

Blast Communication

Two Nutrition Items: AAP recommends Whole Diet Approach & Early Peanut Introduction Lowers Allergy Risk

AAP Policy- Whole Diet Approach

In a new policy statement, the American Academy of Pediatrics urges families and schools to take a broader approach to nutrition, considering children's whole diet pattern – rather than the amount of sugar, fat or specific nutrients in individual foods. The policy statement, "Snacks, Sweetened Beverages, Added Sugars, and Schools," published in the March 2015 Pediatrics (released online Feb. 23) emphasizes that single ingredients shouldn't be avoided and small quantities of sugar or fat is ok if it means a child is more likely to eat foods that are highly nutritious.

Since 1995, steady improvements have been made in school meal programs. Schools are serving meals with more lean meats, lower fat milks, and more fruits, vegetables and whole grains. National standards now limit the type of foods and drinks that are sold in schools. As of 2014, 92% of school districts reported meeting U.S. Department of Agriculture school meal standards released in 2012. There remains an opportunity, however, to improve the nutritional quality of food brought from home, which is often lower in nutrition and higher in calories, according to the policy statement.

The AAP recommends a five-step approach parents and schools can take in selecting food for packed lunches and social events:

- Select a mix of foods from the five food groups: vegetables, fruits, grains, low-fat dairy, and quality protein sources, including lean meats, fish, nuts, seeds and eggs
- Offer a variety of food experiences
- Avoid highly processed foods
- Use small amounts of sugar, salt, fats and oils with highly nutritious foods to enhance enjoyment and consumption
- Offer appropriate portions

- See more at: <http://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/Pages/AAP-Recommend-Whole-Diet-Approach-to-Children's-Nutrition.aspx#sthash.Uvccf8if.dpuf>

The Learning Early About Peanut Allergy (LEAP) Study

Another important nutrition publication, published February 26th in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM 2015; 372: 803-13) showed that the early introduction of peanuts (median age 7.8 months) significantly decreased the frequency of the development of peanut allergy among children at high risk for this allergy. These results will result in changes in practice recommendations. It is noted that approximately 10% of children who had a wheal of more than 4 mm develop after skin-prick testing were excluded.

The associated editorial (pages 875-77) by Rebecca Gruchalla and Hugh Sampson recommends a cautious approach: "any infant between 4 months and 8 months of age believed to be at risk for peanut allergy should undergo skin-prick testing for peanut. If the results are negative, the child should be started on a diet that includes 2 g of peanut protein three times a week for at least three years." For those with mild positivity, "the child should undergo a food challenge...by a physician who has experience performing a food challenge."

More information on the "LEAP" study: <http://blogs.nejm.org/now/index.php/peanut-consumption-in-infants-at-risk-for-peanut-allergy/2015/02/23/>

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If you have any questions about this blast communication or if you are interested in participating in the Chapter's Committee on Nutrition, please contact the Chapter's Nutrition Coordinator, Kyla Crane, RD, LD, at kcrane@gaaap.org or 404-881-5093.