

Celebrate! *A Healthy You*

A newsletter devoted to helping individuals of every size live in a healthy body.

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Go Green for Your Family Vacation

High fuel prices may make some families hesitate to take a vacation this summer. Keep the vacation but reduce its impact on the environment and its cost. Spend your vacation time closer to home, exploring fun activities which are within walking distance of home, or ones you can get to using public transportation. Or, you could allow one tank of gas for the entire week and limit your activities to what can be reached with that.

Do take time off work and away from household chores. A break in the routine allows time for rest and stress relief. Make time to reconnect with loved ones without interruptions from cell phone or email. Behave as if you were off in a very remote location where you cannot be reached for any reason.

Here are a few ideas to spark your own creativity. Some of them require advance planning just as you would do anyway when taking a trip. Get the rest of your family involved—anticipation is part of the fun.



- ◆ Go camping in your own backyard. Set up the tent and sleeping bags, cook all your meals on the grill or a camping stove. Make s'mores and tell ghost stories. Take an evening "hike" around your neighborhood to see how different things look in the dark. No reservations are required for this camp site, and the bathrooms are the best you'll ever find!
- ◆ Play tourist in your own community and visit the sites you would take out of town visitors to see. In the metropolitan St. Louis area, there are hundreds of historic sites, museums and other tourist attractions. Many are free. See how many you can visit using public transportation like Metro. Spend a day thoroughly exploring one area like Forest Park, Laclede's Landing or the Loop.
- ◆ Pack lunch in a backpack (keep food safety in mind!) and head off on foot or bikes for playgrounds and parks in your community. Take along a ball for some active play and a blanket for quiet relaxation. Don't forget plenty of water and sunscreen.

- ◆ Play some new games with your kids either at the park or in your own backyard. The website www.verbnow.com/game_generator has some very creative ideas. Rope Golf is one example. To play, use a jump rope to make a circle in the yard or driveway. With a whiffle bat and ball try to hit the ball into the circle. You can keep score by counting the number of strokes it takes or make the winner the one who gets the most holes-in-one.
- ◆ If you live in town, spend a day on a farm or vice-versa. Set up a one day exchange program to experience what it is like to live in a different kind of community. Invite a family you know who lives in a different area to spend the day as your guest and another day in their community. Set up the day like one of those reality shows on TV where you and your guests do exaggerated versions of typical activities.
- ◆ Set up your own version of The Amazing Race or a scavenger hunt in your neighborhood. Divide your family into teams and give each team a list of items to find or information to gather that will take them all over your neighborhood. Enlist the help of your kids ahead of time to make a family trophy to award the winning team.
- ◆ Plan a "get-to-know-your government" day. Call your local city or county representative and ask them to arrange a tour of city hall or the county courthouse. You and/or your children may be intrigued enough in what you see to become more involved in local government.
- ◆ Use one day to volunteer at a local food pantry, animal shelter, Habitat for Humanity building site, or with some other agency that depends on volunteers. Contact your church, United Way or one of the potential agencies to learn about volunteer opportunities ahead of time.



Menu of the Month

Picnics, backyard barbecues and family vacations take eating outdoors in June. These occasions call for recipes that are quick to prepare, light and fresh in flavor, and hold up well to advance preparation. The recipe for **Cole Slaw** below fits that description and makes a great companion to grilled meat, poultry or fish or sandwiches. Pack it in a cooler or insulated bag with a cold pack for transporting to your picnic site. Despite its reputation, mayonnaise is not a hazardous food as long as it is handled properly. In fact, commercially made (as opposed to homemade) mayonnaise is fairly acidic making it a safe bet for picnic food.

Picnic Menu—Grilled Chicken, Raw Veggies, Cole Slaw, Fresh Fruit, Oatmeal Cookies.



Cole Slaw

Dressing ingredients:

¼ cup mayonnaise (use fat free, reduced fat or regular)

1 tablespoon cider or red wine vinegar

3 packets artificial sweetener OR 3 teaspoons sugar

¼ teaspoon pepper

1 bag shredded cole slaw mix OR 3 ½ cups shredded cabbage plus ¼ cup shredded carrots

2 tablespoons finely chopped onion

¼ cup chopped celery

¼ cup chopped green or red pepper

Place all dressing ingredients into bottom of large bowl and mix thoroughly. Add slaw mix or cabbage and carrots, onion, celery and red or green pepper. Toss well to blend. Cover and refrigerate for an hour or more for flavors to blend.

Makes 8 servings of ½ cup each. Nutrition information per serving when made with reduced fat mayonnaise: 30 calories, 3g carbohydrate, 1g protein, 3g fat, 44mg sodium.

Competent Eaters Have Positive Eating Habits

Putting an emphasis on the pleasure to be gained from eating instead of what we should and should not eat may be a better approach to healthy eating. Research published in the fall of last year in the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* supports that idea. People who enjoy eating and feed themselves in a reliable way had healthier body weights, better levels of HDL cholesterol, and lower blood pressure.

Barbara Lohse, PhD, Pennsylvania State University, who did the research notes "If it was successful to have people be uncomfortable and restrictive with what they eat, just going by the rules for the nutrients and calories they need, we would not have an obesity problem. We need a different mindset: Weight is not the big issue, but rather being comfortable with how you eat."

Ellyn Satter, noted author and specialist in the areas of child nutrition and feeding has developed an approach to helping people who struggle with their eating and their weight. Lohse's research looked at what happens to health when people are taught to eat using Satter's approach. Satter calls this approach eating competence.

Satter says competent eaters are people who are consistent about eating food they like in amounts that are satisfying. They take care of themselves by eating regularly and paying attention to what they are eating. In other words, they trust themselves when it comes to food.

Trusting self and following internal cues of hunger and fullness are important to other nutrition experts as well as Satter. What is new is the research support and the holistic approach Satter brings to eating.

We'll continue to explore this topic in upcoming issues of *Celebrate! A Healthy You*.

Words to Consider

"Life doesn't give you all the practice races you need."
-Jesse Owens

"Find the good. It's all around you. Find it, showcase it, and you'll start believing in it." -Jesse Owens