



Nutrition Edition

Your Guide to Child Health and Nutrition



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CACFPRoundtable.org

Honor Native American Culture

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH is celebrated every year in November with Native American Heritage Day coming the day after Thanksgiving. Both were established to pay tribute to the rich ancestry, traditions and contributions of the first Americans.

To help us all understand the past and acknowledge the great diversity of our nation, celebrate Native American Heritage month in November by



learning, sharing and talking about the history of Native Americans, who settled our country long before the European settlers arrived. This special time gives us a chance to give thanks for all we have, enjoy time with family

and friends but it also encourages us to honor the people that lived on this land before us by appreciating their contributions and learning about some of their ways.

Giving thanks is central to Native American heritage. Thanks is given for the gift of Mother Earth's abundance and for creation. Thankful practices include caring for the environment and recognizing the human need for communion with nature and others. Among all Native American tribes many feasts took place to celebrate the harvest season, including the ripening of the acorns, the running of the salmon and the maturing of the maize also known as corn. Other feasts were held throughout the year to celebrate occasions such as a marriage, child naming and honoring the dead. Having a feast is part of Native American traditions and many of the foods that were eaten long ago are still enjoyed today. Incorporate more traditional or culturally inspired Native American recipes by understanding what ingredients are commonly found in the diverse

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Farmer Fran's Fun Facts



Pumpkins

- Pumpkins originated in Central America; seeds have been found in Mexico dating back more than 7,500 years.
- Pumpkins were likely brought to North America by Indian tribes. Native Americans called pumpkins "isquom squash" and they used the seeds for food and medicine.
- A pumpkin vine blossoms with both male and female flowers. When the female blossom opens, it is only for one day. If a bee does not transfer pollen from the male to the female on that day, it will fall off and a pumpkin will not grow.
- Pumpkins are 90% water and can range in size from less than a pound to over 1,000 pounds. The largest known pumpkin weighed over 1,140 pounds.
- Look for fresh pumpkins that are bright orange and feel heavy for their size. They should feel firm and not have any soft spots, bruises or other signs of decay. Roast, bake or mash pumpkin for warm, tasty side dishes. Purée to use in soups and use canned pumpkin to make tasty breads, muffins or pancakes.
- Pumpkin is an excellent source of Vitamin A and a good source of vitamin C.

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Honor Native American Culture

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regions and cultural dishes. Of course, Native American foods come from a wide variety of locations, spanning the northern reaches of Alaska all the way down to the southern border. To cook traditional meals, you may want to pick a geographic location first, discover the tribes that lived there and choose the types of ingredients that would have grown there naturally many years ago.

Native Americans were accomplished farmers long before the European settlers arrived on their shores. They grew their own crops as well as gathered foods that grew in the area during their nomadic migrations. Most tribes enjoyed a host of vegetables, wild grains and herbs in their dishes.

Most Native American tribes had very meat heavy diets. People often associate venison and buffalo with the traditional meat Native American people commonly ate but other meat included elk, turkey, rabbit, antelope, duck, bear, smaller game animals, fish and a variety of shellfish. In northern Canada and Alaska seal and whale meat was eaten as well.

Maize was an important staple to the Native American diet. Dried and ground into flour (corn meal) it traveled well and was mixed with water, shaped and then dropped into boiling water, fried in oil or baked over a fire. It was also made into porridge and sweetened with berries, maple syrup or honey. Corn was also processed by boiling the dried corn with hardwood ash to break open the hulls. It was then rinsed and used to make corn dishes such as succotash and soups.

Many Native Americans used the classic recipe of dried meat, dried fruit, rendered fat with nuts and possibly honey, as a portable, concentrated source of energy to take on long journeys. The Cree Nation called this Pemmican.

Buffalo stew is known as *tanka-me-a-lo* in the Cherokee Nation but can be made with beef if there is no buffalo meat available. Buffalo meat is protein-rich and has a much lower fat content than beef eaten today. It was used as a cooking staple primarily in the midwest and western plains where the American bison roamed in the millions. Buffalo stew would have included potatoes, carrots or other root vegetables and herbs like sage for flavor.

Pumpkins are native to Central America and Mexico and have been a staple in the diet of many Native American tribes dating back thousands of years. Both the seeds and the flesh of the pumpkin is eaten. It is easy to cook pumpkin the same way it was cooked by Native Americans, simply cut it up and roast it in the oven for about an hour. It can be added to soups and stews or made into a variety of savory dishes by adding roast meat, vegetables or herbs.



Other varieties of gourds were cultivated by most tribes. Butternut squash is delicious boiled or roasted, try mixing it with maple syrup, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and butter. This is a versatile Native American recipe which can be served in chunks or blended until smooth.

Wild greens were gathered and eaten raw or cooked. A collection of any type of edible greens that were native to the area in which the tribe lived or traveled could become part of a meal. Some common wild greens included amaranth, black mustard, dandelion leaves, lamb's quarters, mint, purslane, sorrel, watercress and wild onions.

Native American feast days are still celebrated today. Tribal members come together in celebration of their rich culture, religion and language with traditional foods, music and dance. Enjoy discovering all about the first people of this country by exploring their history, culture and incorporating native foods into celebrations.

— Catherine Stafford
Child Health and Nutrition Manager
CocoKids

KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

Self-Care is Not Selfish!

