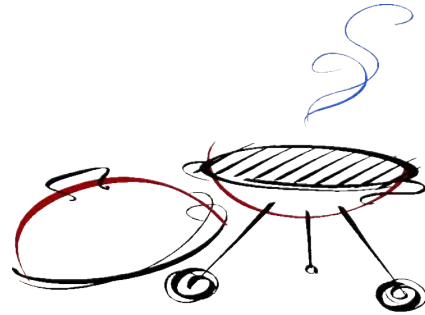


Grill Me About...

DIGESTION



Ask me what I learned about digestion and the importance of fruits and vegetables in my GrowingGreat classroom nutrition lesson:



1. When does digestion start?
2. What are the three reasons chewing your food well is important?
3. What two compounds do fresh fruits and vegetables contain that help fight disease?

GrowingGreat thanks the following companies for their generous contributions of food samples:

Answers:

1. *When we see or smell or even think about food.*
2. *A. Digestion starts in your mouth with enzymes in saliva; B. Food needs to be moist and ground up very well to slide down the esophagus; C. Your stomach does its job with ease when food is chewed well.*
3. *Phytonutrients (fight-o-nutrients) and antioxidants. Ask your child if he/she remember what each does!*

Shop your local Farmers Market! Eating a variety of fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables improves health and fights disease. Try eating all the colors of the rainbow every day.

Colorful fruits and vegetables currently in season:

Green	Red	Orange/Yellow	Purple	White
Arugula	Beets	Carrots	Eggplant	Parsnips
Artichokes	Red cabbage	Butternut Squash	Purple potatoes	Potatoes
Belgian Endive	Red leaf lettuce	Acorn Squash	Blackberries *	Turnips
Broccoli	Strawberries *	Pumpkin	Blueberries *	Pears
Brussel Sprouts	Blood oranges	Oranges		Cauliflower
Cabbage	Red grapefruit	Tangerines		Garlic
Celery root		Sweet potatoes		Onions
Chard		Grapefruit		Shallots
Green beans				Banana
Kale				Jicama
Kohlrabi				
Leeks				
Lettuces				

* Southern California only

Classroom Nutrition Lesson #4: **DIGESTION**



What is digestion? It is the process our body uses to break down food so nutrients can be absorbed.

Want to experience less indigestion and absorb more nutrients?

Take smaller bites and chew them well before swallowing. Depending on the type of food, chewing up to 20 or 30 times reduces strain on your stomach. The result is you experience less indigestion and heartburn and nutrients are more readily absorbed.

Ever heard of “empty calories”? Highly-processed foods, such as white bread, have had the original nutrients stripped out during the manufacturing process. These foods provide the calories your body seeks but not the nutrients.

Want to feel better? Eating more fruits and vegetables not only provide valuable nutrients and fiber but also offer disease fighting benefits.

What do “antioxidants” and “phytonutrients” do for you? Ask your child!

Fruit colors and the positive impact they have on our health



Blue/purple fruits and vegetables contain varying amounts of health-promoting phytochemicals known for their antioxidant and possible anti-aging benefits.

Health benefits of BLUE/PURPLE fruits and vegetables include:

- A lower risk of some cancers
- Urinary tract health
- Memory function
- Healthy aging



White, tan, and brown fruits and vegetables contain varying amounts of phytochemicals. The mineral selenium, found in mushrooms may also prevent some cancers. Including WHITE in your low-fat diet helps maintain:

- Heart health
- Healthy cholesterol levels
- A lower risk of some cancers



Green vegetables contain varying amounts of phytochemicals which provide antioxidant, health-promoting benefits. Include GREEN in your diet to maintain:

- A lower risk of some cancers
- Vision health
- Strong bones and teeth



Yellow/orange fruits and vegetables contain varying amounts of phytochemicals and antioxidants such as vitamin C. Including YELLOW/ORANGE in your diet helps maintain:

- A healthy heart
- Vision health
- A healthy immune system
- A lower risk of some cancers

Red: Specific phytochemicals in the red group include lycopene and anthocyanins. Include a variety of RED fruits and vegetables in your diet to help maintain:

- A healthy heart
- Memory function
- A lower risk of some cancers
- Urinary tract health

