

# The Newsladder

## March Is National Nutrition Month

National Nutrition Month® is a nutrition education and information campaign created annually in March by the American Dietetic Association. The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

Healthy reasons to **EAT A RAINBOW** of colorful fruits and vegetables -

**Red fruits and vegetables** are colored by natural plant pigments called "lycopene" or "anthocyanins." Lycopene in tomatoes, watermelon and pink grapefruit, for example, may help reduce risk of several types of cancer, especially prostate cancer. Lycopene in foods containing cooked tomatoes, such as spaghetti sauce, and a small amount of fat are absorbed better than lycopene from raw tomatoes.

Anthocyanins in strawberries, raspberries, red grapes and other fruits and vegetables act as powerful antioxidants that protect cells from damage. Antioxidants are linked with keeping our hearts healthy, too.

These are some other examples of the red group:

- Red apples
- Beets
- Red cabbage
- Cherries
- Cranberries
- Red peppers
- Radishes

**Orange/yellow fruits and vegetables** are usually colored by natural plant pigments called "carotenoids." Beta-carotene in sweet potatoes, pumpkins and carrots is converted to vitamin A, which helps maintain healthy mucous membranes and healthy eyes. Scientists have also reported that carotenoid-rich foods can help reduce risk of cancer, heart disease and can improve immune system function. One study found that people

who ate a diet high in carotenoid-rich vegetables were 43 percent less likely to develop age-related macular degeneration, an eye disorder common among the elderly, which can lead to blindness. Carotenoids also may be good for your heart. One study found that men with high cholesterol who ate plenty of vegetables high in carotenoids had a 36 percent lower chance of heart attack and death than their counterparts who shunned vegetables. Citrus fruits like oranges are not a good source of vitamin A. They are an excellent source of vitamin C and folate, a B vitamin that helps reduce risk of birth defects.

Some other examples of the orange/yellow group include:

- Yellow apples
- Apricots
- Cantaloupe
- Grapefruit
- Lemons
- Nectarines
- Peaches
- Pears
- Yellow peppers
- Pineapple
- Sweet corn
- Tangerines

**Green fruits and vegetables** are colored by natural plant pigment called "chlorophyll." Some members of the green group, including spinach and other dark leafy greens, green peppers, peas, cucumber and celery, contain lutein. Lutein works with another chemical, zeaxanthin, found in corn, red peppers, oranges, grapes and egg yolks to help keep eyes healthy. Together, these chemicals may help reduce risk of cataracts and age-related macular degeneration, which can lead to blindness if untreated.

The "indoles" in broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and other cruciferous vegetables may help protect against some types of cancer. Leafy greens such as spinach and broccoli are excellent sources of folate, a B vitamin that helps reduce

risk of birth defects. Some other examples of the green group include:

- Green apples
- Artichokes
- Asparagus
- Avocados
- Green beans
- Brussels sprouts
- Kiwi
- Lettuce
- Limes
- Zucchini

**Blue/purple fruits and vegetables** are colored by natural plant pigments called "anthocyanins." Anthocyanins in blueberries, grapes and raisins act as powerful antioxidants that protect cells from damage. They may help reduce risk of cancer, stroke and heart disease. Other studies have shown that eating more blueberries is linked with improved memory function and healthy aging.

These are some other examples of the blue/purple group:

- Blackberries
- Eggplant
- Figs
- Juneberries
- Plums
- Prunes

White fruits and vegetables are colored by pigments called "anthoxanthins." They may contain health-promoting chemicals such as allicin, which may help lower cholesterol and blood pressure and may help reduce risk of stomach cancer and heart disease. Some members of the white group, such as bananas and potatoes, are good sources of the mineral potassium, too. Some other examples of the white group include:

- Cauliflower
- Garlic
- Ginger
- Mushrooms
- Onions
- Parsnips
- Turnips



## Fruits and Vegetables in Weight Management

Fruits and vegetables are part of a well-balanced and healthy eating plan. There are many different ways to lose or maintain a healthy weight. Using more fruits and vegetables along with whole grains and lean meats, nuts, and beans is a safe and healthy one. Helping control your weight is not the only benefit of eating more fruits and vegetables. Diets rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of some types of cancer and other chronic diseases. Fruits and vegetables also provide essential vitamins and minerals, fiber, and other substances that are important for good health.



### To lose weight, you must eat fewer calories than your body uses.

This doesn't necessarily mean that you have to eat less food. You can create lower-calorie versions of some of your favorite dishes by substituting low-calorie fruits and vegetables in place of higher-calorie ingredients. The water and fiber in fruits and vegetables will add volume to your dishes, so you can eat the same amount of food with fewer calories. Most fruits and vegetables are naturally low in fat and calories and are filling.



