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# Healthier Habits

Volume 5 Issue 3

April/May 2017

## A Word from the Dietitian...

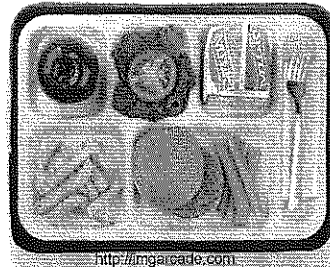
Did you know that school meals are some of the healthiest, most balanced meals you can find? A meal at school includes lean meats, whole grains, a variety of fruits and vegetables, as well as 1 cup of low-fat or fat-free milk.

A week of meals contains less than 10% of calories from saturated fat and 0 grams trans fat. Cutting back on saturated fats and trans fats lowers the risk of heart disease.

Meals also contain limited amounts of sodium. Sodium is a necessary nutrient, but most people get more sodium than they need. Eating too much salt may have an effect on increasing blood pressure which makes the heart work harder.

Calorie needs of different age groups are also considered in the planning of school meals. When planning meals, different calorie ranges are considered for grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

Food service staff at your school work very hard to make sure you have delicious and nutritious meals that students enjoy. You can be certain when you choose school breakfast or school lunch, you are making a good choice!



<http://imgarcade.com>

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### April National Food Days

National Garlic Month  
4/1- Sourdough Bread Day  
4/2- Peanut Butter & Jelly Day  
4/12- Grilled Cheese Day  
4/14- Pecan Day  
4/16- Day of the Mushroom  
4/18- Animal Crackers Day  
4/23- Picnic Day  
4/26- Pretzel Day  
4/30- Raisin Day

### May National Food Days

National Egg Month  
National Hamburger Month  
National Salad Month  
National Salsa Month  
National Strawberry Month  
5/1- Chocolate Parfait Day  
5/5- Enchilada Day  
5/9- Shrimp Day  
5/13- Hummus Day  
5/22- Vanilla Pudding Day  
Taken from [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)

If you would like to learn about the USDA's lunch and breakfast requirements, please visit [www.traytalk.org](http://www.traytalk.org).

## Taste the Season- Vegetables of Spring

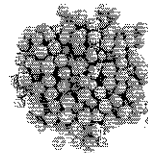
It's the time of year when nature seems to come alive once again. This also means the return of garden-fresh vegetables in Northern Indiana. Here are some of my favorites:

**Asparagus** is a good source of vitamin A and vitamin C. Both of these vitamins help fight off infections. Asparagus spears shoot straight up out of the ground and can grow as much as 10 inches in 24 hours!



Asparagus is yummy fresh, steamed, or grilled. It is categorized as an "other" vegetable.

**Green Peas** grow on vines which are usually supported by a pole or fence. Peas are a good source of fiber. Fiber may lower the risk of heart disease. Peas are great steamed. They also make a good topping for salads. Peas



are a starchy vegetable.

**Spinach** is a leafy, dark green vegetable. It is often eaten raw in salads, sandwiches, or wraps. It is also delicious cooked. Spinach is high in folate. Folate helps the body make red blood cells.



Remember, no matter what fruits and vegetables you choose, the goal is to make half your plate fruits and vegetables!

[www.choosemyplate.org](http://www.choosemyplate.org)

### Did you know?

Added sugars will be included on the Nutrition Facts label in 2018. The 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines recommend consuming no more than 30 percent daily calories from added sugars. Schools are already limiting the amount of foods and beverages with added sugars.



### Healthier Habits

## How to Read the Nutrition Facts Label

- 1. Start with the Serving Size.** Compare the amount of food you eat to the serving size listed on the panel. If you are eating two cups and the serving size is 1 cup, you are getting twice the calories, fat, and other nutrients listed. Also look at the number of servings in the package.
- 2. Check out the Total Calories.** This tells you how many calories are in a single serving of the food.
- 3. Let the Percent Daily Values Be Your Guide.** A 5% or less daily value is considered low in a nutrient. Look for foods low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, and sodium. A 20% or more daily value is considered high in a nutrient. Look for foods high in vitamins, minerals, and fiber.
- 4. Check the Ingredient List.** Foods with more than one ingredient must have an ingredient list on the label. Ingredients are listed in descending order by weight. That means those ingredients with the largest amounts will be listed first. Try to limit foods that have sugar listed as the first ingredient.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>2/3 cup (55g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>10%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 160mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g	<b>13%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
<b>Total Sugars</b> 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
<b>Protein</b> 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 250mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

\*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. A 2,000 calorie diet is used for general nutrition advice.

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

## Make Mealtime Family Time

When's the last time you sat down with your family to share a meal together? Maybe it was last night, last week, last month or even last year! Here are some ideas to make eating meals with your family fun:

- **Remove distractions.** Turn off the TV, put away your cellphones, and enjoy each other's company.
- **Talk to each other.** Share the best part of your day and the worst part of your day. Listen to others as they share.
- **Help plan the meal and set the table.** Everyone can do their part!
- **On nice days, opt for a change of scenery.** It's getting warmer outside, so why not go to a nearby park for a picnic.



[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

## Chocolate-Hazelnut Stuffed Banana Fro-Yo Bites

### Ingredients

- 3 large bananas
- 1/4 cup chocolate-hazelnut spread
- 1/4 cup peanut butter
- 1/4 cup non-fat vanilla Greek yogurt



Serving size: 2 banana bites  
Serves 10

Source: [eatright.org](http://eatright.org)

### Directions

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Slice bananas into bite-sized chunks. In a small bowl, stir together chocolate-hazelnut spread, peanut butter and yogurt.
3. Spread a dollop of mixture on banana slice and top with another banana slice to form a banana sandwich. Place on baking sheet. Repeat with remaining bananas.

Freeze banana bites for two hours. Transfer to airtight container and store in freezer.