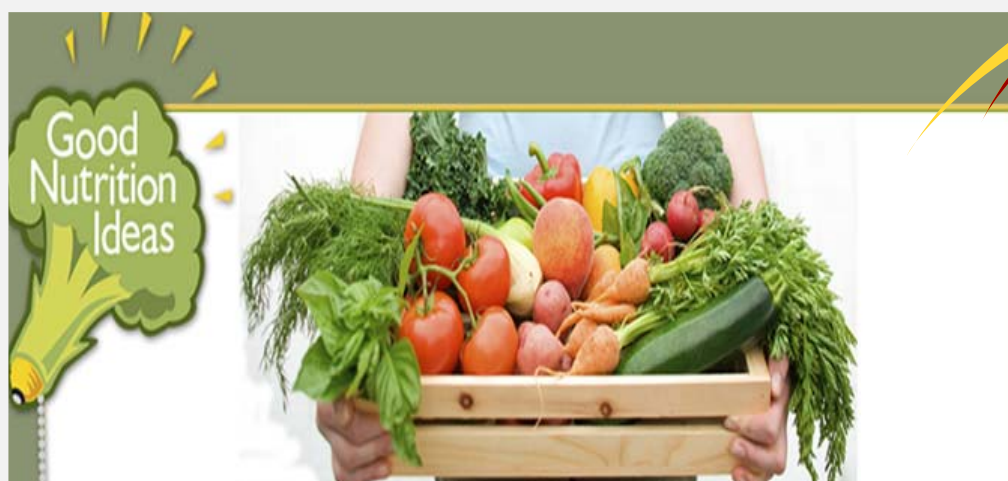


# Mission In Motion

Health & Wellness Monthly Newsletter  
March 2012



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## The Skinny on Fast Food

The skinny on fast food—be choosy. If you make healthier meal choices and practice portion control, fast food can fit into your diet.

- ◆ Keep portions small—try a kid's meal instead of the larger option
- ◆ Skip the French fries and order a healthier side dish, like a salad or fresh fruit
- ◆ Select a salad with grilled chicken as your main entree and use a fat-free or low-fat dressing on the side
- ◆ Go for grilled items instead of fried or breaded foods
- ◆ Say no to the special dressings, tartar sauce, sour cream and other high-calorie condiments; ask for reduced-fat mayonnaise, mustard or salsa instead
- ◆ Choose water, diet soda, unsweetened ice tea or mineral water; a large soda (32 ounces) has about 400 calories

Source: Mayo Clinic Online Resources

### Nutritional Tip:

Go for the greens! Get the most out of leafy green vegetables by choosing the darkest greens (and red, too)—these are the ones that have the most beta carotene and other vitamins, nutrients and phytochemicals. Your best bets are spinach, kale, arugula, turnip greens and mustard greens. If you tend to use iceberg, Boston or bibb lettuce, you might want to try another green or mix your old favorites with other more nutritional greens.

Source: University of California, Berkeley Wellness Letter



## Add A Healthy Punch To Your Child's Lunch

Today's myriad of tempting fast food options makes it difficult to compete with your child's appetite. But you can fill the lunchbox or bag with enticing and nutritious foods and beverages, and also set a good example at home with healthy eating habits. Introducing a diet high in whole grains, fruits and vegetables with fast food in moderation can help parents to model good behaviors that children will use for the rest of their lives.

Lunch does not have to be limited to cold sandwiches. The more creative and flexible the choices, the easier it is to incorporate food groups based on the USDA food pyramid. If your child has access to a microwave at school, leftovers from the night before are a good choice. A lunchbox with a thermos to keep foods warm and an ice pack to keep foods cold will also extend your options.

Here are some brownbag ideas incorporating all food groups:

**Grains-** Instead of plain sandwich bread, try pita bread, bagels, tortilla wraps, potatoes, rice, leftover pasta, popcorn cakes, crackers or dry cereal.

**Fruits-** Apples, oranges and bananas can be exchanged for fruits that are in season, like mango or strawberries. Try a slice of pineapple on a ham and cheese sandwich or include some dried fruit, such as apricots and apples.

**Vegetables-** Carrots, jicama, bell pepper and broccoli are good for dipping in low-fat ranch dressing. Top sandwiches with tomatoes, lettuce, sprouts, cucumbers or onions.

**Dairy-** One serving of dairy products includes 8 ounces of milk or yogurt or 1½ ounces of cheese. Low-fat, milk-based pudding and chocolate milk are nice treats once in a while.

**Meat-** Change your selection of lean meats every day for variety. Good meat substitutes are beans, tuna fish, eggs, cheese, nuts, peanut butter, almond butter or hummus.

Children should also help make their own lunches once they are old enough. Kids who are involved in the preparation are far more likely to eat everything in their lunchboxes. It's also a good idea to provide a variety of healthy options and let the children decide what they want for lunch that day.

The days of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches as regular lunch fare may be gone. But when you offer creative, healthy options, your child can look forward to a lunch that's far from the plain brown bag it's packed in.

Source: PersonalMD.com

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### Did You Know?

