

*Fall into
Health*

Preparing for Opportunity

Parents and children look forward to this time of the year. The kids are back in school, and children are planning who they will be this Halloween. These two events may not seem relevant to WIC because we don't typically serve children in school, and certainly do not promote eating massive amounts of candy. As Milton Berle said, "If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door." I see back-to-school and Halloween as the proverbial "doors."

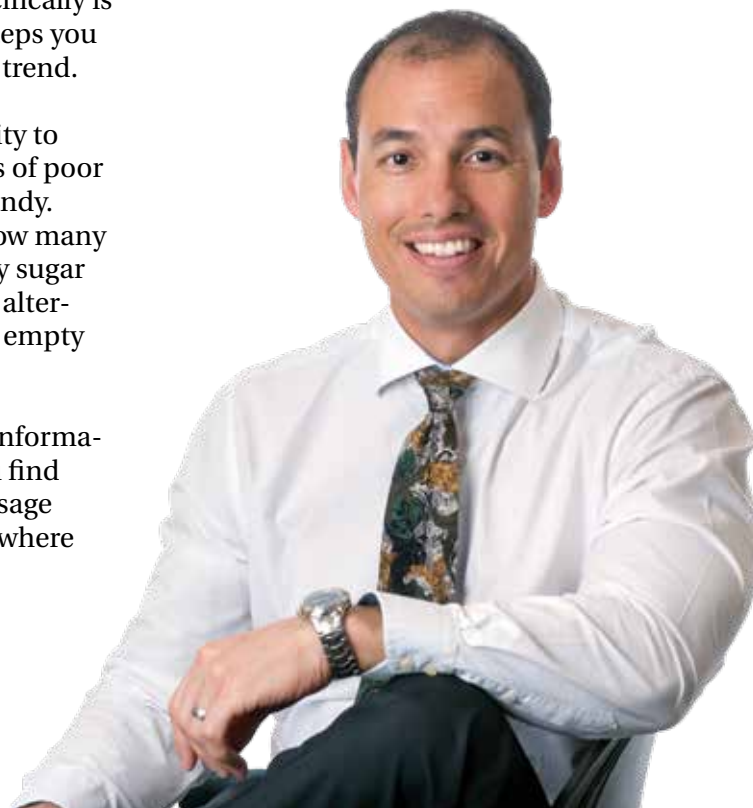
Back-to-school is an opportunity to show potential participants how good nutrition from WIC can help a child meet developmental milestones, which ultimately improves their readiness for school. On page 4, you will learn how obesity is down among children in the WIC program. You will also read how Texas WIC specifically is contributing to the decline and steps you can take to continue this positive trend.

Halloween provides an opportunity to talk about the health implications of poor nutrition, like eating too much candy. Take the quiz on page 18 to see how many calories are packed into those tiny sugar bombs. Check out the Halloween alternatives on page 16 to cut back on empty calories.

Of course you want to share this information with your participants. If you find yourself struggling to get the message through, you can turn to page 12 where

you can read tips on how to effectively communicate with WIC clients.

Since we are talking about opportunity, I'm going to share one more quote: "Luck is preparation meeting opportunity." When things go well it is because we prepared for them to go well and prepared for other contingencies. Whether it is TXIN deployment, aggressive outreach, or funding decisions, your ability to take effective strategic action is dependent upon your preparation. That is not luck, it's being ready and willing to take advantage of every opportunity to serve Texans. This edition is filled with topics and tips to help you prepare for even more opportunities. I hope you enjoy it.



From the desk of Edgar Curtis — Texas WIC Director



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National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month: Obesity Down in WIC Children



by Juliette Coronado, MS, RD, LD
WIC Nutrition Education Specialist

This September, National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month brings a time for communities and organizations to learn about raising healthy children and promoting balanced lifestyles. According to the 2015-2016 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), the percent of obese preschool and school-age children (ages 2 to 5 years) was 13.9 percent; a 4.5 percent increase from 2013-2014. Although overall childhood obesity rates remain high, the rise in these rates has slowed. Some programs, such as Texas WIC, have seen rates decline among participants in the past years. This article will highlight the efforts Texas WIC has taken to address this issue.

