

June 2015

Kindred *Spirits*

Snacking healthfully this summer

Make a snack from two food groups

Move more this summer

This summer pledge to get out and walk, bike, or swim with your grandchildren.

Exercise can

- ◆ Increase brain power
- ◆ Improve sleep quality
- ◆ Boost energy
- ◆ Strengthen the heart
- ◆ Strengthen muscles
- ◆ Burn calories and fat
- ◆ Lower cholesterol
- ◆ Increase metabolism
- ◆ Relieve stress
- ◆ Lower risk of heart disease, hypertension and diabetes

Make exercise a fun habit with your grandchildren. You will all benefit.

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It's summer vacation and the grandkids are home. At least one time a day, you probably hear "I'm hungry!" or "There's nothing to eat!" Your grandchild is having a "snack attack". Don't be frustrated, be prepared.

You may have heard that children should not snack. According to Tammy Roberts, MU Extension nutrition and health education specialist, "it may be hard for children to get all of the servings of each of the food groups in three meals." Plan the snacks for your grandchildren to help meet nutrient needs each day.

Talk to your grandchildren about snacks. Have them choose foods from two food groups for each snack. An example would be cheese in whole grain tortilla, or peanut butter and celery. Choosing from two food groups helps to assure a variety of nutrients are being consumed.

To make it easy on yourself, think ahead and have a snack box available. In the box, have single portions of snacks for the children to choose from. Foods in a refrigerator snack box might include pudding, yogurt, vegetable dip and vegetables, or a hard-boiled egg. A pantry snack box could include things like

tortillas, peanut butter, granola, whole wheat crackers, raisins, or sunflower seeds. Don't forget the fruit! Bananas, apples and oranges are a great addition to any snack box.

Many children love having the option of having a snack box available but also might like preparing their own snack. For an activity with the children, make peanut butter balls together. They contain foods from three food groups and are sure to be a hit with your grandchildren!

Peanut Butter Balls

- ¼ cup peanut butter
- ¼ cup honey
- ½ cup nonfat dry milk
- ¼ cup quick oats
- ¾ cup crisp rice cereal (save ½ cup to crush)

In a large mixing bowl, combine peanut butter, honey, dry milk, oats and ¼ cup rice cereal. Shape into about 18 one-inch balls. Put the remaining ½ cup rice cereal in a large zip-type plastic bag and crush with hands. Place balls in bag and shake until balls are covered with cereal. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator.

Take care of yourself

Reduce your risk of falls

When you were a kid and fell, more often than not it resulted in a few tears and a scraped knee. According to Saralee Jamieson, MU Extension human development specialist, “As we age, so do consequences of a fall. And, arthritis, reduced strength, slower reflexes and diminished awareness of one’s spatial orientation add to the problem.”

Here are eight ways to reduce your risk of falls.

- ◆ Don’t multitask while walking. It interferes with your ability to identify that a fall is about to take place.
- ◆ Exercise. Tai chi, water workouts and walking all build strength while improving flexibility, coordination and balance. The Arthritis Foundation encourages all three activities.
- ◆ Get your eyes and hearing tested.
- ◆ Consider your medications. Some prescriptions may cause drowsiness or dizziness; talk to you doctor about possible alternative medications.
- ◆ Make your home safer. Clean up clutter, secure throw rugs or get rid of them, use non-slip mats in the shower or tub, install grab bars in the bathroom, use two hand rails in stair wells, add additional light to stairs and dark areas of the home.
- ◆ Choose shoes wisely. High heels can throw you off balance, floppy sandals or slippers can trip you and new shoes may have slippery soles.
- ◆ Know where your pets are at all times. Small pets can get under foot and big ones can knock you off balance.
- ◆ Reorganize. From clothing to dishes to pantry items, keep things you use regularly within easy reach so you don’t have to climb on a stepladder or something less stable, like a chair.

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Listen with love

We all want to be heard. Sometimes, we get busy and forget that our grandchildren want and need our attention.

According to Sarah Traub, MU Extension human development specialist, “Listening is an important way to show love.”

Children like it when we listen to them and try to understand their feelings. When children are upset, sensitive listening provides emotional comfort. But when we give advice to an upset child it may cause frustration or feelings that you just don’t understand what they are going through.

When a child is disappointed, we can show understanding by saying, “I’m sorry that didn’t work out.” So, stop what you are doing, stoop down to your grandchild’s level and give them your full attention without brushing your grandchild off the next time they are upset.