

Healthy Workplace

Your monthly Anthem wellness newsletter

August 2019 Edition

Making Family Meal Times Fun

Sitting down together for a meal whenever you can is a great way to connect with your family. Keeping it relaxed is key to making sure you are getting the most out of this time together, including talking, laughing and choosing healthy foods.



Here are some tips from families for making meals more relaxed in your home:

- **Remove distractions.** Turn off the television and put away phones and tablets, so that your attention is on each other.
- **Talk to each other.** Focus conversation on what family members did during the day, for example, what made you laugh or what you did for fun. Other conversation starters include:
 - ◊ Give each family member the spotlight to share their highlight, lowlight, and “funnylight” from the day or week.
 - ◊ If our family lived in a zoo, what animals would we be and why?
 - ◊ If you could have one super power, what would it be and why?
 - ◊ If you were stranded on a desert island and could only have one food to eat, what would it be and why?

- **Pass on traditions.** Tell children about the “good old days” such as foods grandma made that you loved to eat.
- **On nice days, opt for a change of scenery.** For example, go to a nearby park for a dinner picnic.
- **Reserve a special plate** to rotate between family members, for example on birthdays, when someone gets a good grade, or any other occasion you’d like to recognize.
- **Let kids make choices.** Set a healthy table and let everyone, including the kids, make choices about what they want and how much to
- **Let everyone help.** Kids learn by doing. The little one might get the napkins and older kids help with fixing foods and clean-up.
- **Make-your-own dishes** like tacos, mini pizzas, and yogurt parfaits get everyone involved in meal time.

How can families help their children and teens eat healthy at school?

- Try new foods at home. Kids need many opportunities to taste a new food to “get used to it.”
- Eat lunch at school with your child. Learn more about what’s offered and meet school nutrition staff.
- Encourage your child or teen to join in taste-testing events or surveys about school lunch, when available.
- Talk with your child about what’s on the menu. Make sure they know about all the foods that are included in their school lunch.



Your Table, Your Tips:

“With children you have to keep offering them a variety. You can’t just offer them something once & because they didn’t like it the first time give up...You’ll be surprised that after a few tries often children will change their minds. Mine did.”

– Lisa, mom of 4 boys

Article and images from: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/families>

Easy Baked Potato Bar

When I used to teach nutrition ed classes, baked potato bars were something that got everyone excited. Bonus tip—have your kids help set up the bar!



Ingredients

- 4 potatoes, baked
- 1/2 cup sour cream, or try plain Greek yogurt for a protein boost
- 1/2 cup pico de gallo
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup chili beans
- 1 cup tortilla chips, slightly broken into small pieces
- 1/3 cup bacon bits
- 1/2 cup guacamole
- 2 chopped green onions , optional, for topping

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees, clean potatoes and poke with a fork to release steam while baking.
2. Bake potatoes until soft when pierced with a fork, about 1 hour.
3. Allow potatoes to slightly cool, cut off tops, scoop out some insides, and add desired ingredients. Use a [*sharp, serrated knife*](#) to "saw" off the tops of the potatoes and you will thank me!
4. Add cheese, chili, and tortilla chips OR guacamole, sour cream, and salsa OR classic with cheese and bacon bits.

Extra vegetable additions:

- Steamed broccoli
- Corn
- Diced onions
- Diced tomatoes
- Substitute russet potatoes with sweet potatoes

Recipe and Photo Source: <https://www.lifealittlebrighter.com/2017/09/super-simple-baked-potato-bar/>

Wellness Corner

Hello, everyone! Sarah from Maine here!

With the *dog days of summer* upon us, my need for adventure has been curtailed by the recent heat and humidity. If you're in the same boat as me but also aren't someone who is going to sit at the beach, swimming holes might be a solution for you!

They're the perfect combination of adventure (you have to hike to most of them) and relief from the summer heat. I found some resources for each of our states—the lists are by no means exhaustive but might help you find a new favorite spot!