Childhood Obesity: Rates Decline in WIC Children

Across 31 U.S. states and three territories, rates of obesity among 2- to 4-year-olds enrolled in WIC have declined. Obesity rates of WIC children dropped from 15.9 percent in 2010 to 14.5 percent in 2014. From 2010 to 2014 the prevalence of severe obesity among WIC children also decreased. Similarly, Texas WIC saw a drop in obesity rates among WIC children from 16.9 percent in 2010 to 14.9 percent in 2014.

Possible reasons for the decline in obesity among WIC children include:

- Updates to WIC food packages in 2009 to

align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and enhance breastfeeding promotion and support.

- Increased awareness of the importance of obesity prevention, especially among preschool and school-age children.
- Increased federal support for state involvement in early childhood education programs to improve nutrition, physical activity and breastfeeding support and to limit screen time.

How has Texas WIC taken action?

Texas WIC has undertaken many efforts at both the state and local level to help slow the rate of childhood obesity. Some of these activities include:

- **Local Agency Grants** – Special funding is provided to support obesity prevention activities such as gardening initiatives, cooking classes and more.
- **Breastfeeding Promotion and Support** – In 2009, Texas WIC launched a breastfeeding campaign called “Breastmilk: Every Ounce Counts” and the www.breastmilkcounts.com website. This campaign continues to be a success.
- **Personalized Nutrition Counseling** – Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment (VENA) has enabled more meaningful conversation

between clients and staff. Nutrition experts provide daily one-on-one counseling with participants at clinics across the state.

- **Client Centered Nutrition Education** – Classes are provided to participants in a variety of formats on topics such as increasing fruit and vegetable intake, raising healthy eaters, physical activity and more. Participants can receive classes in person or online at [TexasWIC.org](https://www.texaswic.org).
- **Nutrition and Fitness DVDs** – The Adventures of Zobey DVDs encourage young children to be physically active and choose healthy foods more often.

Texas WIC continues to promote obesity prevention and awareness through many different avenues.

- **Training for WIC Staff** – Trainings on nutrition education, counseling, breastfeeding promotion and other topics aim to provide WIC staff with the knowledge and skills to help WIC parents raise healthy children.
- **Enhancing Online Classes and Participant Resources** – The updated [TexasWIC.org](https://www.texaswic.org) website includes different online classes and recipes with videos for clients to try. Some of the newer classes include topics like breastfeeding after returning to work and picky eating.
- **Creating Client and Family Centered Activities and Lessons** – Dance Together, Play Together, Be Superheroes Together, and Grow Together are new nutrition education group classes available for staff to engage WIC families while promoting physical activity, positive parenting practices, and more fruits and vegetables.
- **New Recipe Videos** – Many participants visit [TexasWIC.org](https://www.texaswic.org) for recipes. This year, the state agency is working to turn those recipes into short videos. Some of the videos even feature WIC children showing they can help in the kitchen, too.
- **Continuing Obesity Prevention Grants** – This year, local agencies receiving funding for obesity prevention activities are digging into their tool boxes to continue creating programs for WIC children and their families. Stay tuned for more updates as local agencies dive into action.

Ideas to Continue Supporting Healthy Families at Your Clinic

- **Family Time** – Whether it is during nutrition education counseling, group activities, cooking demonstrations or outside events for WIC participants, involve the entire family.
- **Help Kids Stay Active** – Find fun ways to engage children in physical activity. Turn on some dance music in the waiting room or during a group activity and encourage children to groove to the music.
- **Encourage Healthy Eating Habits** – Many clinics already participate in cooking demonstrations, but let's shake it up! Have parents bring in their favorite recipe to make and find new substitutions for healthier options. Take it a step further and find recipes that kids can help with. Check out the recipe page at [TexasWIC.org](https://www.texaswic.org) for some kid-friendly ideas.

