

Smart Snacking

What Wise Wisconsinites Will Eat For Better Smiles

(NAPSA)—Here's nutrition news you can really get your teeth into: A balanced diet is essential for a healthy smile as well as good for the rest of you.

The problem is, only 7.5 percent of Wisconsinites eat the daily recommended vegetable allowance, and less than 13 percent eat the recommended fruit allowance.

Some Answers

To help your family enjoy nutritious food choices that can help lay the foundation for good oral health, Dr. Fred Eichmiller, Vice President and Chief Science Officer for Delta Dental of Wisconsin, suggests key foods for dental health and ways to incorporate them into snacking:

- **Leafy greens, such as spinach and kale.** These foods are full of vitamin K, which produces a protein that supports bone strength and acts as a shield to block substances that break down teeth. They also contain vitamin C, which strengthens gums and other soft tissues in the mouth.

In fact, kale is among the most nutrient-dense foods on the planet. A single cup of raw kale delivers 684 percent of vitamin K, 206 percent of vitamin A and 134 percent vitamin C recommended daily values.

Two tasty ways to get the health benefits of these greens are kale chips and spinach and tomato salad.

- **Apples, carrots and celery.** These crunchy foods have lots of fiber so they take a fair amount of work to chew, which increases saliva production in your mouth. Saliva is a powerful tool that can rinse away bacteria and food particles at the end of a meal. Carrots in particular are packed with vitamin A, which helps strengthen enamel.

Try carrot and celery sticks with blue cheese.

- **Milk, cheese and yogurt.** Dairy products from #WisconsinDairy are full of calcium, which is famous for making bones—and teeth—stronger. It hardens tooth enamel, strengthens your jawbone and extends the life of your teeth. These foods are also often fortified with vitamin D, which helps the body absorb calcium to boost bone mineral density.

Try yogurt with bananas, a cheese cubes and apple slices mixture or cauliflower nachos. Here's how:



Tasty treats that make the whole family smile can also help make those smiles brighter.

Cauliflower Nachos

- 1 head cauliflower, sliced
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- ½ teaspoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 pinch cayenne pepper
- 1 cup low-fat cheese
- Toppings of choice

Preheat oven to 425° F. Toss the cauliflower, oil and spices together in a bowl. Place on a baking sheet in one even layer and bake for 35 to 40 minutes. Once golden, remove from the oven and top with cheese. Place in oven for another 5–7 minutes. Add your favorite toppings such as guacamole and fresh salsa.

- **Bananas, sweet potatoes and tomatoes.** While it may seem like these foods don't have much in common, they all contain potassium. This vitamin boosts bone density and helps keep blood from becoming too acidic, which can lead to a loss of calcium in bones and teeth.

A good potassium-rich snack can be baked sweet potato chips.

- **Water.** Water is especially important for oral health as it keeps the mouth hydrated and rinses away some of the acids or bacteria that can build up on teeth. In addition to plain water, milk and sparkling water are good beverage options.

Learn More

For more oral health facts and recipes, go to www.deltadentalwiblog.com.