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FOR IMMEDIATE

WIC Project #31

RELEASE

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Bell County Public Health District WIC Program Provides Healthy Tips for the Thanksgiving Holidays

Temple, Texas – Bell County Public Health District WIC Program provides healthy tips and recipes for families and children during the fall season.

The Women, Infants & Children's Program (WIC) wants to help families stay healthy during the holidays. During Thanksgiving feasts it is easy to get stuffed and overdo unhealthy food choices. WIC helps parents to modify recipes and try new foods and healthy alternatives to stay on track with mindful eating choices. The impact of starting early with healthy and mindful eating for children can help shape their eating habits and teaches them to eat for well-being and growth.

A few holiday healthy tips that families can implement is to drink plenty of water during the day. Staying hydrated is important for our bodies and helps to avoid over indulging in foods during the day. Try adding a fall touch by infusing your water with apple slices and cinnamon sticks or cranberries, pomegranate and herbs like mint or rosemary. Another tip is to make sure as the weather changes during the fall to still make time for exercise and outdoor activities as a family. Take a walk each day discovering how the trees change or find a nearby playground in your neighborhood. Creating holiday scavenger hunts can also be a fun and creative exercise.

A few eating tips that are kid focused are to make fruit a main part of snacking. Fruit trays and fruit salads are a great alternative to other high calorie appetizers and snacks we tend to eat during the holidays. Fruit is also a nutritious and flavorful ingredient for desserts. Try desserts such as cobblers or fruit dipped in chocolate or yogurt dips, fruit topped with cool whip or coconut as a sweet alternative to high sugar, high calorie desserts. Vegetables can also be a great

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way to add a creamy rich flavor to everyday family favorites such as oatmeal and macaroni and cheese. Try adding a can of pumpkin with spices such as cinnamon and cloves to oatmeal or adding mashed butternut squash and herbs to melted cheese when making macaroni and cheese. Parents can visit our Temple, Killeen, Copperas Cove and Fort Hood WIC clinic Facebook pages for more weekly recipes and healthy tips during the holidays.

Along with encouraging families to eat mindfully, WIC offers family cooking classes each month. Parents come and learn about healthy eating and nutritious ways to prepare their favorite foods and also try new foods and recipes. Each WIC cooking class is interactive for the whole family, and both parents and kids love to taste-test the recipes.

For more information on the WIC Program, visit our website at www.bellcountyhealth.org or for more WIC resources and recipe ideas, go to www.texaswic.org.

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Pumpkin OATMEAL

Ingredients

1 C. rolled oats
1 1/4 C. water
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 C. canned pumpkin
3/4 C. milk
2 Tbps. brown sugar
1 tsp. ground cinnamon

Additions

1/4 tsp. ground ginger
1/4 tsp. ground cloves
Drizzling of maple syrup

Preparation

- Whisk the pumpkin, milk, and water in a pot.
- Add the oats, salt, brown sugar, and spices.
- Cook over medium-low heat until the mixture just comes to a boil, 2 to 5 minutes.
- Turn to low for 5 more minutes. Add maple syrup or more sugar to taste.