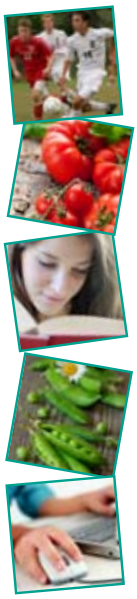

# eatwellkids

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At CulinArt, we are dedicated to growing healthy kids. Our newsletters are designed to educate grades 6–12 to be nutritionally literate and to empower them to participate as health partners with their families. We aim to support better eating habits for a lifetime of good nutrition.

eat well

## fun food facts: ch-ch-ch-chia!

If you haven't yet heard about these itty bitty seeds, then we are about to clue you in! Chia seeds are an ancient superfood that was used by the Incas, Mayans and Aztecs to provide them with energy. In fact, "chia" actually means "strength," and folklore has it that these cultures referred to it as "Indian running food" since it was given to messengers before they traveled long distances on foot. Records indicate chia seeds were used as a food source as far back as 3500 B.C. The seed, which comes from the salvia hispanica, desert plant times its weight can soak up ten when left to sit in in liquid, so it absorbs the water or milk, **ing you stay liquid, help- ger** once inside hydrated lon- there's more: We your body. But, chia seeds are an now know that **unprocessed food** that is a complete source of protein with **more than twice the amount of protein than any other seed** or grain. They are a wonderful **source of iron, calcium, and fiber** and have incredibly **high levels of omega 3s and omega 6s** (more than any other plant food). This makes chia a wonderful protector and promoter of brain development and health. Chia also has three times more **antioxidant activity** than blueberries. These potent little powerhouses are mild and somewhat nutty in flavor, making them an easy add to your favorite food or beverage. Sprinkle them on oatmeal or salads or blend into smoothies, baked goods, sauces or puddings (see the easy, delicious breakfast recipe that you can share at home, to the right). Their addition won't change the flavor, but will add to your nutrition.

### did you know?

Chia was the third most important crop for the Aztecs, who not only recognized it as a superfood, but prized it so highly that it was often used as currency!

**Make yourself a popular Mexican drink--chia fresca--by soaking seeds in water until they become gel-like and then add a squeeze of lemon or lime for an all-natural pre-sports drink!**

*This recipe is naturally gluten free and if you use nut milk instead of dairy, it becomes vegan. It makes a great breakfast, snack or dessert!*

## Ambrosia Chia Pudding

**Ingredients**

2 cups (plus more) of milk of your choice
2/3 cup chia seeds
1/4 cup fresh blueberries
1/4 cup fresh mango chunks
1/2 apple, cored and sliced into chunks
1/2 naval orange, peeled and diced
2 tablespoons shaved coconut
2 tablespoons slivered almonds
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

**Directions**

Mix milk and chia seeds together in a bowl and let sit for one hour (minimum) or overnight. Add in fruit and splash more milk to create a pudding consistency. Top with slivered almonds and shaved coconut.
Makes four 1-cup servings.

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CULINART GROUP
INNOVATIVE DINING SOLUTIONS

Think that all you can put in a smoothie for creamy deliciousness is milk or yogurt? No way! Try one of these dairy-free alternatives and get blending!

**Soy Milk**
Made from filtered water and soybeans, this beverage has a sweet, creamy flavor. Soy milk is a good source of calcium and is most like cow's milk in terms of its nutritional content.

**Coconut Milk**
Coconut milk is made from the ground meat and juice of coconuts. Be sure to look for the coconut milk that comes in a carton in the packaged milk aisle of the grocery store (like So Delicious brand), not the canned version used for cooking.

**Rice Milk**
Rice milk is made from boiled rice, brown rice syrup, brown rice starch and water. It is a good choice for those with food allergies because it is free of soy or lactose, but it provides the least amount of protein and vitamins compared to other milks.

**Oat Milk**
New on the scene, oat milk is a blend of cooked oats, water, and a touch of salt and sweetener. It is mild and slightly sweet.

# 6 SMOOTHIE SENSATIONS

Smoothies first came on the scene in the 1960s *(they're like ancient!)* and with each decade since, these popular blended beverages have evolved. The truth is, you can pack so many wonderful things into a blender and not only will they taste dreamy together, but they will also fill you up, consist of whole, fresh goodness and are loaded with nutrition. Consider a smoothie a great alternative to sugary, colored breakfast cereals or as a great after-school, before sports boost instead of heavily processed snacks. Try one of our six sensational recipes (just dump ingredients in a high-speed blender and pulse away) next time you have a hankering for something tall and cool. Most of our recipes call for 1/2 cup to 1 cup of liquid, but you can adjust until it reaches your desired thickness. Mostly, these are guidelines. You can swap fruits, vegetables, experiment with different milks (see info at left) and spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla), or add in some chia seeds. Have fun with your creations!

