



Exploring MyPyramid with Professor Popcorn

Focus on Fruits

Dear Parents or Caregivers,

In this lesson your child learned about the benefits of the fruit group. MyPyramid tells us to Focus on Fruit. The word "focus" means: *pay attention to or make the center of attention.*

So why is fruit getting all this attention? Fruit is naturally sweet, it is low in calories, loaded with vitamins, easy to eat, low fat and high fiber. Studies show that fruit may reduce the risk of heart disease and may protect against certain types cancer.

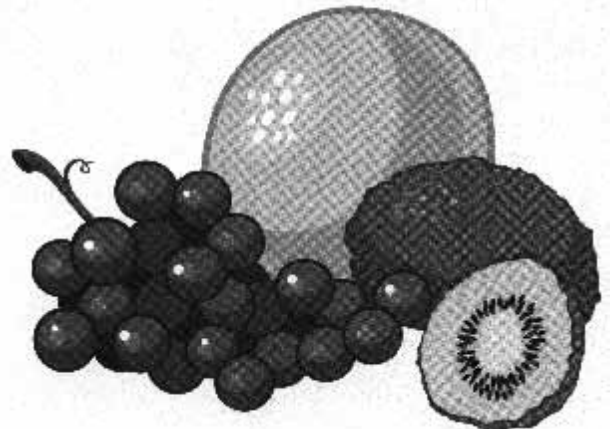
Sincerely,

How much should you eat?

Children 6 to 12 years old should eat 1½ cups of fruit every day.

Adults who are moderately active should eat 2 cups every day.

In general, 1 cup of fruit or 100% fruit juice, or ½ cup of dried fruit each counts as 1 cup from the fruit group.



Is it Juice?

Clever advertising and packaging can sometimes fool us. We may think we are buying juice, yet we may be getting a "fruit-flavored drink" with little nutritional value.

Parents need to be careful to read the label and choose 100% pure fruit juice. Fruit drinks, punches, "ades", or low-percent fruit juice products may be fortified with vitamin C, but are low in potassium and high in sugar.

Things to know about juice:

- Orange juice still gives you the greatest amount of vitamin C.
- Don't fill up on juice. Leave room for the other nutrients you need.
- Check out the label. Look to see if additional sugar has been added.
- Fruit has fiber and juice does not. If you pick juice over fruit you will be hungry sooner.



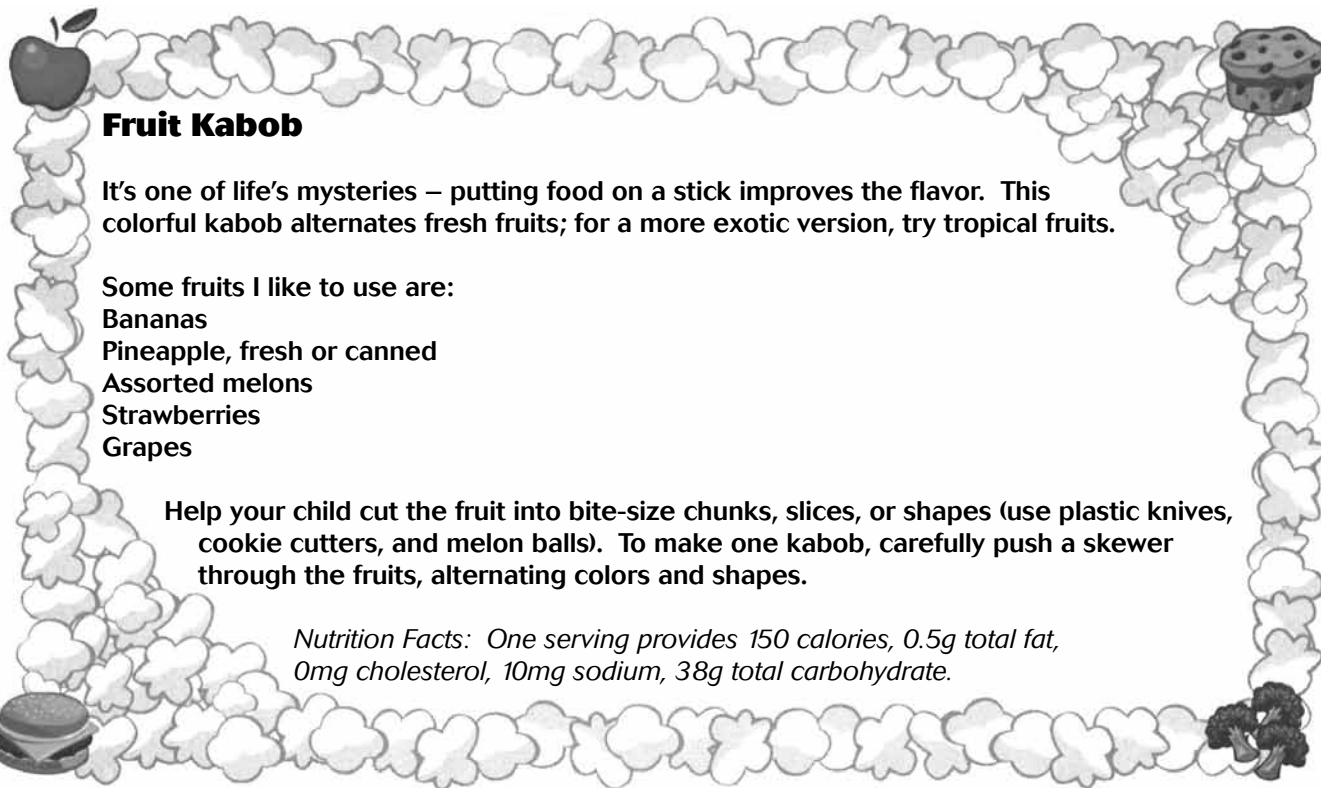
Fruit as a Snack!

How often have you been fixing dinner as the kids start parading into the kitchen looking for something to eat? Fruit makes a great choice for a snack. It will satisfy them for the present yet leave them with an appetite for dinner. Many types of fruit can be washed and eaten alone and others need little or no preparation.



Fruit Snack Ideas

- Fresh fruit and graham crackers
- Yogurt and apple slices
- Rice cakes with applesauce
- Pretzels and grapes
- Popcorn and apple slices
- Fresh fruit in an ice cream cone



Fruit Kabob

It's one of life's mysteries – putting food on a stick improves the flavor. This colorful kabob alternates fresh fruits; for a more exotic version, try tropical fruits.

Some fruits I like to use are:

Bananas
Pineapple, fresh or canned
Assorted melons
Strawberries
Grapes

Help your child cut the fruit into bite-size chunks, slices, or shapes (use plastic knives, cookie cutters, and melon balls). To make one kabob, carefully push a skewer through the fruits, alternating colors and shapes.

Nutrition Facts: One serving provides 150 calories, 0.5g total fat, 0mg cholesterol, 10mg sodium, 38g total carbohydrate.

<http://www.mypyramid.gov>; Professor Popcorn, Purdue University

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