Thank you to all WIC staff and partners for your efforts to help Texas families grow up healthy. You make a difference every day.

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A Partnership that Works: **WIC and the Children's Defense Fund**

By WyKisha McKinney
Program Director

In Texas, more than 600,000 children are uninsured. More than half of these children are eligible but not enrolled in state health coverage programs like Children's Medicaid and CHIP. The Children's Defense Fund's (CDF) Child Health Outreach and Enrollment project works to ensure a healthy start for Texas children by connecting them to affordable, comprehensive physical and mental health coverage. CDF's work is grounded in the belief that families and communities can come together to improve the health and well-being of children and, in doing so, change the health trajectory of their whole community.

Families USA, an advocate for consumer health care, notes that children with health insurance:

- Are more likely to have a usual source of care.
- Are more likely to have access to preventive care.
- Help close racial disparity gaps.
- Have improved social and emotional development.
- Are better equipped to do well in school.

Meeting Families Where They Are

CDF's health outreach strategies are rooted in meeting families where they are to best reach eligible uninsured children. Neighborhood groups, businesses, churches, community organizations, libraries and schools are essential partners in identifying community health care needs and designing the best approach in each unique

context. This includes our WIC local agency partners. Cindy Ross, Health Outreach Program Coordinator for CDF, explains, “By being at the WIC clinics, we create sort of a one-stop shop for moms and break down some of the barriers that prevent them from accessing care.”

A Win-Win Partnership in Northeast Texas

WIC’s mission to improve the health of low-income women, infants, and children up to age 5 is parallel to CDF’s objectives. CDF currently provides application assistance at WIC clinics in three northeast Texas counties: Cherokee, Rusk and Smith. “The programs complement one another, which allows us to help families on a whole other level,”

says WIC Director in Northeast Texas, Tecora Smith. WIC’s strategy of scheduling consistent appointments for mothers to visit their clinics for services provides an opportunity for CDF’s health outreach team to assist those families in real time.

CDF and WIC work together to make sure moms know about our collective services. According to Smith, “Many people view WIC as simply a nutrition education and breastfeeding program, but we are more than that. We have a social services component that allows us to partner with organizations like Children’s Defense Fund to help us to take a more comprehensive approach to caring for our clients.”

A Win for Families

CDF’s partnership with WIC breaks down significant barriers to accessing health care such as limited transportation, lack of trust in providers, and difficulty navigating challenging systems and procedures. “A lot of our moms have issues with trusting providers,” says Smith. “Our moms trust WIC to refer them to an organization that is no harm to them. By having CDF onsite at our WIC clinics, they know this is someone they can trust.” Refer-

ring back to the “one-stop shop” approach, Smith states, “When I was a WIC mom it was a one-stop shop. I was able to get WIC, apply for Medicaid, and see the OB-GYN all in one place. As a result, I had a stress-free pregnancy and was prepared to care for my baby. I want that for other mothers.” At WIC, CDF not only helps mothers apply for CHIP and Medicaid, but they also help the family choose a health plan and primary care provider and renew their health coverage when the time arrives, reducing the chances of a lapse in coverage.

Tips for Creating Partnerships that Work

Smith offers these tips for WIC clinics considering partnerships:

- Develop a collaborative mindset. WIC can work with organizations to achieve an all-inclusive approach necessary to best serve our families.
- Learn as much as you can about the partner organization and their program.
- Ensure that families served are protected and that their confidentiality is respected at all times.
- Make sure the goal of the partner organization is aligned with WIC’s goals and objectives.