### Here are some simple ways to cut calories and eat fruits and vegetables throughout your day:

#### Breakfast: Start the Day Right

- Substitute some spinach, onions, or mushrooms for one of the eggs or half of the cheese in your morning omelet. The vegetables will add volume and flavor to the dish with fewer calories than the egg or cheese.
- Cut back on the amount of cereal in your bowl to make room for some cut-up bananas, peaches, or strawberries. You can still eat a full bowl, but with fewer calories.

#### Lighten Up Your Lunch

- Substitute vegetables such as lettuce, toma-

toes, cucumbers, or onions for 2 ounces of the cheese and 2 ounces of the meat in your sandwich, wrap, or burrito. The new version will fill you up with fewer calories than the original.

- Add a cup of chopped vegetables, such as broccoli, carrots, beans, or red peppers, in place of 2 ounces of the meat or 1 cup of noodles in your favorite broth-based soup. The vegetables will help fill you up, so you won't miss those extra calories.

#### Dinner

- Add in 1 cup of chopped vegetables such as broccoli, tomatoes, squash, onions, or peppers, while removing 1 cup of the rice or pasta in your favorite dish. The dish with the vegetables will be just as satisfying but have fewer calories than the same amount of the original version.
- Take a good look at your dinner plate. Vegetables, fruit, and whole grains should take up the largest portion of your plate. If they do not, replace some of the meat, cheese, white pasta, or rice with legumes, steamed broccoli, asparagus, greens, or another favorite vegetable. This will reduce the total calories in your meal without reducing the amount of food you eat. BUT remember to use a normal- or small-size plate — not a platter. The total number of calories that you eat counts, even if a good proportion of them come from fruits and vegetables.

#### Smart Snacks

- Most healthy eating plans allow for one or two small snacks a day. Choosing most fruits and vegetables will allow you to eat a snack with only 100 calories.

#### About 100 Calories or Less

- a medium-size apple (72 calories)
- a medium-size banana

(105 calories)

- 1 cup steamed green beans (44 calories)
- 1 cup blueberries (83 calories)
- 1 cup grapes (100 calories)
- 1 cup carrots (45 calories), broccoli (30 calories), or bell peppers (30 calories) with 2 tbsp. hummus (46 calories)

Instead of a high-calorie snack from a vending machine, bring some cut-up vegetables or fruit from home. One snack-sized bag of corn chips (1 ounce) has the same number of calories as a small apple, 1 cup of whole strawberries, AND 1 cup of carrots with 1/4 cup of low-calorie dip. Substitute one or two of these options for the chips, and you will have a satisfying snack with fewer calories.

#### Remember: Substitution is the key.

It's true that fruits and vegetables are lower in calories than many other foods, but they do contain some calories. If you start eating fruits and vegetables in addition to what you usually eat, you are adding calories and may gain weight. The key is substitution. Eat fruits and vegetables instead of some other higher-calorie food.

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

## They're Back!.....Seasonal Allergies

Spring has sprung and for many, along with the beautiful flowers and spring cleaning, comes seasonal allergies.

### What's the Problem?

Allergies are the 6th leading cause of chronic illness in the U.S. with an annual cost in excess of \$18 billion. More than 50 million Americans suffer from allergies each year.

Allergies are an overreaction of the immune system to substances that generally do not affect other individuals. These substances, or allergens, can cause sneezing, coughing, and itching. Allergic reactions range from merely bothersome to life-threatening. Some allergies are seasonal, like hay fever. Allergies have also been associated with chronic conditions like sinusitis and asthma.

### Who's at Risk?

Anyone may have or develop an allergy - from a baby born with an allergy to cow's milk, to a child who gets poison ivy, to a senior citizen who develops hives after taking a new medication.

### Can It Be Prevented?

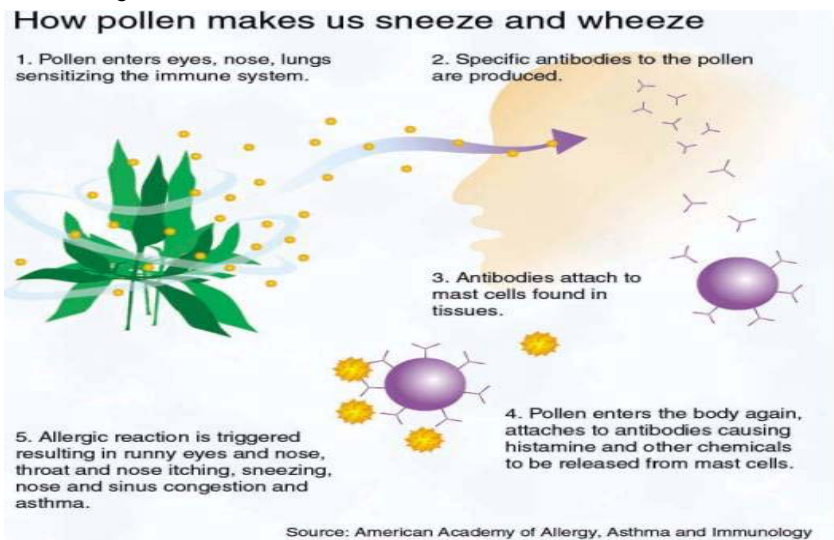
Allergies can generally not be prevented but allergic reactions can be. Once a person knows they are allergic to a certain substance, they can avoid contact with the allergen. Strategies for doing this include being in an air-conditioned environment during peak hay-fever season,

avoiding certain foods, and eliminating dust mites and animal dander from the home. They can also control the allergy by reducing or eliminating the symptoms. Strategies include taking medication to counteract reactions or minimize symptoms and being immunized with allergy injection therapy.

