



Wellness Wakeup Call

Newsletter for K-1 2

Special Holiday Bonus Tips

Welcome to Wellness Wakeup Call! This newsletter contains messages to be read each morning in school over the loud speaker for morning announcements. This program is an easy way to help fulfill the requirements of nutrition education goals for the federally mandated Local Wellness Policies. If there are more messages than school days in the month, please combine a few so that you will be able to read them all. This program should be used in chronological order, starting with Month 1, and so on. In addition, we encourage you to notify parents about this program through the district or PTA/PTO newsletters to learn what their students are learning, and so they can try a healthy recipe! This document is available as a PDF file at www.healthyschoolfood.org and you are welcome to post these files on the district website. This information and more can be found at www.healthyschoolfood.org.

- Each day, start the message with: **"Good morning, this is your Wellness Wakeup Call!"**
- Then read the message for the day. End each message with: **"Enjoy your holiday, the healthy way!"**

Special celebrations often call for special celebration foods, and many are very nutritious! During the winter holidays, people use pumpkins and other squash, apples, cranberries, corn, nuts, oranges, gingerbread, and sweet potatoes. Can you think of others?

A wonderful way to celebrate holidays with family and friends is to do an outdoor activity together. Touch football, hide-and-seek, or taking a walk are a few ideas. Can you think of others?

Popcorn is a fun healthy holiday food. Just don't get the kind with unhealthy fats, called trans fats, and other artificial ingredients. It makes a great gift that's not expensive. First, be sure an adult is there to help. Then, pop kernels in a hot air popper and transfer to a bowl. Then, lightly spray the popcorn with cooking spray or drizzle with a teaspoon of olive oil. Finally, toss the popcorn with a little bit of powdered spice such as cinnamon, curry, or garlic.

Special treats are for special occasions, and so the holiday season is the time to enjoy them. But it shouldn't mean eating so much that you feel stuffed and uncomfortable. Instead you can take smaller servings and enjoy the people who have come together to celebrate.

A nibble here and a taste there of holiday treats and desserts can really add up fast, making you feel too stuffed and very tired. So be kind to your body and eat healthy breakfasts, lunches, and dinners, followed by a small holiday treat afterward. Some delicious and healthy foods to have at holiday meals are punch made with real fruit juice, stuffed squash with a healthy mushroom gravy, oven roasted yams, mashed potatoes, and cranberry sauce.

You can celebrate with ordinary food. You might feel especially grateful that you have food to share with the people you love, while in some homes around the world, families have very little food on their table and go hungry.

See the holiday recipes on the next page...



Recipes for the Holidays

Sesame-Roasted Butternut Squash

Some will say that this is dessert. This is a delicious way to serve winter squash.

You will need:

- 2.5 lbs butternut squash
- 1 Tablespoon TOASTED sesame oil
- 1 Tablespoon tamari (natural soy sauce)

Garnish: toasted black or white sesame seeds, fresh parsley, chopped

What to do:

Preheat oven to 400 F. Peel and seed squash, then cut into 1 inch cubes. Toss with sesame oil and tamari. Spread out on a baking sheet and roast in oven for about 30 minutes or until tender. Serve with garnish - sesame seeds and chopped parsley. Makes 8 servings.

(Recipe from *Professional Vegetarian Cooking* by Ken Bergeron.)

Wild Rice Pilaf with Jewels of the Earth

You will need:

- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup sliced celery
- 1 cup combination of long grain brown and wild rices
- 2 1/4 cups low sodium vegetable broth
- 3/4 cup combination of raisins and dried cranberries
- 1/3 cup chopped pecans

What to do:

Heat oil over medium heat in a medium sized saucepan. Add onion and celery, and cook until soft. Add remaining ingredients except pecans. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 40 minutes or until all liquid is absorbed. Top with chopped pecans and serve.

Makes 4-6 servings.

(Modified from a recipe at www.sunmaid.com.)

Mushroom Gravy

Gravy can be low-fat and relatively healthy. This gravy is especially delicious!

You will need:

- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 2 onions, diced
- 6 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 5 - 6 cups water
- 3/4 cups tamari (natural soy sauce)

What to do:

Heat oil and sauté onions and mushrooms. Mix flour with water (hint: mix one cup flour with one cup water first, then add the rest of the water). Add tamari. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring often, then simmer uncovered over medium heat for one-half hour, stirring occasionally.

Makes 6 cups of gravy.

(Modified from a recipe by Matthew Schmidt, proprietor of the Tofu Shop in Arcata, California.)