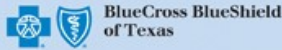
- Did you know that your orange juice can have a significant reduction in vitamin C after you open the carton? If you buy the chilled cartons, drink your juice within a week after opening it.
- Sweet potatoes are a powerhouse for vitamins and have no more calories than white potatoes. Ounce per ounce, they have nearly as much beta carotene as carrots, half as much vitamin C as oranges, and even some vitamin E.
- Perk up your diet with some peppers! Green peppers have about three times more vitamin C as oranges. Better yet, red and yellow peppers have twice as much vitamin C as green ones – a whopping 170 milligrams in three ounces.
- Looking for ways to cut down sodium in your diet? Watch out for seasoning mixers. Many seasoning blends, like Cajun seasoning, meat magic and pepper medley, can be high in sodium.
- Make colorful choices! Choose bright and dark-colored fruits and vegetables. The color is generally a sign of extra nutrients. For instance, buy red grapes instead of green, romaine or watercress rather than iceberg lettuce, red cabbage instead of green, and dark orange carrots over pale ones.

Source: University of California,

Berkeley Wellness Letter



## Healthy tips



[www.bcbstx.com](http://www.bcbstx.com)

### Anytime tips for eating out:

Try these ideas to help make any restaurant dining experience both appetizing and good for you:

- Use margarine rather than butter
- Request skim milk instead of whole milk or cream
- Trim visible fat from poultry and other meats
- Omit butter, gravy or sauces from a dish
- Ask for salad dressing on the side
- Consider making special requests, such as less cooking oil

Source: The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute Obesity Guidelines

## The Best of All Possible Worlds

### How to eat healthy when dining out at ethnic restaurants:

There's no shortage of ethnic restaurants to satisfy your taste buds. Whether Chinese, Italian or Mexican, different types of ethnic cuisine can offer you a tasty treat even if you are counting calories and fat. The key to healthy dining out at ethnic restaurants is to be menu-savvy.

For example, when choosing Chinese fare, look for options that are steamed, jum (poached), kow (roasted), shu (barbequed). Also, it's best to choose steamed rice or brown rice rather than fried and to look for dishes without MSG added. Healthy Italian entrees to look

for include red sauces, primavera (no cream), piccata (lemon), sun-dried or crushed tomatoes. Try menu items that are lightly sautéed or grilled. It's hard to resist Mexican food, and it is possible to dine out while avoiding fat-laden, high-calorie foods. Add spice to your meal with choices like salsa or picante, spicy chicken, rice, black beans and soft corn tortillas.

If you want to eat healthy and still have lots of different choices, take a taste adventure with ethnic foods. It will do you a world of good.

Source: The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute Obesity Guidelines

## Fruits & Vegetables—Getting Your Five a Day

What's the formula for good health? The right answer is five fruits and vegetables each day\*. That's because fruits and vegetables are loaded with vitamins and minerals, so they can improve your health and may reduce the risk of cancer.

Try these easy ideas to give your health a high-five:

- Start the day with 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice.
- Add sliced bananas or strawberries to your cereal.
- Have a salad with lunch.
- Eat an apple for an afternoon snack.
- Include a vegetable with dinner.

When you eat five fruits and vegetables every day, it just adds up to better health.

Want to get more nutrition tips and healthy recipes? Visit Blue Access® for Members at [www.bcbstx.com](http://www.bcbstx.com).

\* National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion



## Upcoming Monthly Health & Wellness Training Series:

March 2012 — Kidney Disease

April 2012 — First Aid

May 2012 — Depression

June 2012 — Physical Fitness

July 2012 — Varicose Veins

August 2012—Immunization  
Awareness

September 2012—Cholesterol

(All topics subject to change)

\*If you have a subject or topic that you would like more information on, feel free to make your requests at 956-580-8630.

### Next Month's Issue:

April '12: Cancer Prevention

## March Health & Wellness Training Series:

Kidney Disease

March 22, 2012

City Hall—Council Chambers Speaker and Time: To be announced

Look for Health & Wellness Training Series flyer for more information.

### Pasta with spinach, garbanzos and raisins By Mayo Clinic Staff Ingredients Serves 6

8 ounces farfalle (bow tie) pasta	2 tablespoons olive oil
4 garlic cloves, crushed	1/2 can (19 ounces) garbanzos, rinsed and drained
1/2 cup unsalted chicken broth	1/2 cup golden raisins
4 cups fresh spinach, chopped	2 tablespoons Parmesan cheese
Cracked black peppercorns, to taste	

### Directions

Fill a large pot 3/4 full with water and bring to a boil. Add the pasta and cook until al dente (tender), 10 to 12 minutes, or according to the package directions. Drain the pasta thoroughly.

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil and garlic over medium heat. Add the garbanzos and chicken broth. Stir until warmed through. Add the raisins and spinach. Heat just until spinach is wilted, about 3 minutes. Don't overcook.

Divide the pasta among the plates. Top each serving with 1/6 of the sauce, 1 teaspoon Parmesan cheese and peppercorns to taste. Serve immediately.



## Mission In Motion

Our mission is to promote health awareness and  
to encourage healthy lifestyles.

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