### The Bottom Line

- The most common allergic diseases include: hay fever, asthma, conjunctivitis, hives, eczema, dermatitis and sinusitis.
- Latex allergies are a reaction to the proteins in latex rubber, a substance used in gloves and other products.
- Bees, hornets, wasps, yellow jackets, and fire ants can cause insect sting allergies.

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



## Children and Fire – Life Saving Tips

Young children are not able to sense danger in the same way as adults. They have a very limited ability to react quickly and properly in an emergency situation as well as little control over their environment. This increases their risk of death and injury in a fire.

- Keep matches, lighters and other items used for ignition in a secured drawer or cabinet out of the reach of children.
- Teach your children to tell you when they find matches and lighters.
- Always dress children in pajamas that meet Federal flammability standards. Avoid dressing children for sleep in loose-fitting, 100% cotton garments, such as oversized t-shirts.
- Teach children not to hide from firefighters, but to get out quickly and call for help from another location.
- Show children how to crawl low on the floor, below the smoke, to get out of the house and stay out.
- Demonstrate how to stop, drop to the ground, and roll if clothes catch fire.
- Develop and practice a home fire escape plan and designate a meeting place outside. Get out and stay out.
- Familiarize children with the sound of your smoke alarm.
- Replace mattresses made prior to the 2007 Federal Mattress Flammability

Standard.

- Check under beds and in closets for burnt matches, evidence your child may be playing with fire.

### By the Numbers: Children and Fire

- In 2006, an estimated 14,500 child-playing structure fires were reported to U.S. municipal fire departments, with associated losses of 130 civilian deaths, 810 civilian injuries, and \$328 million in direct damage.
- Children under the age of 5 are more than eight times as likely to die in fire caused by playing with the heat source than are people of all ages.
- Most child-playing

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

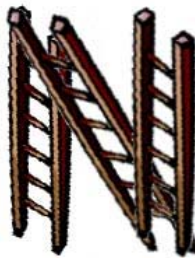


home fires are started with lighters or matches.

- Almost half (42%) of child-playing home structure fires begin in the bedroom.
- Leading items ignited by home fire-play are mattresses, bedding, and clothing.

**THE CITY OF TALLAHASSEE AND  
THE TALLAHASSEE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
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## **Smoke Detectors and The Smoke Detector Program**

Most fire deaths occur in homes without properly placed or maintained smoke detectors. If you have a fire, the smoke will act like an anesthetic and will put you in a deeper sleep. Therefore, you must protect yourself and your family by installing and maintaining smoke detectors in your home. A properly placed and working smoke detector will wake you in time to escape.

### **Minimum Protection:**

- One smoke detector outside each sleeping area
- One smoke detector on each level of your home
- An additional smoke detector in each bedroom

### **Placement**

Proper placement of the smoke detector is important. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions. The basic guidelines are as follows:

- Mount on the ceiling or wall. If on the ceiling, make sure it is at least 4" from the wall and if on the wall, it should be mounted between 4"-12" down from the ceiling (the corner between wall and ceiling is a dead air space).
- Keep smoke detectors away from air vents and ceiling fans.
- If detector is located near a kitchen or shower area, the detector may activate. If so, relocate the detector closer to a bedroom area.

### **Maintenance**

- Battery operated smoke detectors should be checked weekly by pushing the test button. Hard-wired detectors should be checked at least monthly.
- Clean the detector periodically by removing the cover and dusting or vacuuming the detector.
- Change the battery when you change your clock in the spring and fall.
- A periodic "beep" or "chirp" means the battery is low. Replace the battery immediately and don't remove or disconnect the battery before you have one to replace it.

### **The Smoke Detector Program**

The Tallahassee Fire Department Smoke Detector Program began in the early 1980's with a community block grant. This program was designed to provide senior citizens and low-income citizens with a smoke detector for their home. Senior citizens have an increased risk of dying in fires. More than 1,200 Americans over the age of 65 die as a result of fire and 3,000 are injured due to residential fires each year. Over the years, the department has installed many smoke detectors throughout Tallahassee and Leon County. Smoke detectors can provide the early warning necessary to escape a deadly fire. To be effective, smoke detectors must be installed in the right location and they must be maintained. Battery replacement should be done whenever you change your clock in the fall and in the spring.