WE OFTEN FEEL GUILTY about the idea of self-care, but there is no reward for self-sacrifice. When we take care of ourselves, we can offer our kids the love, compassion, structure and connection they need. We can also model for them how to support their own emotional and physical wellbeing.



enhance your sense of wellbeing. Adults need 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Establish a routine. Shut down your screens at least a half hour before bedtime. Try taking an Epsom salt bath, putting your legs up the wall for a few minutes or writing in a journal to help you wind down.

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE BIG

Making tiny tweaks to your daily routine—such as breathing deeply, staying hydrated and getting enough sleep—can lead to real transformation. Problems are easier to solve when you're not running on empty.

PRACTICE FINDING CALM

Focused breathing is the fastest way to neutralize stress. Put your hand over your diaphragm and inhale through your nose for four seconds, expanding your belly. Hold for four seconds, then exhale slowly through your mouth for eight seconds. Another option is a body scan, where you slowly sweep through each body part with your mind, from your feet to your head, noticing and relaxing into (rather than encouraging) whatever intense sensations you find.

BE KINDER TO YOURSELF

Your inner voice can be an enemy or an ally. Notice your self-talk and try to treat yourself the way you would treat a good friend. When you offer yourself compassion, your body releases the “love hormone” oxytocin, enhancing your sense of trust, calm, safety and connectedness so you can rise to the occasion.

FOCUS ON YOUR STRENGTHS

Instead of dwelling on your perceived weaknesses, tap into your strengths. Are you curious, kind, creative? Identify your primary strengths and try to use them each day in new ways. For example, if you're curious, try eating a new food, reading a different newspaper or taking an alternative route. Studies have shown that accentuating “signature strengths” can decrease stress and depression.

GET YOUR SLEEP

When we are pressed for time, often sleep is the first thing we cut. But getting more sleep is the most effective way to

MOVE

Exercising 3 days/week will help you stay in a more positive space. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Hold a plank position for one minute when you wake up. Find a physical activity that you enjoy. Exercise increases serotonin in the brain to ensure your body and mind stay healthy, reducing stress and anxiety.

EAT FOR WELLNESS

Eating healthily decreases depression by 50%. Diet is linked to the hippocampus, a key area of the brain involved in learning, memory and mental health. People with healthy diets, including one rich in fruits and vegetables, have more hippocampal volume than those with unhealthy diets. Omega 3 fatty acids found in fish may help concentration. Vitamin B Complex found in fish, beans, milk and dairy can balance your mood and Vitamin C found in many fruits and vegetables can decrease stress.

SEEK SOCIAL CONNECTION

Family challenges and social stigma can leave parents feeling isolated. Don't suffer alone. Social relationships are important for your wellbeing. Studies show that people who have strong community and social bonds enjoy better health and longer lives. Connecting with other parents who understand will buoy you.

ASK FOR HELP

It takes a village of support to raise kids. In addition to building a team for your child, set up a support squad for yourself. Having friends, family and professionals you can rely on through thick and thin is invaluable. Helping others, even in small ways, can boost your happiness too.

— *WildPeace.org*

Skillet Pumpkin Cornbread

Butter, unsalted (divided) ... 6 Tbsp	Salt 1 tsp
Cornmeal, whole grain 1½ cups	Pumpkin puree 1 cup
Flour, enriched ½ cup	Buttermilk 1 cup
Cinnamon 1 tsp	Egg 1
Nutmeg ¼ tsp	Brown sugar ½ cup
Baking powder 1 Tbsp	

1. Preheat oven 375°F. Grease a 10” cast-iron skillet with 1 tablespoon butter and set aside.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking powder, baking soda and salt.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together pumpkin, buttermilk, egg, brown sugar and ¼ cup melted butter. Pour in cornmeal mixture and whisk together. Transfer to skillet and bake 25 to 30 minutes. (Test doneness by pricking center with a toothpick—it should come out clean.) Immediately spread top with remaining 1 Tbsp butter.
4. Cool for 5 minutes and serve immediately.

Yield: 12 servings (one ounce equivalent)

Meets requirement for whole grain rich

— *Delish.com*

Succotash

Olive oil ¼ cup	Corn, fresh or frozen corn kernels 4 ears or 2 cups
Unsalted butter 3 Tbsp	Coarse salt & freshly ground pepper to taste
Garlic cloves, finely chopped 2	Fresh sage, coarsely chopped 1 Tbsp
Onion, diced 1	Fresh thyme leaves 1 Tbsp
Red bell peppers, seeded, diced 2	
Zucchini, diced 2	
Lima beans, frozen, rinsed & drained 2 (10-ounce) packages	

1. Heat oil and butter in a large skillet on medium-high heat. Add garlic and onion, cook about 4 minutes.
2. Add bell pepper, zucchini, lima beans and corn. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Cook about 10 minutes, stir in herbs and serve.

Yield: 18 servings

Meets requirement for vegetable

— *Marthastewart.com*

ACTIVITY CORNER

Physical Activity Around the World



OUNCH NEECH [PAKISTAN]

This fun version of tag begins with one child as “It.” She chooses either *ouch* (up) or *neech* (down). If she chooses *neech*, then the ground is not safe; runners can be tagged out unless they are *ouch*, up on something like a tree stump, play structure or rock. The opposite is true as well: If “It” chooses *ouch*, then only the ground is safe. The first person tagged becomes “It” for the next round of the game.

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Food Q. Why can't you get angry at a yam?
Funny A. Because they're so sweet!