**MANGO MACHINE**
1/2 banana
1 cup frozen mango
2 ice cubes
1 cup milk of your choice
handful of spinach
1 date for sweetness
dash of cinnamon

**COCONUTTY MONKEY**
1 cup frozen strawberries
1 banana
1/2 cup coconut milk (from a carton)
2 tbsp coconut flakes (optional)
2 mint leaves

**CREAMSICLE**
1 banana
2 oranges, peeled (remove as much skin as possible)
1/2 cup milk of your choice
1/4 tsp vanilla extract
handful of ice

**SIMPLE SMOOTHIE**
1 avocado
1 apple (like Gala)
handful of kale or spinach
1 cup milk of your choice

**BERRY BLAST**
1 cup frozen mixed berries
1 cup spinach
1 cup milk of your choice
1 tbsp honey for sweetness
pinch of cinnamon

**CHOCOLATE "NUT"**
1 banana
1 cup milk of your choice
2 tbsp soynut butter
2 tbsp dark chocolate chips or cocoa powder
handful of ice

## Do You Get Enough Vitamin D? Here's Why You Should...

**Are you vitamin D deficient?** Well, unless you are living at the equator or spending at least 15 minutes a day outside sans sunscreen, you are likely low on the sunshine vitamin. Worldwide D deficiency is estimated at 1 billion people across all age and ethnic groups. This is a serious concern as we are learning more and more about what D does every day. Though vitamin D is well known for promoting bone health and regulating calcium levels, this nutrient's hormone-like activity is important in many other ways. Muscles need it to move, nerves need it to carry messages between the brain and every body part, and the immune system needs vitamin D to fight off invading bacteria and viruses. The Institute of Medicine recommends that the intake of vitamin D for children and adults in the United States be tripled to 600 IU per day and notes that there is no evidence of harm with even 2,000 or 4,000 IU per day. Few foods, other than fatty fish such as salmon, naturally contain ample amounts of the vitamin. For nearly everyone, the best way to get enough D is with a supplement. Vitamin D comes in both liquid and capsule forms. Liquid vitamin D might be a better option if you have digestive issues that make it harder for you to break down tablets. Vitamin D comes in two forms, D2 and D3, and while both are deemed safe, according to the Vitamin D Council, D3 is the preferred version to take for a variety of reasons. D3 is the type of vitamin D that the body naturally produces in the skin in response to sun exposure and it may have higher potency and longer shelf stability. When shopping for D, look for an 800 IU supplement or a multi-vitamin with "extra" vitamin D. Go on, get yourself a little sunshine and help feed your mind!

## Sustainability: Earth Day, Every Day

Even though we just celebrated Earth Day, when we reflect on how we can do more to protect our planet and resources, we think it should be Earth Day every day! With Spring in full swing, and planting getting underway, here are 5 tips to increase your gardening sustainability:

**1** When your parents cook meals, save excess bits and trimmings from veggies that are good for making vegetable stock (onion skins, stems from leafy greens, carrot tops). Store in a plastic bag and freeze. When you have a large amount saved up (1-2 freezer bags full), boil with 10 cups of water for stock. The veggie bits can then be used a third time for compost in the garden.

**2** Save popsicle sticks, unused chopsticks, twine, leftover lumber or twigs for plant markers or support ties in your garden.

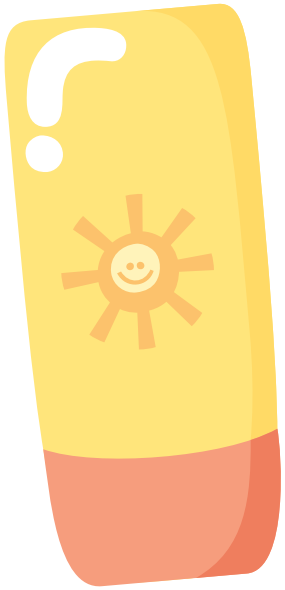
**3** Egg cartons, BPA-free containers, old shoes, old fencing, just about anything can be used as planters. Ask your parents to help you create drainage holes on the bottom if none exist.

**4** Tell your parents to try and buy their seeds locally to save the gas and carbon dioxide required to ship them, and make sure they are organic and pesticide free when possible.

**5** Share the bounty of your garden! This can help spread the message of sustainability and encourage others to join you.

