

Health, Mind & Body

Healthy restaurant food for kids

(BPT) - With summer finally here, many will take the opportunity to spend more quality time with family, and dining out in restaurants is a perfect way to spend that time together.

In an effort to meet the growing demand among consumers for more healthful menu options, a number of restaurants - in hometowns across America and at various vacation destinations - are offering more nutritious and great-tasting menu options for kids.

Restaurateurs are committed to ensuring the meals they offer for children are healthful, flavorful and innovative. The participants of the National Restaurant Association's Kids LiveWell Recipe Challenge initiative offer tangible proof of this. Sponsored by founding partners McCormick For Chefs and Healthy Dining, the challenge gives operators the opportunity to showcase their creative, healthful and flavorful dishes they plan to feature on their menus. During the competition, which uses an "industry tested, kid approved" approach, a panel of food and nutrition professionals select the finalists and

a team of elementary school students choose the eventual winners.

The Kids LiveWell Recipe Challenge provides chefs and foodservice professionals with a forum to develop nutritious recipes that promote fun dining experiences. National chains, foodservice companies, independent restaurants and noncommercial organizations, have displayed their culinary creativity and competed in the contest, inspiring young patrons to be excited about eating healthful foods.

The winning recipes have embodied nutritious and imaginative ideas, such as a sandwich that uses multi-grain and pumpernickel bread shaped to look like a piano, a dish that turns a kid favorite - spaghetti and meatballs - into a pizza, and a quesadilla and soft taco that incorporate whole wheat, lean proteins and vegetables into meals that are tasty and exciting.

All of the challenge's recipes are required to meet nutrition criteria set forth by the National Restaurant Association's Kids LiveWell initiative, which is based on the 2010 USDA Dietary



Guidelines. The program's goal is to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains and low-fat dairy, while limiting unhealthy fats, sugar and sodium.

The Kids LiveWell initiative today includes 145 restaurant brands in more than 42,000 locations, and all of them are committed to providing more healthful meals for children. Nutritious meals can be found at all types of restaurants, from independent to chain to casual dining to quick-service, fast casual

and fine dining. They're even available in museums and theme parks.

For busy families that are constantly on the go, Kids LiveWell has made it even easier to find healthful menu items when they dine out in restaurants. Many of these nutritious menu options can be found on HealthyDiningFinder.com or by downloading the free Kids LiveWell smartphone app, available in the Android Market and iTunes app store.

Restaurateurs and chefs can make the healthful choice the easy choice.

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Enjoying a healthy Mediterranean diet

(BPT) - One particularly healthful diet trend is the Mediterranean diet, so named after the tastes and habits of the people living around the Mediterranean Sea. People in Europe - especially those in Spain, Italy and Greece - generally are healthier than Americans. One often-cited reason is their diet which, it turns out, is very high in salt.

Olives, for example, can only be consumed if they're soaked in salty brine for weeks. Feta cheese is cured and stored in salt brine. Capers, anchovies, codfish and roe are all Mediterranean staples routinely packed in salt. The breads, pastries and sauces of the Mediterranean are all high in salt. Greek taramosalata is made from salted codfish roe, while tzatziki is made from salted, fresh cucumbers that are drained and added to yogurt; North African baba ghanoush is made of roasted eggplant, blended with tahini, garlic, lemon juice, olive oil and lots of salt. This doesn't even include all the famous salt-cured meats such as jamon serrano, prosciutto, salami and various sausages.

Olive oil is the anchor of the Mediterranean diet. No other natural oil has as much monounsaturated fat. When drizzled on salads and vegetables or grilled fish, it adds a pleasing aroma and texture. But olive oil by itself is somewhat bland and is always accompanied by liberal amounts of salt. Virgin olive oil, so cherished for making salads, is slightly bitter because of all the unique antioxidants it contains.

Yet, the people of the Mediterranean, who enjoy all these foods, have the world's best cardiovascular health. The diet is so healthy that the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) used it as a model in its famous DASH Study (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension), which confirmed that the Mediterranean/DASH diet was healthier than the typical American diet and effectively reduced blood pressure.



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Hospice care: what it really means for patients and families

(BPT) - What makes a good death? This is a question that many people prefer not to think about in their day-to-day lives. However, for patients facing an uncertain future, it is an extremely relevant reality. The answer can vary from person to person, depending on individual personalities, interests and desires. However, for most people, a good death is quite simple. It means being physically comfortable, at peace in your own home, surrounded by your loved ones doing the things you love to do up until the very end. These essential details are made possible by hospice care.

Hospice, by definition, is a team-oriented approach to providing specialized care for people facing a life-limiting illness or injury. It includes expert medical care, pain management and emotional support for

patients and their families. But more simply, hospice care supports living one's life to the fullest with dignity regardless of how much time remains.

Seven in 10 Americans said they would prefer to die at home according to a Time/CNN Poll. Statistics show that 25 percent actually do according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In a recent national survey, the overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that expertise in keeping a terminally-ill patient as comfortable and as pain-free as possible is the single most important service to consider when caring for a loved one and the end-of-life experience. This is the essence of hospice care.

One of the great myths of hospice, for many who have not experienced it, is that hospice patients are merely

lying in a bed, barely conscious. This is not the case. When a patient is admitted at an appropriate time, hospice care can improve his or her quality of life. Research shows that health care providers feel responsible to discuss hospice with their patients when the time is right, as it provides a kind of care that they are unable to give. Nearly three-fourths of family caregivers agree that hospice care is a better choice for a terminally ill patient. Of this group, 69 percent believe that involvement in hospice makes a better impact on the patient's family as well.

Another hospice myth is that families lose control over what happens to their loved ones. The facts are that a family is generally able to choose their preferred hospice provider for a loved one, and can be trained to serve as a primary

caregiver, with a specialist to provide support when needed. It is the unique nature of hospice that allows for the feeling of family and comfort to become embedded and vital in the patient's care. This concept of more family interaction explains the overall goal of hospice - creating more moments of life before a life is over.

Hospice enables moments and memories that would otherwise not occur. It is the quality of these final moments, after all, that can define a "good death."

It's never too soon to explore your end-of-life options. To find a hospice or learn more about hospices in your area, visit the NHPCO Find a Provider tool at nhpc.org/findaprovider. To join the national conversation on how to make the most of your moments of life, visit facebook/nhpc.



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