

July 20, 2022

Greetings from NDS!

Today's Wellness Wednesday topic is: Hydration Awareness Month

July is Hydration Awareness Month, which encourages families to recognize the importance of proper hydration to live a healthy life. Staying hydrated is easier than you may think! Its benefits are endless, making you feel more energized. Not only does water boost your energy, it also helps aid in digestion which allows you to consume food more efficiently. Water detoxifies your organs, helping your kidney function better by moving toxins throughout your body at a faster rate.



Making sure to drink an adequate amount of water this summer is extremely important! Water helps to keep our bodies working well such as hydrating our skin, regulating warm body temperatures when it is warm outside, protecting us from dehydration, and more. Without water, our bodies can overheat, make us feel dizzy or lightheaded, and give us a sense of tiredness. This month, spread the word about the importance of drinking enough water, especially when you are outside, and encourage your community and friends to do the same!

How to Keep Your Body Hydrated

1. Drink water in the morning!
 - a. After a night's rest, it's important to hydrate your body after it has not received liquids. To reactivate your metabolism, drink a glass of water in the morning.
2. Keep a water bottle on hand with you!
 - a. If you plan on going for a walk, hanging out with friends, or just being outside, be sure to bring a water bottle to stay hydrated this summer.
3. Drink water before going to bed.
 - a. This helps reduce your blood pressure and heart rate.
4. Listen to your body! If you feel thirsty, drink water!!

For more tips on how to stay hydrated in the summer, click [here!](#)



7/27/2022

Today's Wellness Wednesday topic is: July Harvest of the Month- Beets

PA Harvest of the Month highlights **beets** during the month of July. Beets are a globe shaped root vegetables that are most commonly deep red-purple but can also range in shades of red to white and yellow. The deep red color comes from a natural plant pigment that has disease-fighting properties. Fun fact, beet juice is widely used as a natural dye to give pink or red coloring to processed foods. People originally ate only the beet greens, not the roots. Occasionally, beets have been used medicinally.

Beets are an excellent source of fiber and folate. Fiber aids in digestion and may play a role in reducing the risk of diseases such as obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Folate is needed to produce healthy red blood cells. Beets also contain antioxidants, which may reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer, and other diseases.

Beets should be round and relatively firm with smooth skins, an optimal size is 2-3 inches in diameter. Beets larger than this size are often fibrous and woody. When possible, choose beets with the greens still attached to ensure the freshest product. Beet greens should be bright green with red veins running through them and should not be wilted. You may prepare beets in the microwave, steamed, boiled, pickled, roasted or eaten raw. Grate, shave, or thinly slice raw beets and add them to salads or slaws. Roasting beets results in a very flavorful produce since roasting concentrates the natural sugar found in beets.

Check [The Kitchen Community](#) for healthy beet recipes!



8/3/2022

Today's Wellness Wednesday topic is: National Watermelon Day

Today is National Watermelon Day, August 3rd! Watermelon is a favorite summer treat, that is naturally low in fat, sodium and has no cholesterol. Watermelon is an excellent source of potassium, vitamin C, vitamin A and folic acid. Did you know that watermelon's are made up of 92% water.



A perfectly ripe watermelon will have a dull sheen, dried stem, and buttery yellow underside where it touched the ground. When you tap it, it should sound dull and hollow. An uncut watermelon can be kept for up to 2 weeks at room temperature. When ready to use, scrub with a clean vegetable brush under running water. Dry with a clean towel or paper towel. Once cut, store watermelon in a covered container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days without a decrease in flavor or texture.

Simply Summer Fruit Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 cup watermelon, scrubbed with clean vegetable brush under running water
- 1 cup blueberries, gently rubbed under cold running water
- 1 cup diced kiwi, gently rubbed under cold running water
- 1 cup canned mandarin oranges, drained
- 1 cup pineapple chunks, fresh, frozen or canned

Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Stir fruit together in a medium sized bowl.
3. Serve immediately or cover and store in the refrigerator.

Nutrition Information:

Serving Size (1 cup):

- Calories 77
- Total Fat 0.4g
- Sodium 4mg
- Total Carbohydrates 19.4g
- Fiber 2.7g



8/10/2022

Today's Wellness Wednesday topic is: PA Harvest of the Month - Tomatoes



PA Harvest of the Month highlights tomatoes during the month of August! Did you know, tomatoes were discovered in Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador and that until the early 1800's, tomatoes were thought to be poisonous?

