



For Healthy Living in Eastern and Northern Maine Communities

www.WhatYouDoMatters.org



March 2011

March is National Nutrition Month

If you want to make healthy choices with the foods you eat but aren't always sure which ones to choose, let this year's theme "Eat Right with Color," be your guide to healthy living. "Eat Right with Color" is a great way to remember to include a colorful variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and dairy on your plate every day.

The recently released 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend a diet made up of more plant-based foods. So add variety, especially dark-green, red and orange vegetables, along with beans and peas.

More plant-based food, combined with lean meats, fish, poultry, low-fat milk and dairy products creates a rainbow of colors on the plate that can help you eat a more healthy diet.

For more National Nutrition Month information and activities visit www.EatRight.org.

Federal Government Releases New Dietary Guidelines

More than one-third of children and more than two-thirds of adults in the United States are overweight or obese, placing them at greater risk of developing diet-related chronic disease. The latest edition of *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends reducing calorie consumption and increasing physical activity as the best way to stay healthy and fit.

Take action on the Dietary Guidelines by making changes in these three areas. Choose steps that work for you and start today.

Balancing Calories

- Enjoy your food, but eat less
- Avoid oversized portions
- Exercise at least a half hour per day to burn extra calories

Foods to Increase

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables
- Replace refined grains with whole grains
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk

Foods to Reduce

- Compare sodium (salt) in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals—and choose the foods with lower numbers
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks
- Replace protein foods (meat, poultry, seafood) that are higher in solid fats with choices that are lower in solid fats and calories

Eating and physical activity habits that focus on consuming fewer calories, making informed food choices, and being physically active can help you reach and maintain a healthy weight, reduce your risk of chronic disease, and promote overall good health. So start today!!

National Nutrition Month* 2011



National Nutrition Month National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

March 4

WEAR BLUE DAY

*Help Raise Awareness for Colon
Cancer*

March 20 -26

Poison Prevention Week



March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

The latest available figures show that in 2009, almost 900 Mainers were diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and approximately 260 died from the illness. This makes colorectal cancer the second leading cause of cancer death in Maine.

How to Protect Yourself

Because there are often no symptoms, screening is the only way to detect it. If everyone aged 50 years or older were screened regularly, as many as 60% of deaths from this cancer could be avoided.

In most cases, colorectal cancer develops from precancerous polyps (abnormal growths) in the colon or rectum. Screening tests can find precancerous polyps and they can be removed before they turn into cancer. Screening tests can also find colorectal cancer early, when treatment works best.

Are You at Risk?

The risk of developing colorectal cancer increases with age. More than 90% of cases occur in people aged 50 or older. Other risk factors include:

- Physical inactivity

- Alcohol consumption
- Personal or family history of colorectal cancer and/or polyps
- Smoking
- Poor nutrition
- Being overweight

Reduce Your Risk

The most important step you can take to reduce your risk of colorectal cancer is getting screened regularly starting at age 50, or earlier if you have risk factors such as family history.

Contact your doctor today if you're 50 or over and haven't been screened. In addition, follow these tips to help reduce your risk:

- Eat more fiber, fruits and vegetables
- Cut back on red meat
- Exercise at least 30 minutes a day five or more days a week

Colorectal cancer is often treatable when caught early; get screened and help lower your risk today.

Poison Prevention Week is March 20 - 26

In an average year, the American Association of Poison Control Centers receives more than 7,000 reports of potentially toxic exposures to tobacco products among children younger than six in the United States. That's why Poison Prevention Week is an important time to remember the harmful effects tobacco products have on children who eat them.

Ingestion of Cigarettes and Chewing Tobacco Among Children Has Toxic Effects

While studies show that ingestion of tobacco products by children is four times more likely to occur in a household where tobacco is used, no child is safe from these potentially poisonous products.

Children ages 6- to 24-months old are actively exploring their world and often put things into their mouths. That's why it's important that all parents and caregivers keep a close watch on what their child picks up from the ground. It's especially important that parents who use tobacco store those products and ashtrays out of the reach of children.

Adults often fail to think about the dangers that cigarettes, cigarette butts, and chewing tobacco can present to

children. While minor toxic effects may occur such as vomiting, nausea, lethargy, gagging, and a pale or flushed appearance, more severe poisonings can include depressed respiration, cardiac arrhythmia, and convulsions.

If ingestion does occur, call Northern New England Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 to determine the risks for poisoning and to get recommendations for treatment.

In addition to preventing nicotine poisonings, avoiding the use of tobacco products around children can:

- Decrease the risk for lower respiratory and middle ear infections in children
- Decrease the risk that children will smoke in the future
- Decrease children's access to lighted cigarettes, matches, and cigarette lighters, thereby reducing the risk of fire.

Parents and guardians who want to quit can get personalized help by contacting the Maine Tobacco HelpLine at 1-800-207-1230.

