



A nutrition newsletter for families with children under five

ISSUE 11

Welcome to the eleventh edition of "Food Matters" a quarterly nutrition newsletter for families with children under five. If you would like to know more about a specific nutrition issue, please let us know by contacting the Health Information Centre, Women's and Children's Hospital on (08) 8161 6875. Childcare centres can contact TeethSmart for multiple copies of this newsletter ph: (08) 8295 2311 or fax: (08) 8294 6103.



Eating your way around the world

By Rebecca Haigh, Eat Well SA

As our society becomes richer and more diverse with the influences of different cultures, we have the chance to experience a wide range of cuisines. What better way for children to learn about different cultures than by offering them foods and meals from different countries?

Children can be picky eaters, so you may be hesitant to try new, unfamiliar food for fear of waste. Remember that studies have shown that children may need to be offered a new food at least 10 times before they will accept it. Trying relatively cheaper foods to start with will decrease the risk of you wasting money.

Here are some cheap and easy food ideas and cooking styles from other countries that you may like to try at home.

Couscous

Couscous is a rolled wheat pasta and is a great substitute for rice or potatoes. It is the national dish of Tunisia and is also eaten in other North African countries. Instant couscous is available at the supermarket and is very quick and easy minutes to prepare.

Frittata

Frittata is an Italian omelette – very thick, packed full of vegetables and sometimes has cheese added. Unlike an omelette, a frittata is not folded but takes the shape of the pan it is cooked in. It is usually served warm and cut into thick wedges. See the recipe included.

Pulses

Pulses are the edible seeds of leguminous plants. They include lentils, split peas, dried beans, such as kidney, soya and cannellini beans and chickpeas. Pulses carry the flavour of other ingredients and can be used in a variety of dishes. They are also high in fibre and a good source of iron (when eaten with a vitamin C source). Pulses are very filling and cheap and play a central role in Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and Indian dishes.

Pulses can be bought dried or canned. If dried, they must first be soaked in plenty of water for at least 8 hours before being used. If time is short, canned pulses are quicker to prepare and widely available in supermarkets.

Where do I find these foods?

Many supermarkets now stock foods from all around the world – both fresh and packaged. Alternatively, the Adelaide Central Market is a great place to explore if you are wanting to try some new foods. Also near the Market you can find the Persian Grocery Store at 270 Morphett Street, and the Indian Bazaar, at 11 Market Street. Other food importers include Omega Foods, at 33 Adam Street, Hindmarsh, and Garganis Brothers at 9 Bacon Street, Hindmarsh. There are plenty of local Asian supermarkets around as well, including LP Mini Mart at 219A Hanson Road, Blair Athol, and the Asian Grocery at 162 Henley Beach Road, Torrensville. Contact Diversity Directions on (08) 8346 1762 for more information on multicultural food and home product suppliers.



Teething

By Kerry Clifford, TeethSmart SA

Teeth usually start to appear when a child is about six months of age. Times will vary, but twenty baby teeth normally arrive by the time the child is 2½ to 3 years old. At about 6 years of age the first permanent molars and lower permanent incisors begin to appear.

Some babies and toddlers may experience teething problems such as:

- red swollen gums
- irritability and restlessness
- flushed cheeks and fever
- dribbling
- Finger and fist sucking.

Teething should not cause severe illness. If the child has fever or diarrhoea, medical advice should be sought.

Teething problems may be eased by the baby chewing on:

- Crusts of bread
- Teething rings or rusks

Rubbing your child's gums with your finger or a cold spoon may help.

Healthy teeth are important so your child can:

- eat a nutritious diet
- speak properly
- have a healthy smile

Brushing

Toothbrushing should start when the first tooth appears. Fluoride toothpaste is not recommended for children under 2 years. Low-fluoride toothpaste is recommended for children from 2-6 years.



Italian Frittata

Serves 4-5

This recipe makes a yummy hot breakfast or can be part of a lunch or dinner meal.

Ingredients

- 2 cups of cooked vegetables
- 1 tablespoon of margarine
- 4 eggs, beaten
- ¼ cup grated cheese (optional)

Method

1. Chop the vegetables into small pieces
2. Melt the margarine in a large frypan over medium heat.
3. Stir in the vegetables and add the beaten eggs. Turn down the heat. Sprinkle with grated cheese if desired.
4. Cook gently over low heat until the egg mixture is firm.
5. Once cooked, slice into thick wedges and serve warm.



Recipe from: *Kids in the Kitchen* cookbook, Health Department of Western Australia, 1998.

CORRECTION

Storing expressed breast milk in the fridge



In Food Matters Issue 10 it was stated that breast milk can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 48 hours. This short time period relates to infants in hospital.

For healthy infants at home, expressed breast milk can be safely stored in the back of the refrigerator (the coldest part) at 4°C for up to 3-5 days. We apologise for this confusion.

Editor

Can my 2½ year old eat spicy foods?

Nutritionists from the Women's and Children's Hospital answer your questions.

Q: My two and a half-year-old son Harry attends Family Day Care. The care provider is of Indian background and has asked if I am happy for Harry to have traditional Indian curry for lunch. Is it ok for Harry to eat spicy foods? Alison, Glenelg.

A: Alison, it is great to expose your son to foods from different cultures. He will not only develop a wider appreciation of different textures, colours, flavours and smells of foods but also be able to learn about customs from different cultures.

Spicy foods are yet another new flavour for your son to taste, however it is best that these foods are mild in spices, especially to begin with. Even mild curries that do not taste strong to adults can taste very spicy for younger children who have not been exposed to hot dishes. So, encourage your son's care provider to introduce different foods, such as curries, to your son. However ask the care provider to prepare the curry for your son with only a small amount of spice or chilli.

