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# Healthy Bites

## Information To Improve Your Selection and Use Of Foods In Your Home

## Cooking with Kids - A Recipe for Lifelong Health

Volume XIII

**The next time you bake your famous cranberry bread or try a new recipe, invite the children you know to help you.** Cooking with children encourages healthy eating patterns that will last a lifetime. Learning how to follow step-by-step instructions, measure ingredients and follow kitchen safety rules are valuable lessons that create future cooks capable of making nutritious and safe meals at home. Research shows teaching children about healthy eating can encourage good habits that may reduce risk for obesity and chronic disease later in life. You'll also be spending quality time together.

### "Try It—You Might Like It!"

First, disregard the myth that kids don't like vegetables. When children watch adults enjoying healthy foods they develop a willingness to try these foods too. Also, seeing each ingredient as it goes into a recipe makes them more willing to eat the finished product. Kids love adventure, so experiment with different vegetables and fruits such as snow peas, kale or jicama. It is okay if they don't like an item one week. Just try something different next time. Introduce new items with old favorites, combining chopped green vegetables with corn.

### Getting Started

Involving children in deciding which foods they would like to eat and which recipes they want to make gives them a sense of ownership in the meal. Let older children prepare breakfast and pack their own lunches. Bringing the kids to the grocery store, local farmers market or even starting a small vegetable garden will inspire their curiosity in foods. Talk to them about nutrition in foods you see.

### Kid-Friendly Recipes

Children find these cooking projects especially fun. Help them think of clever names for the finished creations!

- Finger foods (baked sweet potato "fries," sandwiches).
- Messy projects (shucking corn, crushing whole canned tomatoes).
- Assembly required (tacos, baked potato bar with toppings, homemade pizza).

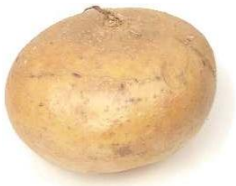
Source: American Institute for Cancer Research

## **Word Wise**

### Jicama (say: HEE-kuh-muh)

Jicama is a relative of the potato. There are many names for jicama including the Mexican potato, Mexican yam bean, Chinese turnip and the Chinese potato.

Jicama looks similar to a turnip or a large radish. Its skin is thin and can be gray, tan or brown in color. The skin is peeled before eating it raw. Raw jicama tastes similar to a pear or apple. When jicama is used in cooking it tends to take on the flavors of the ingredients that it is being combined with. Therefore, jicama is a nice complement to various stir fry dishes, it blends well with many vegetables and seasonings. Jicama contains a high amount of vitamin C, is low in sodium and has no fat. One adult serving of jicama is equal to one cup of cubed jicama or 120 grams.



## **Chicken Broccoli Casserole **

**Ingredients:**

1 pound fresh cooked or one 10 ounce package of frozen broccoli cooked
1 cup cooked chicken
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

**Directions:** Cover bottom of casserole dish with cooked broccoli. Cover broccoli with chicken and cream soup (undiluted). Sprinkle with grated cheese. Bake at 350°F for 20-30 minutes. Great served over cooked pasta, rice or noodles.

Number of servings 4; Serving size 1 1/4 cup; Preparation time 25 minutes; Calories 246; Grams of fat 15.

Source: ERIB

As Food and Nutrition Extension Educator I welcome your thoughts and ideas for upcoming issues of *Healthy Bites*.
Contact me at 586-469-6432 or haramin2@msu.edu. Thank you. —Eileen Haraminac

# Why Exercise is Cool

Kids exercise all the time without even thinking of it. Just being active, like running around outside or playing kickball at school, is a kind of exercise. What else counts as exercise? Playing sports, dancing, doing push-ups and even reaching down to touch your toes.

When you exercise, you are helping build a strong body that will be able to move around and do all the stuff you need it to do. Try to be active every day and your body will thank you later!

**Exercise Makes Your Heart Happy**

You may know that your heart is a muscle. It works hard, pumping blood every day of your life. You can help this important muscle get stronger by exercising. When you give your heart this kind of workout on a regular basis, your heart will get even better at its main job—delivering oxygen (in the form of oxygen-carrying blood cells) to all parts of your body.

So you want to do some exercise right now? Try swimming, basketball, ice or roller hockey, jogging or walking quickly), in-line skating, soccer, cross-country skiing, biking or rowing. And don't forget that skipping, jumping rope and playing hopscotch are activities, too!

**Exercise Strengthens Muscles**

Did you ever do a push-up or swing across the monkey bars at the playground? Those are exercises that can build strength. Here are some exercises and activities to build strong muscles:

Push-ups Pull-ups Tug-of-war Bike riding Running In-line skating

**Exercise Makes You Flexible**

Can you touch your toes easily without yelling ouch? Most kids are pretty flexible, which means that they can bend and stretch their bodies without much trouble. This kind of exercise often feels really good, like a big stretch in the morning after waking up.