[Swimming holes in Maine](#)

[Swimming holes in New Hampshire](#)

[Swimming holes in Connecticut](#)

Tips for water-based adventures:

- Check the weather— be sure there isn't a thunderstorm on the horizon
- Bring water — lots of it! Your body is working hard on your adventure, if you feel thirsty, it's a sign of dehydration
- Wear sturdy shoes—flip flops (while convenient) do not offer support and can make trails dangerous
- Bring that sunblock— you'll most likely be under shade but those harmful rays can get through
- Pack snacks— Lara bars and an apple are my personal favorite
- Bring water shoes—protect your toes and have a better grip on those slippery rocks
- Bring a small first-aid kit
- Pack a towel and change of clothes— on your hike back, it's important to keep your body dry to prevent chaffing and potential moisture based infections



My August wellness question for you: where are you going to adventure to, to beat the summer heat?

The picture above is from a recent adventure to find swimming holes in Carrabassett Valley

Wellness Bites for your Quick Wellness Needs!

Mindful Eating

We know having a health diet is important, but between answering emails, running errands, getting distracted by our phone/television when we get home, we can lose sight of how full we are and often end up eating mindlessly. Mindfulness can help you fully enjoy a meal and the experience of eating — with moderation and restraint. Some studies suggest that mindfulness-based practices help improve eating habits. For those who binge-eat or eat for comfort or out of stress, mindful eating may even aid with weight loss.

Here are **10 tips for more mindful eating**. Not all of these tips may feel right for you — try a few and see how they work.

1. Reflect.

Before you begin eating, take a moment to reflect upon how you feel. Are you rushed? Stressed? Sad? Bored? Hungry? What are your wants, and what are your needs? Differentiate between the two. After you have taken this moment to reflect, then you can choose if you want to eat, what you want to eat, and how you want to eat.

2. Sit down.

Don't eat on the go. Have a seat. You're less likely to appreciate your food when you are multi-tasking. It's also difficult to keep track of how much you are eating when you snack on the go.

3. Turn off the TV (and everything else with a screen).

Have you ever glanced down from your phone or tablet or computer, only to wonder where all the food went? These distractions make us less aware of what and how much we are eating.

4. Serve out your portions.

Resist eating straight from the bag or the box. Not only is it easier to overeat when you can't see how much you've had, but it is also harder to fully appreciate your food when it is hidden from view.

5. Pick the smaller plate.

You might crave less if you see less. Smaller plates will help you with your portion control — an especially good strategy for those all-you-can-eat buffets.

6. Give gratitude.

Before you start to eat, pause and take a moment to acknowledge the labor that went into providing your meal — be it thanks to the farmers, the factory workers, the animals, mother Earth, the chefs, or even your companions at the table.

7. Chew 30 times.

Try to get 30 chews out of each bite. (30 is a rough guide, as it might be difficult to get even 10 chews out of a mouthful of oatmeal!) Take time to enjoy the flavors and textures in your mouth before you swallow. This may also help prevent overeating by giving your gut time to send messages to the brain to say you're full.

8. Put down your utensil.

Often, we are already preparing the next morsel with our fork and knife while we are still on our previous bite. Try putting down your utensils after each bite, and don't pick them back up until you have enjoyed and swallowed what you already have in your mouth.

9. Resign from the Clean Plate Club.

Many of us were brought up to finish everything on our plate and were not allowed to leave the table until we did. It's okay to cancel your membership to the Clean Plate Club. Consider packing the leftovers to go, or just leaving the last few bites. Even though nobody likes to waste food, overstuffing yourself won't help those in need. (This is also where Tip #5 comes in handy.)

10. Silence.

Try eating your meals in silence once in a while. When it's quiet, it is natural for the mind to wander; acknowledge these thoughts, and then see if you can gently return to your experience of eating. Be conscious of the food's consistency, flavor, tastes, and smells, and fully appreciate the moment. Of course, mealtime can be an important time for sharing the day when the whole household gathers, so having an entire meal in silence might be impractical or just feel awkward. But even spending the first five to 10 minutes in silence can be refreshing and set a grateful tone for the rest of the meal.

