



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Eat Your Fruit and Vegetables

Fruit and Vegetable Intake Among Children --- United States, 2003-2010

Recorded: August 5, 2014; posted: August 7, 2014

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Getting kids to eat their fruits and vegetables is a common problem for many parents, but it's a battle worth fighting.

Dr. Lutetia Moore is a researcher with CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity. She's joining us today to discuss the importance of encouraging children to eat their fruit and vegetables. Welcome to the show, Latetia.

[Dr. Moore] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Latetia, how many fruits and vegetables should children be eating daily?

[Dr. Moore] Well, toddlers need one cup of fruit and one cup of vegetables every day. Teenage boys need two cups of fruit and three cups of vegetables every day. If you'd like to find out what your child needs, you can go to choosemyplate.gov to get a complete list of recommendations.

[Dr. Gaynes] Are children in the U.S. consuming the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables?

[Dr. Moore] We are seeing some improvement, but there's still a ways to go. Sixty percent of children are not getting the fruit they need every day and 93 percent of children are not getting the amount of vegetables they need.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the health benefits that come from eating a healthy diet?

[Dr. Moore] Fruits and vegetables are a very important part of a healthy diet. Eating them adds important nutrients, helps reduce the risk of many serious illnesses and death, such as heart disease and diabetes, and if you use them instead of other foods in sugar and fat, they can even help you control your weight.

[Dr. Gaynes] How can parents encourage their kids to eat fruits and vegetables?

[Dr. Moore] parents can do a variety of things to encourage their kids to eat fruits and vegetables. They can eat them with their kids, even if it takes many tries for them to like

them. You can also offer fruits and vegetables as snacks instead of foods that are high in sugar and fat. Parents can also take their kids shopping with them, help them grow fruits and vegetables, and help them prepare them for different meals and snacks each day.

[Dr. Gaynes] What can parents do to help schools and day care centers ensure that their children are getting fruits and vegetables.

[Dr. Moore] Parents can get involved. One of the first things parents can do is ensure that fruits and vegetables are offered any time food is offered to their children. Parents can also make sure that their children are learning about and experiencing fruits and vegetables at school through things like farm-to-school programs where they can learn about, grow, and taste fruits and vegetables while they're outside of their parents' care.

[Dr. Gaynes] Latetia, where can listeners get more information about the importance of a healthy diet for children?

[Dr. Moore] Listeners can go to choosemyplate.gov.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Latetia. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Latetia Moore about the importance of getting children to eat their fruits and vegetables.

Remember, good eating habits developed early in childhood can last a lifetime. Parents—eat a variety of fruits and vegetables with your children and offer them as snacks, instead of foods high in fats and added sugars.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.