



March 2010

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Family Dinners Matter!

For many families, eating dinner together has been put to the wayside with busy schedules and commitments. But family mealtime can be more important than you thought.

By eating with your children, it is more likely that their meals (and yours!) will be healthy and well-balanced. Because children tend to mimic their parents' attitudes about foods, what you cook and serve at home has an impact on your children. Not only that, eating dinner together keeps the lines of communication open between you and the members of your family.

Children will not see healthy meal choices as a priority if it's not something they see you doing. So, make family dinner a dynamic experience – cook together, eat sensible portion sizes, be open to trying new foods and preparing food in new ways. This is a great opportunity to pass on traditions and strengthen family bonds. Sit down and enjoy a meal with your family.



LIVE WELL, WORK WELL

Emphasize Nutrition

What better time to start focusing on nutrition in your life than during National Nutrition Month? Sponsored by the American Dietetic Association, National Nutrition Month® focuses on the importance of making sound food choices and developing positive eating and physical activity habits. Here are some ways to incorporate healthy food choices and physical activity into your life this month:

- Keep a food diary. Knowing what you eat will help you to make changes where necessary. Starting today, write down when you eat, as well as what, how much, where and how you're feeling when you eat.
- Plan ahead. If you plan your meals for the week, you can save time and money.
- Shop smart at the grocery store. Eat a snack before you leave to shop and stick to what's on your list. Shop the perimeter of the store first, as it typically contains the healthiest foods.
- Read the nutrition facts label. Look at the serving size, and try to keep saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol and sodium at 5 percent of your



recommended daily value or less.

- Choose foods that have 20 percent or more of your daily value of fiber, iron, calcium, potassium, and vitamins A and C.
- Snack on healthy foods. Eat small, healthy snacks throughout the day, such as baby carrots or a handful of almonds. This will keep you from overeating at mealtimes.
- Make smart choices at restaurants. Consume only half of your meal and take the rest home. Ask for dressings and sauces on the side.
- Walk. Park farther away from the store or work. Opt for the stairs instead of the elevator. Take a walk during your lunch break. Your steps will add up!
- Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes of physical activity a week. If you don't have time for 30 minutes of exercise at one time, get moving for shorter 10-minute periods throughout the day.

March is
National Nutrition
Month®!



For additional information on National Nutrition Month, visit www.eatright.org/NNM.

National Nutrition Month® is a registered

Handle with Care

Two-thirds of raw chicken contains salmonella and/or campylobacter, the leading bacteria that cause food-borne illnesses, according to a recent study by Consumer Reports.

Consumer Reports has consistently found disease-causing bacteria in store-bought chicken since 1998, suggesting that most poultry producers have inadequate safeguards against contamination.

Campylobacter was found in 62 percent of the chickens and salmonella was found in 14 percent. Only 34 percent of chickens were free of both bacterias. So what can you do to protect yourself and your family? Follow these procedures to avoid contracting a food-borne illness from chicken:

- When at the grocery store, choose chicken that is well-wrapped at the bottom of the case where the temperature is coolest.



- Buy chicken last before checking out.
- Cook chicken to at least 165 degrees F. It can still contain bacteria even if it's not pink, so use a meat thermometer.
- Don't place cooked chicken back on the same plate that held it raw.
- Refrigerate or freeze leftovers within two hours of cooking.



FLEXIBILITY



HYGIENE



STRENGTH



MENTAL
HEALTH



GOOD
DIET

Refunds into Bonds

In an effort to help individuals build their savings and retirement funds, a new option allows taxpayers to use their tax refunds to purchase U.S. Series I Savings Bonds.

This year, for the first time, taxpayers can request a portion, or all, of their refund to be used to buy up to \$5,000 in low-risk, liquid Treasury I Bonds.

These bonds earn interest from the first day of their issue month, and protect owners against inflation. They can be redeemed at any time after a 12-month minimum holding period, and can grow in value for up to 30 years.

To purchase these savings bonds with your tax refund, indicate on your tax return how much of your refund you would like to request for I Bond purchase. Amounts must be in \$50 increments. For more information, visit www.irs.gov.



A fresh spin on the twice-baked potato – and only 115 calories per serving!

Twice-Baked Potato with Salsa

- 4 medium baking potatoes
- ¾ cup low-fat cottage cheese
- ¼ cup low-fat milk
- 2 tablespoons soft margarine
- 4 scallions, minced
- 2 tablespoons fresh jalapeno pepper, minced
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1.5 lbs. tomato, diced
- 2/3 cup red onion, minced
- 6 tablespoons cilantro, chopped
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt

Prick potatoes with a fork. Bake at 425 degrees for 60 minutes, or until tender. Cut potatoes in half lengthwise and scoop out potato pulp, leaving enough attached to the skin to form a sturdy shell. Add cottage cheese, milk, margarine, scallions and black pepper to the potato pulp. Mix well and spoon into potato skins. Bake for an additional 20 minutes. In a bowl, mix together remaining ingredients to create the fresh salsa. Spoon over potatoes and serve. Recipe yields 8 servings.