## SAFER SUNSCREENS

**Just one sunburn during childhood can double your chances of developing skin cancer later on.** Obviously, you need to wear sunscreen, but **not all sunscreens are created equal**. Shocking, we know. Six years ago, Environmental Working Group (EWG), an environmental organization that specializes in protecting the public's health and the environment, examined sunscreens and found that **many products offer poor protection from the sun, make bogus promises, and contain toxic ingredients.** Now, each year, they review some 1,800 labels of products with SPF ratings and only recommend about 25%. Here's what you need to know: **Skip ingredient labels that contain vitamin A** (has been shown to cause skin cancer in laboratory tests), **oxybenzone** (a hormone disruptor and skin allergen), **high SPF labels** (values higher than 50 are misleading and offer little additional benefit. In fact, scientists worry they tempt you to stay in the sun too long, risking overexposure). Instead, **select products with zinc oxide, titanium dioxide, mexoryl sx, or avobenzone**. **SPF 15 to 50 is best, make sure they are water resistant and opt for lotion**, not sprays or oils. Look up your favorite sunscreen and see how it rates on EWG's sunscreen database (*www.ewg.org*). **A rating of 0-2 reflects a sunscreen with the lowest hazard to you** based on ingredients and studies. Three of our favorites include: Loving Naturals Clear Body Sunscreen SPF 30+, Aubrey Organics Natural Sun Unscented Sensitive Skin Children Sunscreen SPF 30+, and California Baby Sunscreen Stick SPF 30+.



# get going!

**Tips from First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move campaign...**

LET'S MOVE!

AMERICA'S MOVE TO RAISE A HEALTHIER GENERATION OF KIDS

"Back in the day," all kids wanted to do after school was run around outside until dinner. But now, with video games, the internet, iPhones and iTouches, and entire TV networks geared toward kids, there's a lot more competition for free time. The downside is that when you are not active, you may be less likely to grow up healthy. Our First Lady Michelle Obama has kicked off the Let's Move! campaign. Its goal is to get kids moving again and enjoying it. It's important to know that **physical activity is an essential component of a healthy life** and when combined with healthy eating, it **can help prevent a range of illnesses**. Physical activity also **helps control weight, builds muscle, and promotes strong bone, muscle and joint development**. Here are some ways you can get going and make sure **physical activity becomes part of your everyday life**.

**hit the great outdoors** Regular exercise in nature is proven to improve your physical and mental health. *Let's Move Outside* aims to get kids and families enjoying America's great outdoors. Kids need **at least 60 minutes of active and vigorous play each day** to stay healthy, and one of the easiest and most enjoyable ways to meet this goal is by playing outside. By visiting *letsmove.gov* and clicking on "Let's Move Outside" and then "Where To Go," you can search for outdoor nature events, parks and forests near you, or local playgrounds. You can also search for nearby hiking trails, biking routes, places to swim, or other fun outdoor places to play. Tag, anyone?

**make it a family play date** Horsing around as a family can be a great way to get everyone moving. **Get your family in on the fun** by: walking around the block together after a meal; planning weekly activities like family park day, swim day or bike day; issuing a family challenge to see who can be the first to achieve a Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (*presidentschallenge.org*) by committing to physical activity **five days a week, for six weeks** (adults and children can both receive the award) or make up your own challenge; or new family rules like no sitting still during television commercials.

**bring it to school** Regular physical activity is not only good for your heart, **but also for your head**. Being active has also been shown to **increase concentration and focus, improve classroom attendance and behavior, and boost academic performance**. Wowzas! To help create a more active environment at your school: talk to the principal or write a letter to your district superintendent to incorporate more physical education into the day; encourage your school to hold recess prior to lunch to increase physical activity before mealtime; volunteer to help with after school physical activities or sports teams. For more info, visit *letsmoveschools.org*.

## Test your nutrition knowledge...

**1. Chia seeds are a great source of:**
a. Omega-3s.
b. iron.
c. Omega-6s.
d. all of the above.

**2. Vitamin D is needed for:**
a. bone health.
b. fighting off bacteria and viruses.
c. sunshine.
d. both a and b.

**3. How much vitamin D, minimum, do you need each day?**
a. 200 IU.
b. 400 IU.
c. 600 IU.
d. 2,000 IU.

**4. All sunscreens are good, as long as they say 50 SPF.**
a. True.
b. False.

**5. Smoothies are a great way to get more vitamins, minerals and fiber in your diet.**
a. True.
b. False.

**6. Being active is important because:**
a. it builds strong bones and joints.
b. it helps you concentrate in class.
c. it keeps you healthy and happy.
d. all of the above.

Answers: 1.d, 2. d, 3.c, 4.b, 5. a, 6 . d

*Eat Well Kids is produced and designed by CulinArt's Wellness Department.* CulinArt Group, the largest privately held managed dining services company in the Northeast and second largest in the United States, serves more than 200 corporate, educational, and leisure clients throughout the country. For more information, visit us online at *www.culinartinc.com*. Email your nutrition questions to nutrition@culinartinc.com.

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