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Steps to a Healthier You!

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Steps to a Healthier You!

Lesson Goals

After this lesson, participants will:

- Name the food groups as defined in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Identify the amounts of food from each of the food groups needed by each family member.
- Describe how to use MyPlate to build a better diet.
- Identify at least five signs of good health.
- Know the relationship of nutrition to health problems.

Before Teaching the Lesson

1. Read carefully:
   - MyPlate, Steps to a Healthier You (NEP-201)
   - What’s a Serving? (NEP-201A)
   - Signs of Good Health (NEP-201B)
2. Review:
   - MyPlate Worksheet (NEP-201C).
3. If available, check the homemaker’s “24-Hour Food Recall Record” and the nutrition analysis. Does her diet indicate certain food groups or key nutrients that need emphasis?
4. Collect a variety of food models and nutrient comparison cards. Be sure to include several from each food group.
5. Ask these questions:
   - Are there overweight or underweight family members?
   - Do the family members exhibit signs of good health?
6. Check to see if the homemaker or any of her children are enrolled in the Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC). If yes, find out which health risk factors qualified each participant for the program.
7. Collect magazine pictures of healthy men, women, and children throughout the life cycle.
8. Use National Dairy Council cardboard models to illustrate the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Dietary Guidelines if available. Use the food and nutrition calendar to teach each guideline.
9. Plan how you will teach the lesson.

Teaching Tools

For the Homemaker:
- MyPlate, Steps to a Healthier You (NEP-201)
- What Counts as One Serving? (NEP-201A)
- Signs of Good Health (NEP-201B)
- Nutrition analysis of “24-Hour Food Recall Record,” if available
- MyPlate Worksheet (NEP-201C)
- Empty Calories (NEP-201D)
- PowerPoint® presentation “MyPlate” or flip chart
- Food models and nutrition comparison cards
- Food and nutrition calendar

For Youth:
- LEAP for Health (PreK-3rd grade)
- The Organwise Guys:
  - Organ Annie
  - “How to Be Smart from the Inside Out” (3rd-5th grades)
  - “Basic Training for Better Health”
- 4-H Curriculum:
  - “4-H Fun with Foods” (5-6 year olds)
  - “Food, Fun and Fitness” (7-8 year olds)
  - “Food Fundamentals” (9-11 year olds)
Lesson Points to Stress

NEP-201

1. Nutrition is the study of food and how the human body uses it to maintain life, growth, and repair of tissues. It also involves how to prepare, buy, grow, preserve, and store food. Good nutrition requires that a variety of foods be combined to provide nutritionally balanced meals.

2. MyPlate depicts a place setting with a plate divided into four food groups:
   - Grains (orange)
   - Vegetables (green)
   - Fruits (red)
   - Protein (purple)

   The fifth food group, Dairy (blue) is represented by a glass.

   Although the Dietary Guidelines provide guidance about how much oil should be eaten daily at each calorie level, oils are not represented in the MyPlate icon. The differing amounts of space allotted to food groups in the plate represent the proportion of total calories we should eat from each group. Each group is known for providing special nutrients. No one food has all the nutrients you need, so variety is important. Eating the recommended amounts from each group each day helps assure adequate nutrient intake.

3. Calorie needs are based on age, gender, and activity level, as well as body size and state of health. These factors must be considered in finding our personal eating plan. We need to balance the calories we eat with physical activity every day to maintain a healthy weight.

NEP-201A

1. Knowing recommended serving sizes helps meet nutritional needs. It is important to recognize standard portion sizes because the size of portions commonly served over the past 10 years has been increasing. People are encouraged to overeat through such advertising and marketing strategies as serving larger portions, serving food on larger plates, and packaging deals that make it inexpensive to get more calories for less money. Use food labels to identify the appropriate portions of food. There are other strategies to use to control portion sizes, both at home and while eating out. Our hands provide a simple way to estimate portions.

   * Grains Group
   The greatest proportion of our calories should come from the grains group in the form of whole grains. One serving would be one slice of bread, ½ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta, five to six small cracker squares, or about 1 cup of dry cereal.

   * Vegetables Group
   A large proportion of our calories should come from vegetables. One serving is ½ cup cooked or raw chopped vegetables or 1 cup leafy green vegetables.

   * Fruits Group
   One serving from the fruits group could be one medium whole fruit, ½ cup canned fruit, ¼ cup of juice, or ¼ cup dried fruit.

   * Dairy Group
   This group includes all products made from milk. A serving is 1 cup of milk, 8 ounces of yogurt, 1½ ounces of cheese, or 2 ounces of process cheese.

   * Protein Group
   A serving is 3 ounces of lean cooked meat, poultry, or fish, ½ cup cooked beans, or ½ cup (1 ounce) of nuts or seeds. Each of the following counts as 1 ounce of meat:
   - 1 tablespoon of peanut butter
   - 1 egg

   * Oils
   Although the USDA does not list oils as a food group, a small amount of calories from oils is necessary for good health. One serving is 1 teaspoon of butter, margarine, or oil.