Ross offers these tips for organizations interested in partnering with WIC:

- Determine what works well for both agencies to meet their goals.
- Offer workshops to the WIC staff to learn about your program and what they can expect from your organization.
- Don’t add to the WIC staff’s workload; come ready with everything you need to work.
- Maintain an open line of communication between everyone involved.

For more information on partnering with the Children’s Defense Fund, contact WyKisha McKinney, Health Outreach Program Director, at wmckinney@childrensdefense.org or 713-664-4080.

References:

Families USA. (2006, July). Why Health Insurance Matters for Children. Retrieved May 29, 2018, from Campaign for Children’s Healthcare: <http://www.childrenshealthcampaign.org/assets/pdf/Kids-Why-Insurance-Matters.pdf>.

Texas LAUNCH Project

by Ramah Leith
Texas LAUNCH Project Director

Many developmental, social and emotional delays can be identified and addressed in early childhood, reducing the long-term impacts on children and their families. However, families may be unaware of the signs of these delays and lack information on how to promote social and emotional wellness or how to access support. **Texas LAUNCH** (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health) is a state initiative focused on positively impacting the physical, social, emotional, cognitive and behavioral development of children ages birth to 8 years. The project focuses on improving access to early childhood developmental screenings, providing parenting classes, promoting mental health consultation and strengthening the early childhood workforce. Texas LAUNCH is in the third year of a four-year Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grant. Initiated ten years ago in El Paso, Texas LAUNCH has built on El Paso's success by expanding into three additional communities: Bexar County (San Antonio), Tarrant County (Fort Worth), and the Tigua tribal community in Ysleta del Sur Pueblo (El Paso). The initiative is led by the Department of State Health Services Maternal Child Health, in partnership with the Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health at the University of Texas at Austin and Aliviane, Inc., the original LAUNCH grantee.

The Texas WIC [program](#) is in a key position to support families of young children build their resiliency, identify opportunities to strengthen family practices, and provide parents with tools and resources to support the healthy development of their children. Texas LAUNCH offers training in the use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaires, evidence-supported tools for identifying developmental and/or social and emotional delays in young children. WIC staff can support this goal by implementing the screening tools at family visits, educating families about the importance of regular screening, and providing appropriate referrals. Texas



LAUNCH stands ready to provide WIC staff with tools, training and other resources to assist with this shared goal. WIC staff may also be in a prime position to hear parents' concerns or identify early signs of potential delays in young children. Texas LAUNCH can assist with workforce training needs, helping staff build their competence in early childhood development, and responding to common parental concerns.

To connect with Texas LAUNCH providers within your community, contact the state LAUNCH team lead, Holly Gurslin at Holly.Gurslin@austin.utexas.edu.

WIC and Texas LAUNCH share a common vision of healthy Texas families. To learn more about Texas LAUNCH and discuss partnership opportunities, contact the Texas LAUNCH Project Director, Ramah Leith at ramah.leith@dshs.texas.gov.

National Health Education Week

by Melanie Smith
WIC Communications Strategist

The week of October 15 is National Health Education Week (NHEW). Since 1995, NHEW is celebrated the third week of October. There are two goals of the celebration: to raise awareness of major public health issues, and to promote the role health education plays in promoting the public's health.

WIC agencies are encouraged to use this week to get creative in their nutrition and health education.

Social media ideas

- On social media, invite clients and community members to post a picture of themselves being active.
- Highlight the specific health issues facing your community and provide simple steps residents can take to address those issues. Your local health department is a good resource for this information.
- Highlight what your agency offers to help address health issues (eg. IBCLC, RDN, cooking classes, etc.).

Counseling ideas

- Ask clients about their family's health history. Talk about the benefits family members have seen from living a healthy lifestyle or the limitations seen due to poor health. Talk about how WIC foods can help prevent problems and prolong good health.
- Highlight seasonal produce to encourage clients and their children to try new veggies at their peak. <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/seasonal-produce-guide>



Should you try a detox diet?

