



MARCH

2017 WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

**3/6
NO SCHOOL
CASIMIR PULASKI
DAY**

**3/15
EARLY DISMISSAL
WELLNESS SPONSORED
LUNCH**

**3/25 - 4/1
SPRING BREAK!**

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS ASHWAGANDHA?

Ashwagandha is an herb used in Ayurvedic medicine, the 3,000-year-old healing practice from India.

It's great in smoothies: Just ask Gwyneth Paltrow who, according to Goop, puts the powder in her smoothie every morning.

It won't break the bank: Some herbal supplements can run upward of \$30 per purchase. But you can get ashwagandha for \$14 per 10-ounce pouch. And since a little goes a long way, you'll be herb-battling yourself to health for cheap.

It's relaxing: Sure, you can think of another herb that helps you bliss out, but this one is fully legal. Add a spoonful to a cup of warm milk before bed to help you drift off happily.

It has street cred: Ashwagandha is otherwise known as Indian ginseng, alluding to its similarities with the popular tea that gets touted as a cure-all.

It's adaptogenic: All this really means is that it helps balance your physiological systems. Too much 2 a.m. pizza? Say "I'm sorry" with an ashwagandha-spiked smoothie.

BREAKFAST / BRUNCH

**Apple & Cinnamon
Baked Oats With
Raspberry Drizzle**



**Healthy Broccoli
& Parmesan Hash
Brown Bake**



**Oatmeal Minus the
Oats**



**Easy Berry
Cobbler**



**Smothered
Breakfast Sweet
Potato Fries**



**Breakfast Taco
Salad With Easy
Plantain Chips**



**Chocolate Chip
Banana Pancake
Casserole**



**Overnight Peaches
and Cream Steel
Cut Oats**



**Apple-Cinnamon
Steel Cut Oats**



Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

March 2017

Coal City Community Unit School District
Food Service Department



FAST TAKES

Entertaining exercise

Working out while watching your favorite TV show can make exercise go faster. Your teenager



might try bicep curls with dumbbells or step up and down on a sturdy bench.

Idea: Before-hand, have him write out which exercises he'll do so he can refer to his list as he watches.

Good fats

Using dressing made with healthy oils not only makes salad taste great, it also helps your tween get more nutrients. Healthy fats found in oils like olive, sesame, corn, and soybean let her absorb beta-carotene and other antioxidants from vegetables. *Idea:* For even more "good" fat, she could toss avocado chunks into her salad.

Did You Know?

Aerobic activity is good for the body and the mind. Vigorous exercise, such as walking, boxing, or hip-hop dancing, causes the body to produce endorphins—hormones that bring about a feeling of well-being and relaxation. It's just another great reason for your child to work out.

Just for fun

Q: What has no beginning, no middle, and no end?

A: A bagel.



Let's eat together

A family meal brings a lot to the table, from better nutrition to strong family bonds. Consider these tips for making the most of the experience.

Introduce healthy foods

Kids who share family meals are more likely to try new foods and eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Ask your youngster to choose different ingredients and find ways to incorporate them into nutritious meals. For instance, she might want to grill sliced pineapple alongside pork chops. Or she may find a recipe for lasagna with eggplant and whole-wheat noodles in place of meat and regular noodles.

Give everyone a role

Split up tasks so everyone is involved in getting dinner on the table. You might write the grocery list, and your teenager can do the shopping. Then if you cook, your tween could clear the table and load the dishwasher. Or vice versa. She'll



get more comfortable in the kitchen, and the burden won't fall on one person.

Enjoy conversation

Family meals give your child a chance to talk about her day and connect with you. And close parent-child relationships help steer kids away from cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs. Tell each other about your experiences. Try conversation starters like: "What was the funniest thing that happened this week?" or "If you could change one thing about today, what would it be?"

Got braces? No worries!

If your youngster wears braces, a few simple changes will let him enjoy foods and not risk breaking a wire or bracket.

Cut up fruit. Have him slice crunchy fruits like apples instead of biting into them whole. *Tip:* He can safely eat applesauce or soft fruit like bananas (break pieces off to eat).

Cook vegetables. Rather than eat raw broccoli, your child could microwave it



until soft. Mashed potatoes and steamed spinach are good bets, too.

Swap out snacks. Whole-grain pita bread triangles are a soft alternative to chips. Your tween might top them with spreadable cheese.

Watch for bones. For chicken wings or ribs, pull meat off the bone before eating it.

Note: Your child should avoid crusty breads, pretzels, caramels, jelly beans, and gum. His orthodontist will have a list of foods he can and cannot eat.

Nutrition Nuggets

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

March 2017

Coal City Community Unit School District
Food Service Department



BEST BITES

I'm full

Help your child avoid overeating by taking time to talk about the color, texture, or taste of his food. If you say, "I love the color of carrots," he may respond, "I like how crunchy they are." By stopping to think, he'll slow down his eating pace, giving him time to feel full.

Building strength

Let your youngster create her own weights using two empty quart-sized milk jugs. Help her fill them a quarter-full with sand or dry rice and screw on the cap. Suggest that she hold one in each hand as she squats, lunges, or does bicep curls. As she gets stronger, she could add sand or rice to make her weights heavier.



DID YOU KNOW? Most children consume too much sodium. Lower your child's salt intake by offering a variety of spices and fresh herbs instead. Let him smell the basil, oregano, or ginger and sprinkle it in while you're cooking. *Idea:* Read spice jar labels together for ideas of where to use the spices. He'll learn about different flavors—and forget about the salt shaker!

Just for fun

Q: How do you fix a torn pizza?

A: With tomato paste.



Go for whole grains

Get your youngster used to eating whole grains while she's young, and you'll help her build a healthy habit for a lifetime. Try these strategies.

Give details

Begin by explaining why whole grains are good for her. You can tell her that these grains are still "wearing their coats"—they contain the entire grain kernel with all its fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Processed grains like white bread have the outer layer removed, so they've "lost their jackets"—where the important nutrients are.

Make it gradual

Help your youngster adjust to whole grains by working them in gradually. For instance, make both white and brown rice, and mix them together. Or prepare regular and whole-grain pasta, and toss them in a bowl with sauce. As she becomes accustomed to the taste, build up to three-quarters whole grains and then eventually to all whole grains.

Get your winter wiggles out

Winter's chill might still be lingering, but your youngster can burn off pent-up energy—and get physical activity—with these indoor ideas.

● **"Drive" around the house.** Let your child use a kitchen pot lid as a pretend steering wheel. He could pick up speed by marching down the hallway or slow down as he maneuvers around furniture.

● **Follow the path.** Have your youngster make a color trail with different-colored socks (or pieces of construction paper). Then, take turns saying a color, and everyone has to walk down the path, stepping only on that color. *Variation:* Step on any color except the one called out. ●



Use daily

Try adding whole grains to foods your child regularly eats. You can stir oats into lean ground beef when you're fixing hamburgers. Or put barley or bulgur wheat in soups and casseroles. When shopping, go for the whole-grain varieties of bagels and tortillas.

Note: Many chronic conditions that develop later in life might be avoided by eating more whole grains. The fiber and other natural compounds may reduce the risk of diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers. ●