A ripe tomatoes should have bright, shiny, red skin that is free of bruises. Tomatoes are placed into categories based on shape, use, and size. These include:

- **Cherry or grape:** Small and sweet, usually eaten in salads.
- **Plum:** Pear-shaped, meaty flesh, great for making into sauce or salsas.
- **Slicing:** Round shapes, can be used for making into sauces, used on sandwiches, or made into salsa.
- **Beefsteak:** Larger, round, juicy. They can be used in sandwiches.

Fun fact, you can place an unripe tomato in a bag with a banana or apple for one to two days. The gas given off by the banana or apple will help the tomatoes ripen faster.

Tomatoes are an excellent source of vitamin C, which can help boost your immune system. Tomatoes are fat free, low in sodium, and high in potassium. Potassium helps maintain cell growth and normal water levels in the body. Tomatoes are classified into the red and orange subgroup of vegetables. Tomatoes are red in color because of lycopene. Lycopene is an antioxidant that can help protect against some types of cancer.

You can serve tomatoes many ways. Some common ways include:

- **Grilled:** Wash your tomatoes and remove the stem and core. Using a sharp knife, cut your tomatoes in half, brush with olive oil, and place on a pre-heated, medium to high heat grill. Cook about 6-8 minutes, until soft, turning once.
- **Raw:** Rinse, dry and remove your tomato core. Slice and dice your tomatoes to enjoy in salads or on sandwiches. To enjoy by itself, slice your tomato into ¼" slices, and sprinkle with salt. Allow your tomato slices to sit for about 15 minutes. The salt will draw excess water from the tomato. This will help deepen the natural flavor of your tomato.
- **Roasted:** Place small, grape tomatoes or cut tomatoes in a bowl. Toss your tomatoes with olive oil, salt, pepper, and other desired seasonings. Spread the tomatoes in an even layer on a prepared baking sheet pan. Roast at 425° until soft and caramelized, for about 5-8 minutes.

A message from NUTRITIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

8/17/2022

Greetings from NDS!

Today's Wellness Wednesday topic discusses:



National Wellness Month

August is Wellness Month! Use this month as a time to focus on self-care, stress management, and creating healthy routines. Self-care is an important part of our well-being. Practicing self-care, managing stress, being mindful, practicing self-compassion, and focusing on proper nutrition and exercise are all things you should focus on including in your daily routine.

How can you celebrate National Wellness Month?

- **Drink more water.** Staying hydrated is one of the best things you can do for your overall health. Water helps give you energy, flushes toxins from your body, improves concentration, and can even help with weight loss.
- **Stretch or practice yoga.** If you are on your feet all day, or sitting at a desk most of the day, stretching daily can help improve your posture, heal back pain, as well as ease your mind.
- **Try something new.** Whether it be a new bike route, exploring a new restaurant, or volunteering. Doing something new can help improve your mental outlook and make you feel good overall.
- **Prioritize exercise.** There are so many benefits to exercising including pain management, letting stress out, boosting confidence, as well as increasing strength, and so much more.
- **Pay attention.** If something is making you feel overwhelmed or stressed, pay attention and act. Go take a walk, try a breathing technique, talk to a friend, find something to help alleviate the overwhelming feeling, and give yourself the opportunity to slow down.
- **Make healthy food choices.** Food can impact the way you feel. Having a balanced diet and good nutrition will help nourish your body and lead to good overall health.

Did you celebrate National Relaxation Day on Monday, August 15th?



8/24/2022

Kids Eat Right Month

Kids Eat Right Month, celebrated every August, focuses on the importance of healthful eating and active lifestyles for kids and families. As summer winds down, and kids prepare to return to school, parents and caregivers should use this time to help children (re)establish healthful eating habits.

- **Fall back into good nutrition**- Plan meals ahead of time, prepare/prep the night before, cook in bulk and freeze meals for later, simplify meals and snacks to keep it easy and more likely to stick to your diet, and include your children in meal and snack planning.
- **Make Mealtime Family Time**- Family meals allow young children to focus on the task and it provides an opportunity for you to model good behaviors. Family mealtime does not have to be every day and it does not have to be dinner, breakfast and lunch are also great opportunities to share meals! Focus on cooking, eating, and talking together.
- **Offer a variety of foods**- Mix it up, let your child choose a new vegetable, add different ingredients to salads and sandwiches, vary your grains throughout the week, keep fruits and vegetables visible on the counter and fridge where your child can see them.
- **Be a healthy role model**- Go food shopping together, prepare meals and snacks together, keep things positive, and set time to be physically active.



[Resources for schools](#)

[Resources for parents and kids](#)