CONTRIBUTED BY JESSI PAGE, TEXAS STATE DIETETIC INTERN

We've all seen them: the countless websites, blog posts, books, and magazine articles advertising detox diets as the cure for fatigue, weight gain, bloating, acne, slow metabolism... the list goes on and on. But do these diets really work? Do they help remove "toxins" from our bodies?



There are many different detox diets, but all are based on strictly limiting food intake for a period of time. "Juice cleanses," which allow only juiced fruits and veggies, are quite popular. A common type of "clean eating detox" allows fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts and seeds, but not other common foods like meat, fish, eggs, dairy products, wheat, sugar, caffeine or alcohol. Finally, there is fasting, which means drinking only water, although sometimes herbal teas and fruit juices are allowed. (Throughout history, fasting has often been used for religious or spiritual reasons, not just to get rid of "toxins.")

Let's take a look at the pros and cons of these diets.

The Pros:

- Some detoxes focus on fruits and veggies, which are low in calories and full of vitamins, fiber and antioxidants that promote health and help fight disease.
- Detox diets reduce calorie intake, which can lead to temporary weight loss.

The Cons:

- Juice cleanses and other extreme detox diets can be very low in fiber and other vital nutrients. It is important to remember that the main nutrient in fresh juice is fructose, a type of sugar, which paired with low fiber can cause blood sugar spikes. Also, going multiple days with little fiber can affect colon function and impair healthy gut bacteria.
- Many detox diets are low in protein, and without enough protein, our bodies can start to break down muscle.
- The weight loss "benefits" of detoxes are short-lived; most people quickly regain all the weight they lose on a fast or detox.
- Detox diets can be expensive. Many encourage you to purchase special supplements or herbal laxatives, services (such as colon cleanses), books, or other products. Juice cleanses tend to be very pricey because of the amount of fruits and vegetables (not to mention a juicer!) needed to prepare the juices.
- There is no data showing these diets have any effect on getting rid of toxins.

Detox diets are unnecessary because we have organs that take care of this for us; our livers, lungs, kidneys, and skin are our detoxifiers. Our liver filters the blood to remove large toxins such as alcohol and drugs. Our kidneys filter out waste by making urine. Our skin allows us to sweat out toxins. Our lungs filter the air we breathe.

(Continued on next page)

Detox Diet

(Continued from previous page)

Ultimately, the best way to “detox” is by eating a healthy, balanced diet rather than following extreme diets that are not backed by science.

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Texas Seasonal Produce

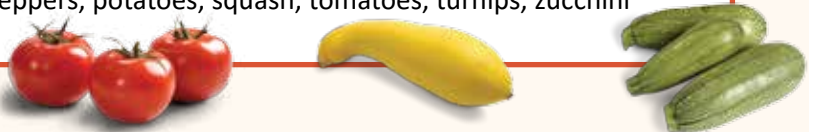
Fruits:

Apples, oranges, cantaloupes, honeydew, pears, watermelon



Vegetables:

Beets, green cabbage, carrots, cucumbers, green onions, herbs, lettuce, mushrooms, onions, sweet peppers, hot peppers, potatoes, squash, tomatoes, turnips, zucchini



recipe

Brussels Sprouts Salad

Adapted from Cookinglight.com

CONTRIBUTED BY STEPHANIE HOLLAND, RD, LD, WIC WELLNESS COORDINATOR

Place ingredients in a large bowl and stir to combine. Enjoy a yummy fall salad perfect to serve any time of the year!

Ingredients:

- 1 pound of shaved Brussels sprouts
- ½ cup toasted walnuts
- 3 tablespoons of feta cheese
- 2 tablespoons of dried cranberries
- 1 squeezed lemon
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon of Kosher salt

Nutritional Information: 198 calories, 8 grams of fat, 9 grams of carbohydrate, 6 grams of protein, 4 grams of fiber, and 4 milligrams of cholesterol.