**Exercise Makes You Feel Good**

It feels good to have a strong, flexible body that can do all the activities you enjoy—like running, jumping and playing with your friends. It's also fun to be good at something, like scoring a basket, hitting a home run or perfecting a dive. But you may not know that exercising can actually put you in a better mood.

When you exercise, your brain releases a chemical called **endorphins** (say: en-**dor**-funz), which may make you feel happier. It is just another reason why exercise is cool!

Source: www.Kidshealth.org

## **Check Your Label**

**Calories**: Allows you to compare the calorie content per serving. When comparing similar foods be sure to check that the serving sizes are the same.

**Nutritional Panel:** The nutrients required to appear on the nutrition panel are those most important to the health of people today, most of whom need to worry about getting too much of certain items (fat, for example), rather than too few vitamins or minerals as in the past.

**Nutrition Facts**

**Serving Size 1 cup (228g)**
**Servings Per Container 2**

**Amount Per Serving**

**Calories 260 Calories from fat 120**

| | % Daily Value* |
|---|---|
| **Total Fat** 13g | **20%** |
| Saturated Fat 5g | **25%** |
| **Cholesterol** 30mg | **10%** |
| **Sodium** 660mg | **28%** |
| **Total Carbohydrate** 31g | **10%** |
| Dietary Fiber 0g | **0%** |
| Sugars 5g | |
| **Protein** 5g | |

Vitamin A 4% • Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 15% • Iron 4%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

| | Calories: | 2,000 | 2,500 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total Fat | Less than | 65g | 80g |
| Sat Fat | Less than | 20g | 25g |
| Cholesterol | Less than | 300mg | 300mg |
| Sodium | Less than | 2,400mg | 2,400mg |
| Total Carbohydrate | | 300g | 375g |
| Dietary Fiber | | 25g | 30g |

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

## **Food Nutrition Hotline**

**MSU Extension provides a General Nutrition Hotline for county residents, (586) 469-5060.**

Jane Smith staffs the Hotline, and is available M-W-F from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. to answer general food/nutrition questions and provide information about food safety and food preservation, such as canning and freezing.

We also provide testing of pressure canning equipment to county residents. **Residents will be required to leave the lid of the unit for testing and return in 2 days to pick up their equipment.** No fee is charged for county residents.

# In Case of an Emergency...

## Steps to follow to prepare for a possible weather emergency:

- Keep an appliance thermometer in the refrigerator and freezer. An appliance thermometer will indicate the temperature in the refrigerator and freezer in case of a power outage and help determine the safety of the food.
- Make sure the freezer is at or below 0° F and the refrigerator is at or below 40° F.
- Freeze containers of water for ice to help keep food cold in the freezer, refrigerator or coolers after the power is out.
- Freeze refrigerated items such as leftovers, milk and fresh meat and poultry that you may not need immediately—this helps keep them at a safe temperature longer.
- Plan ahead and know where dry ice and block ice can be purchased.
- Store food on shelves that will be safely out of the way of contaminated water in case of flooding.
- Have coolers on hand to keep refrigerator food cold if the power will be out for more than four hours. Purchase or make ice cubes and store in the freezer for use in the refrigerator or in a cooler. Freeze gel packs ahead of time for use in coolers.
- Group food together in the freezer—this helps the food stay cold longer.

## Steps to follow after the weather emergency:

- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature.
- The refrigerator will keep food safely cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened. A full freezer will hold the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full and the door remains closed).
- Food may be safely refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or is at 40° F or below.
- Never taste a food to determine its safety!
- Obtain dry or block ice to keep your refrigerator and freezer as cold as possible if the power is going to be out for a prolonged period of time. Fifty pounds of dry ice should hold an 18-cubic-foot full freezer for two days.
- If the power has been out for several days, then check the temperature of the freezer with an appliance thermometer or food thermometer. If the food still contains ice crystals or is at 40° F or below, the food is safe.
- If a thermometer has not been kept in the freezer, then check each package of food to determine its safety. If the food still contains ice crystals, the food is safe.
- Discard refrigerated perishable food such as meat, poultry, fish, soft cheeses, milk, eggs, leftovers and deli items after four hours without power.
- Drink only bottled water if flooding has occurred.
- Discard all food that came in contact with flood waters, including canned goods. Discard wooden cutting boards, plastic utensils, baby bottle nipples and pacifiers.
- Thoroughly wash all metal pans, ceramic dishes and utensils that came in contact with flood water with hot soapy water and sanitize by boiling them in clean water or by immersing them for 15 minutes in a solution of one teaspoon of chlorine bleach per quart of water.

**When in doubt, throw it out!**

Source: Food Safety Inspection Services

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