



Wellness Wakeup Call

Newsletter for 6-12

Month #6: Label Reading

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. New messages are available on our website each month, and are generally ready by the 25th. We encourage you to photocopy this newsletter double sided to send home with students so parents can learn, too, and have a healthy recipe to try. In addition, we encourage you to notify parents about this program through the district or PTA/PTO newsletters to learn what their children are learning, and so they can try a healthy recipe! This document is available as PDF files at www.healthyschoolfood.org and you are welcome to post these files on the district website.

- 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 day, the healthy way!"**

1. Did you ever wonder about the ingredients in your food? You can read the ingredient listing on a food package to find out what's in the food.
2. Food manufacturers have to list all the ingredients in a food on the label. Ingredients are listed in order by weight. The first ingredient in the list is the one that there's the most of.
3. Manufacturers have to clearly indicate if a food contains any of the things that people are most likely to be allergic to - milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, wheat and soy.
4. People who have allergies should always check the ingredient labels of foods to make sure there's nothing in the food that they're allergic to. Actually, everyone should look at the ingredient listing since many foods contain ingredients that it would be better for everyone to avoid.
5. Some foods just have one ingredient. For instance, an apple is just that - an apple. It gets more complicated when manufacturers have to combine ingredients to make something else. Some foods can have more than 50 ingredients!
6. Reading an ingredient listing can help you decide whether or not a food is good for you and if it's something you want to eat. How many ingredients are in your favorite foods?
7. Have you heard of something called "transfat"? It's a kind of unhealthy fat that is found in many processed foods like doughnuts, cookies, and crackers and in some brands of margarine. Transfats help the product last longer on the shelf but they can result in a shorter life for us!
8. You can tell if a food contains transfats by checking the ingredient listing. If the ingredients include the words "partially hydrogenated" [hy-DROJ-en-ateed] or "hydrogenated", then the food probably contains transfats. Health experts say that it would be best to eat no transfats.
9. You might see a product label that says contains 0 grams of trans-fat but still see "partially hydrogenated" on the listing of ingredients. That's because if a serving of a food contains less than 1/2 gram of trans-fat, the label can still say it has no trans-fat. Since we often eat more than one serving of a food, we can get more trans-fat than we realize.
10. Manufacturers are finding ways to replace transfats in foods with healthier fats but it's still important to check the label so you can make sure that your food has no partially hydrogenated fat.

11. Here are some good ideas for snacks that don't have transfat: apples, bananas, carrot sticks, grapes, airpopped popcorn, watermelon, cherry tomatoes, and homemade trail mix.
12. A food can say that it is 99% fatfree and still have lots of fat. How can that be? An ounce of low-fat cheese has about 7/100 of a gram of fat so, by weight, the cheese is only about 7% fat. However, it's more important to look at what percent calories come from fat. In this case, more than a third of the calories come from fat.
13. Food manufacturers add salt to food because they think people like food with a salty taste. Health experts think that it would be better to have people add a little salt to their foods if they want to instead of having food companies add lots of salt.
14. Eating too much salt all the time can lead to high blood pressure, which is not good for us.
15. Some foods that are especially high in salt are frozen dinners, pizza, canned soup, pasta sauce, lunchmeats, and fast food. Some frozen dinners have more salt than a person should eat in a day!
16. Look for packages that say, "contains less salt" or "reduced sodium" to cut down on the amount of salt that you eat. You can find out how much salt is in a food by looking on the label for the amount of sodium.
17. Americans eat about 100 pounds of sugar per person a year. Some people think that is one reason why so many people in the United States are overweight.
18. Sugar doesn't do much nutritionally. It provides calories but doesn't give us anything else - no protein, no vitamins, no minerals, and no protective phytonutrients. That's why it's called an empty calorie food.
19. Did you know that high fructose corn syrup, cane sugar, invert sugar, corn sweetener, honey, sucrose, dextrose, fructose, maple syrup, corn syrup, brown sugar, and molasses are all different names for sugar that may appear in the ingredient listing?
20. Can you think of ways to cut down on sugar? One idea is to drink water instead of soda or "sports drinks".
21. Try making your own frozen treats by freezing 100% fruit juice in small cups or Popsicle-shaped molds.
22. Reading the food label can help you choose healthier foods. You can show others how to read a food label or help people who have trouble reading the fine print on some labels.

This information and more can be found at www.healthyschoolfood.org.



Recipe of the Month

Apple Raisin Spice Muffins

These muffins are easy to make for breakfast or for a snack! Try using different varieties of apples or even replacing the apples with pears. You can add chopped nuts or other dried fruits as well.

You will need:

- 1 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- 1 cup water
- 1/3 cup molasses or maple syrup
- 2 apples, cored and chopped finely
- 1/2 cup raisins



What to do:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Mix all the ingredients together in a large bowl. Pour batter into lightly oiled muffin tins. Bake for 20 minutes at 400 degrees. Cool briefly before removing from tins. Makes 18 muffins.

Nutritional analysis per muffin: 106 calories; 3 grams protein; <1 gram fat; 24 grams carbohydrate; 2 grams dietary fiber; 20 milligrams calcium; <1 milligram iron; 32 milligrams sodium

This recipe is from *Simply Vegan* by Debra Wasserman (The Vegetarian Resource Group)

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