Share your wellness success stories for a chance to be spotlighted in Texas WIC News and inspire other WIC staff! Contact your State Wellness Coordinator, Stephanie Holland at Stephanie.Holland1@hhsc.state.tx.us or 512-341-4577.

Finding the Right Words for Better Health

by Jennifer Rowe
Information Specialist III (PPMS Group)



October is Health Literacy Month. What does that mean for you as a service provider at WIC? Think back to the first time you were sick and went to the doctor by yourself. You may have heard words or phrases about your illness or received test results with terminology that was unfamiliar to you. Was your condition serious? Should you be concerned? Would asking questions make you look foolish? Oftentimes, patients act as if they understand what their doctor is telling them and either do not ask the right questions or do not ask any questions at all. The same may hold true for some of the participants you see in your clinics.

Founded in 1999 by Helen Osborne M.Ed., OTR/L, Health Literacy Month is a worldwide event that promotes the importance of making health information easily understandable. Helen saw how overwhelming and difficult it was for patients to listen and remember what they were being told during visits when they were sick and scared. She wanted to come up with an approach for communicating about health in a way people could easily comprehend.

Terminology common to a health care worker might be easily misunderstood by a patient who is listening, but not grasping the message. For example, WIC Nutrition Education Manager Shirley Ellis recalls a time when she was discussing iron rich foods with a recently pregnant friend. “I told her there were several good sources of iron found in food including beans and red meat. She told me her husband liked eating it that way, but she didn’t like it when it was really red. It took me a moment to realize she thought red meat was just the color of the meat and that I was encouraging her to eat undercooked meat. She didn’t know what ‘red meat’ actually meant.”

Using plain language does not mean just using short words when speaking to someone. It’s about clearly communicating your message and making sure it is understood. Here are a few simple ways to incorporate health literacy into your everyday interactions.

- Whenever possible, avoid using lengthy scientific or biological terms when describing a condition. Use words and phrases that

- are familiar to your client. If needed, draw a picture to show an anatomical problem.
- If you are discussing breastfeeding positions, use a doll to demonstrate the position. Then, ask the client to use the doll to demonstrate the technique back to you, so you know they understand what to do.
 - Your body language says a lot, as does your tone of voice. Use eye contact and give your full attention to anyone you are meeting with in person. If you need to speak to a client over the phone, add energy and enthusiasm to your voice to let them know you are interested in providing assistance.
 - Provide visuals. If you are explaining the ratio of carbohydrates someone should eat versus the amount of meat or vegetables, draw it out on a plate to show the different portion sizes. The same goes for liquids – if you are telling a client how many ounces of milk their child should drink every day, draw a line on a cup to show what one portion looks like.

If you need additional plain language health education resources – including health care text translated in 18 languages – be sure to check out Health Information Translations’ website <https://www.healthinfotranslations.org>. There you will have access to more than 3,000 free, culturally appropriate documents covering a range of topics from “Health and Wellness” to “Pregnancy and Baby Care.” The

documents are written at or below a 7th grade reading level and were created through a collaboration of health education specialists from The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, Mount Carmel Health System, OhioHealth, and Nationwide Children’s Hospital.

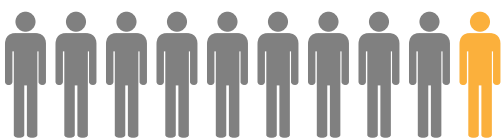
Interested in learning more?

Helen Osborne has a monthly podcast called “Health Literacy Out Loud” (HLOL) where she speaks with professionals in the industry about their background, communication styles, and how they are working toward improving the health care experience. You can subscribe to Helen’s free HLOL podcasts by visiting <https://healthliteracy.com/subscribe-to-podcasts/>.

Helen’s award-winning book, “Health Literacy from A to Z: Practical Ways to Communicate Your Health Message” explains the key principles of health literacy and provides how-to strategies for everyone from health care workers and case managers to students and family caregivers.