NEP-201B

1. Enjoy life through good health. This affects how you look, act, and feel. Signs of good health are:
   - Normal weight for size
   - Good posture
   - Firm muscles
   - Clean, smooth skin with natural color
   - Glossy, clean hair
   - Clean teeth with healthy pink gums
   - Clear, bright eyes
   - Ability to sleep well
   - Positive attitude toward life
   - Ability to cope with everyday stress
2. Eating right is basic to building strong bodies and healthy minds.
   - Protein is important for muscles, clear skin, shiny hair, and helping wounds heal.
   - Carbohydrates are basic to having good energy.
   - Fat is for soft, smooth skin.
   - Vitamins are for bright eyes, pink gums, and helping wounds heal.
   - Minerals are for strong bones and teeth, healthy blood pressure, and a regular heartbeat.
   - Fiber keeps you regular and helps control blood sugar and cholesterol.
   - Water is for regularity and for preventing fatigue and irritability.
   
   Nutrients are interrelated; some nutrients cannot function properly unless others are present in adequate amounts.

3. Poor eating habits can cause skin problems, overweight, tooth decay, irritability, and fatigue. Many major health problems are related to diet.
   - Tooth decay may be the result of frequently eating too many foods high in sugar or acid.
   - Overweight may be caused by frequently eating too many high-calorie sweets and fats. Being overweight creates serious health problems. Excess fat can:
     - Make it difficult to move around.
     - Complicate high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and other illnesses.
     - Make arthritis problems worse.
     - Slow down recovery after surgery.
     - Shorten your life.
   - Heart disease may be affected by eating too many foods high in fat and sodium.

4. While poor eating habits can cause poor health, good food choices can improve health. However, the results do not occur all at once. What a young girl eats today may affect her pregnancy years later. What a child eats, affects the way he or she grows and develops into an adult. Consuming adequate calcium during youth can prevent osteoporosis in adulthood. What an adult eats can greatly affect health now and in the future.

### NEP-201C

1. Use the USDA charts on *MyPlate Worksheet* to help estimate daily caloric needs and how much should be eaten from each food group each day.
2. Compare these recommended amounts to those reported in the “Food Recall Record.”
3. Use *Empty Calories* (NEP-201D) to help estimate the calories being eaten from “extras” each day.
4. Help identify changes in the diet to improve nutrition status. The worksheet can be used to identify proper amounts of food each family member should eat from each food group.

### Ideas for Teaching the Lesson

1. Before teaching the lesson, review what you taught the homemaker on your last visit.
   - What information has she used?
   - What new things has she tried?
2. If a child is present, bring some coloring sheets or worksheets from the MyPlate Web site for kids at [http://www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers.html](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers.html).
3. Take a “blank” plate and food models with you. Fill the food groups with the food models. Use this to discuss the MyPlate food guide with the homemaker.
4. Use nutrient comparison cards to show that foods contain different amounts of nutrients and that no single food contains all the nutrients.
5. Use nutrient comparison cards to illustrate the concept of “nutrient dense” foods.
6. Help the homemaker to evaluate her diet by completing the activities in the NEP-201 series.
7. Using *Empty Calories* (NEP-201D), help the homemaker identify the discretionary calories in her diet.
8. Discuss ways of putting the USDA’s Dietary Guidelines into practice.
9. Brainstorm barriers to good nutrition and physical activity. Discuss ways to overcome those barriers. Refer to the food and nutrition calendar.
Ideas for Teaching Small Groups

1. Demonstrate a recipe using foods from several food groups. Ask members of the group to name the ingredients from the food groups. Can they think of other foods that are a “perfect mix”? Some examples include pizza and a cheeseburger with tomato and lettuce. Discuss how the recipe applies to the USDA’s Dietary Guidelines.

2. Allow homemakers to create their own complete MyPlate snack on a toothpick. Provide a variety of food choices, such as cheese cubes, pieces of ham, grapes, cherry tomatoes, and cubes of bread. Ask each person to make a kebab that contains something from each food group. Before eating, have each person describe her creation to the group.

3. Ask the homemakers to plan a balanced meal using food models, paper plates, and their MyPlate eating plan.

4. Act out a skit about how food affects your health. Ask the homemakers to identify the signs of good and poor health demonstrated by the characters. Discuss how their lifestyles affected their health.

5. Provide magazine pictures of various people. Ask members of the group to identify which people are in good health. Discuss what characteristics indicate good health.

6. Brainstorm barriers to good nutrition and physical activity. Have them share ideas for overcoming the barriers. Refer to the food and nutrition calendar for ideas.

How to Tell What the Homemaker(s) Learned

Immediately following the lesson:

- Ask each homemaker to describe how MyPlate is a useful tool.
- Use a blank MyPlate form. Ask the homemaker(s) to tell you the name of the food groups and to write the amount from each group that should be eaten daily by an adult or child.
- Give each homemaker a mixture of food models to classify into the correct food group. (Include at least five foods from each group.)
- Give the homemaker a paper plate. Ask the homemaker to make a balanced meal by selecting (from a pile of food models) one food to place in each section of the plate. Alternatively, ask the homemaker to draw foods on a paper plate. Encourage her to choose foods her family likes to eat.
- Ask each homemaker to tell you signs of good health or to point out the signs in a picture.
- Give each homemaker a picture of different stages in the life cycle. Ask her to tell you why good eating habits are important at that stage. Discuss how nutrient needs change in quantity throughout the life cycle.
- Ask the homemaker to tell you the relationship between several major illnesses and nutrition.

At a later visit:

- Review the homemaker’s “24-Hour Food Recall Record.” Has she improved her diet? Has she made changes that relate to the USDA’s Dietary Guidelines in how she prepares food?
- Ask if there are noticeable signs of improved health in family members.

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