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NUTRITION SEGMENT JUNE 9TH, 2008 SCHOOL'S OUT FOR THE SUMMER

Summertime means a break from the regular routine. Older kids are out of school, the days are longer and warmer, families eat dinner outside and everyone is generally more relaxed. However, maintaining structure is a still good thing when it comes to meals and snacks.

Raising healthy eaters has become more difficult in this nation of excess, access and ease. Raising healthy eaters is more than just knowing the "right" foods to put on the table. It is about positive food experiences, exposure to new foods, all eating the same meal together as a family and modeling. Eating is not just about food and nourishment, it is a setting for social and physical development.

Children's Needs

An active 5 year old requires 1600 calories per day and an active male 12 year old requires 2400 calories. Kids have small stomach but high energy needs so need to eat more often than adults.

Eating Tips for Summer Schedule

- Children do best with routine. Maintain a schedule of three meals plus two snacks with the parent deciding the WHAT, WHEN and WHERE of the meal and the child deciding the WHETHER and HOW MUCH. (*Ellyn Satter Division of Responsibility*).
- If a child doesn't do well at lunch and wants another food item 10 minutes later, remind them that lunch is over and the next time we eat is at snack. This will be difficult at first but it will help the child learn that they have five opportunities to eat throughout the day and in between offer water.
- Planned snacks prevent: grazing, catering, food handout and promote good nutrition. Kids eat best and are most interested in food when they come to the table hungry.

Snacks Ideas for Busy Summer Days:

Create a snack draw full of string cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt, applesauce, fruit, vegetables and bean dip. Have the children choose two items from the snack draw. The goal is to have at least two food groups at each snack.

- Grilled peanut butter sandwich + fruit
- Popcorn with sprinkled Parmesan cheese + fruit
- *Nature Valley* granola bar + fruit
- Hard-boiled egg + fruit
- Egg salad stuffed instead juicy cherry tomato + whole wheat crackers
- Edamame + whole wheat crackers + cheese
- Carrots + hummus
- Toasted pita triangle with melted Parmesan cheese and sliced tomato

For nutrition questions, contact St Luke's Health Solutions dietitian, Stacy Beeson at 381-2403.