There’s also a free monthly “What’s New” E-newsletter available through Helen’s Health Literacy Consulting website. It provides communication tips, links to podcasts, and other resources. You can sign up at <https://healthliteracy.com/free-e-newsletters-6/>.

Be a Health Literacy Hero



Nine out of 10 adults struggle to understand and use health information when it is:



Unfamiliar



Complex



Jargon-filled

Limited health literacy costs the health care system money and results in higher-than-necessary morbidity and mortality.



You can improve health literacy by:



Using plain language



Simplifying numbers



Accounting for culture

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016



Whole Grains Month: Gluten-Free Whole Grains

Kara Nemethy, RD
WIC Approved Foods Coordinator

September is Whole Grains Month, and the perfect time to encourage our participants to make half their grains whole. Whole grains provide a variety of nutrients including B vitamins, protein, minerals and fiber. For participants with celiac disease, however, incorporating whole grains into a gluten-free diet can be a challenge. This article will provide alternative whole grain options for participants with celiac disease as well as tips for adding whole grains to a gluten-free diet.

What is Celiac Disease?

Celiac disease is an autoimmune and digestive disorder affecting about 1 percent of the population. People with celiac disease have an abnormal immune reaction when consuming gluten, a protein found in grains such as barley, rye, triticale and wheat. This immune response results in damage to the villi of the small intestine, leading to malabsorption of nutrients. The treatment for celiac disease is a gluten-free diet, which excludes all foods containing gluten. People with celiac disease have a high risk of nutrient deficiencies, not only due to malabsorption, but also because a gluten-free diet can be low in whole grains. When counseling participants with celiac disease, it is important to stress the importance of including gluten-free whole grains as a part of a well-balanced diet.

Whole Grains

Whole grains are grains that have all parts of the kernel, including the endosperm, bran and germ, intact. The U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommend Americans make half their grains whole, about 3 ounce equivalents per day. In

general, an ounce equivalent of a whole grain food includes ½ cup cooked grains, 1 cup of ready to eat cereal, one small slice of bread or one small tortilla. While many whole grains contain gluten, there are plenty of alternative, gluten-free whole grains available.

Alternative Gluten-Free Whole Grains

Amaranth – This tiny, ancient seed has a nutty flavor and provides calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus and potassium. Amaranth is also a complete protein and is the only grain known to provide vitamin C. Amaranth is versatile — it can be popped on the stovetop, added to hot cereal, soups or salads and used in baked goods as an alternative to flour.

Brown Rice – Brown rice provides fiber, B vitamins and minerals. There are several varieties of brown rice, and depending on the type, the cooking time may vary. Brown rice flour is also available as an alternative to wheat flour. Brown rice is available as a whole grain option in most participant food packages.

Buckwheat – Although the name is similar, buckwheat is very different from regular wheat. This grain provides several important nutrients including potassium, zinc, copper and manganese. Buckwheat is often found as a flour, however, you can also purchase whole groats, which can be prepared as a hot cereal, added to soups or served as a side.

Corn – Corn is a source of vitamin A and the antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin, which promote healthy vision. When purchasing whole grain foods with corn or cornmeal, avoid products with “degerminated corn” as an ingre-

dient. Whole grain yellow or white corn tortillas as well as fresh and frozen corn are WIC food options.

Millet – Millet is a staple in Asia and parts of Africa. Millet provides protein, fiber, B vitamins and several minerals. This seed can be prepared as a hot cereal, added to casseroles or served as a side.

Quinoa – Quinoa is an excellent choice for a gluten-free diet because it provides magnesium, folate, potassium and it is a complete protein. When cooking with quinoa, be sure to rinse it prior to cooking to remove the saponin, which gives it a bitter flavor. Quinoa can be used in salads, as a side, or as an alternative to rice and other grains.

