



NEWS RELEASE

St. Charles County Government

Department of Community Health and the Environment

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HEALTHY DIETS START WITH EATING A RAINBOW

Colorful Fruits, Vegetables Provide Varied Tastes, Nutrients

St. Charles County, Missouri – Along with improving the attractiveness of the meal, eating a variety of colors at meals will improve your overall health. In an effort to focus attention on the importance of informed food choices and to develop sound eating habits, the American Dietetic Association has declared March to be National Nutrition Month®.

The theme for this year's celebration is "Eat Right With Color," which signifies the benefits of choosing a variety of fruits and vegetables with each meal. Along with varying texture and flavor, the mix of colors also provides multiple vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that cannot be obtained through just one source. Red fruits and vegetables like apples, watermelon, tomatoes, peppers, and beets promote heart health, improve memory, and reduce the risks of some cancers. To help eyesight, lower cholesterol, and reduce blood pressure, dietitians recommend selecting orange foods that are high in beta-carotene like cantaloupe, carrots, sweet potatoes, and mangos. Adding blue and purple foods (blueberries, prunes, and eggplant) will increase your intake of anthocyanins, which reduces cancer risks, boosts the immune system, and helps digestion. Spinach, green peppers, peas and other green fruits and vegetables combine with other nutrients to lower blood pressure, reduce cancer risks, and maintain vision.

The Division of Public Health's Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program provides nutrition education and a supplemental food program for pregnant or breast-feeding women and their infants or children under the age of five. The service is provided at no cost to eligible families, who are determined using income guidelines and nutritional risk screenings. Eligibility guidelines (effective as of 3/1/11) may be viewed on the Division of Public Health's website (www.scchealth.org). In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, St. Charles County is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

St. Charles County's WIC program is based at the Division of Public Health's office at 1650 Boone's Lick Road (in St. Charles). For information on the WIC program, please call (636) 949-7402.

The St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment is committed to the protection and enhancement of health and the quality of life for all members of our community. For information on programs offered and to discover ways the Department assists our community, please visit www.scchealth.org or call 636-949-7400.

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