Whole Grain Cooking Chart*

Grain (1 cup dry)	Water or Broth**	Cooking Time (minutes)	Yield
Amaranth	2 cups	20-25	3.5 cups
Brown Rice	2.5 cups	25-45	3-4 cups
Buckwheat	2 cups	20	4 cups
Millet	2.5 cups	25-35	4 cups
Quinoa	2 cups	12-15	3 cups

*Adapted from The Whole Grains Council “Cooking and Eating Gluten-Free Whole Grains”

**For all grains in the chart, bring the water or broth to a boil, add grains, cover and simmer.

What about Oats?

Oats do not naturally contain gluten, however they can be cross-contaminated with gluten-containing grains during growing, harvesting, transport and/or processing. Many manufacturers and growers have implemented procedures to produce gluten-free oats, which can be labeled as such if the final product contains less than 20 ppm gluten. There are some individuals with celiac disease, however, who have an immune reaction to the storage protein in oats, although this is rare. The American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommends people with celiac disease limit consumption

of oats to about 50 grams dry per day and only include oats or oat products that are labeled gluten-free. Additionally, people with celiac disease should consult with their health care provider prior to including oats in their diet.

Other Tips to Share with Participants

- When purchasing packaged foods, look for foods with whole grains or whole grain flour as the first ingredient. Read all product labels to ensure grains and grain products are truly gluten-free.
- Add grains to soups, stews and salads or serve as a main dish or side.
- When cooking whole grains from scratch, try adding lightly sautéed vegetables for extra flavor.
- Save time by cooking large batches ahead of time, which can be served throughout the week.
- Check out TexasWIC.org for gluten-free recipes featuring WIC foods like corn and brown rice!

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Putting the *Health* in Halloween

by Melanie Smith and state staff

Jennifer Rowe

Tip: Save the seeds from carving pumpkins and roast them for a tasty snack.



Melanie Smith

Tip: Mix your kids' candy with something healthy. Chop up a mini candy bar and have your kids mix it with yogurt and blueberries.



Tracy Erickson

Tip: I give mini-bags of goldfish crackers to my trick-or-treaters. The kids love them!



Kristina Annieta

Tip: Bring fruit and veggies to the school Halloween parties.



Kristina Annieta

Tip: Don't bring all of your kids' candy to the break room at work.



Trick or Treat Trivia

by Mrs. Always B. Wright

Hubby is off to another knife convention. Who knew there were so many culinary cutlery conventions?

Since Eaton is away, I get to manage the Halloween festivities all by myself. Oh, that favorite time of year when you give away bucket-loads of candy, only to have your kiddos return with...bucket-loads of candy.

We know that the real magic happens after those little goblins, ghouls and ghosts head off to dreamland. Bags are overflowing with candy and you can slowly steal chocolate one-by-one in hopes that your little one doesn't notice.

As you are elbows-deep in endless piles of the sweet stuff, which one should you choose? What Halloween chocolate favorite has the least amount of calories and sugar?

- A. Snickers miniature
- B. Reese's Peanut Butter Cup miniature
- C. Kit Kat snack size
- D. M & Ms fun size

Answer: (A) Snickers miniature wins.

- A) Snickers miniature
43.3 calories
4.6 g sugar
- B) Reese's Peanut Butter Cup miniature
44 calories
4.6 g sugar
- C) Kit Kat snack size
70 calories
7 g sugar
- D) M&M's fun size
73 calories
9 g sugar





Hospitality Tip

Clients know they are late. They may have had transportation issues, or everything may have been perfect and they were going to be early, until the baby had a diaper blowout. Whatever the reason, your client has arrived late. Take this moment to let mom (or whoever it is) know that it is okay and we still will take care of them. Try to avoid using words, phrases or body language that could make them feel even worse.

Say this:

“We’re so glad you made it in. Go ahead and get settled and we will get to you as soon as we can. May I get you a cup of water?”

Not this:

“Well, you are 20 minutes late so it is going to take a while to get to you. We will call you when we can.”

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