Menus and Variety

A cycle menu of three weeks or longer that changes with the seasons should be used. Entrees should not be repeated more than two times throughout the cycle, and the repetition of other food items should be minimal. This also helps with planning purchase orders and work schedules. Taking advantage of seasonal items may help to reduce food costs and can be used to link the menu to classroom nutrition education activities.

Frequency of Meals and Snacks

The number of meals or snacks you should serve is based on the number of hours you are open.

If you are open 9 hours:

You should serve at least one snack and two meals.

The information provided in this slide show is standard practices. Be sure to follow the specific regulations mandated by the state or county for your program.

Frequency of Meals and Snacks

The number of meals or snacks you should serve is based on the number of hours you are open.

If you are open over 9 hours:

You should serve two snacks and two meals, or three snacks and one meal.

Frequency of Meals and Snacks

You should also offer food at intervals of not less than two hours and not more than three and one-half hours apart.

- Breakfast or snack to children in morning care whether or not the child ate before arriving at the center
- Breakfast to the child in nighttime care if the child remains at the center after the child's usual breakfast time
- A snack or meal for children arriving after school
- An evening snack to children in nighttime care
- Dinner to children in nighttime care if the children are at the center after their usual dinnertime or have not had dinner

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Frequency of Meals and Snacks

Do you meet the nutritional needs of the children in your care:

- Children in care for 5 hours are served at least breakfast or lunch and a snack. If the children are hungry, feed them
- Children in care for more than 5 hours a day and up to 9 hours are served at least a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack and lunch. Or they could have breakfast, lunch and at least one snack
- Children who remain in care for 9 or more hours need more food. They could have breakfast (or a mid-morning snack), lunch, a mid-afternoon and a late afternoon snack
- Children still in your care after 4:30 or 5:00 p.m. need to be served a late afternoon snack. Most children are hungry at that time because it has been several hours since the mid-afternoon snack was served

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Menus and Variety

Menus should include foods from a variety of cultures.

Children should be offered foods from different cultures. Tasting and eating such foods will help children learn about different parts of the world, cultural diversity and different customs.

Menus and Variety

Offering foods from different cultures also encourages children to try new flavors and increases variety in menus.

- Sponsor an ethnic recipe contest among staff.
- Include common ethnic foods eaten by staff members on menus.
- Keep ethnic menus healthy by using low-fat cheeses and chicken or turkey.
- Ask kids to share a favorite ethnic food.
- Make it fun. Choose a country or ethnicity and have a celebration including regional food, music and fun activities.
- Invite family members of different cultures to eat with children. They can talk about the foods offered from their culture.

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Preparing the Menu

You should:

- Provide daily a minimum of one serving of Vitamin C fruit, vegetable, or juice
- Provide three or more times weekly foods high in Vitamin A
- Maintain at least a three day supply of food and water for emergency purposes based on the number of children in child care

Attention! Provide Vitamin C every day.

Provide Vitamin A 3 or more times a week.

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Preparing the Menu

You should serve at least one food rich in vitamin C daily.

Vitamin C has a major role in the body. It helps heal cuts, scrapes, burns and infections.

Vitamin C helps form collagen (connective tissue) and promotes healthy bones, teeth, skin and blood vessels.

Preparing the Menu

You should serve at least one food rich in vitamin C daily.

Good sources of foods rich in Vitamin C include:

cantaloupe, grapefruit, 100% citrus juice , kiwi fruit, jujube, guava, mango, oranges, papaya, strawberries, tangerines, Satsuma's, asparagus, Bok Choi, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, red cabbage, cauliflower, kale, kohlrabi, red and green peppers, potatoes, snow peas, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and turnip greens.

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Preparing the Menu

Serve fruit or vegetables as the daily vitamin C source most often (serve juice less often).

When juice is used to meet Vitamin C requirements, offer juice that is naturally high in Vitamin C (such as 100% orange, pineapple, or a combination of 100% fruit juices). Minimize juice to one, 4 oz. serving per day. Serve water at snack time as a beverage instead of or along with juice.

Preparing the Menu

Provide three or more times weekly foods high in Vitamin A.

Good sources of foods rich in Vitamin A include:

- apricots
- cantaloupe
- mango
- mandarin oranges
- peaches
- broccoli
- Bok Choi
- tomato puree and paste
- greens (mustard, collard, Swiss chard, and kale)
- pumpkin
- red bell peppers
- spinach
- sweet potatoes
- winter squash
- carrots

Preparing the Menu

Breakfast Boosts Brain Power

Why Breakfast?

- Eating breakfast can prevent overeating later in the day.
- Eating breakfast can improve a child's learning ability.
- Kids who eat breakfast learn better and behave better in school.

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Preparing the Menu

Each breakfast meal the child eats at the center should contain:

1. A fruit or vegetable or one hundred percent fruit or vegetable juice
2. A dairy product (such as milk, cheese, yogurt, or cottage cheese)
3. A grain product (such as bread, cereal, rice cake or bagel)

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Preparing the Menu

Each lunch and dinner meal the child eats at the center should contain:

1. A dairy product (such as milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, cheese)
2. Meat or meat alternative (such as beef, fish, poultry, legumes, tofu, or beans)
3. A grain product (such as bread, cereal, bagel, or rice cake)
4. Fruits or vegetables (two fruits or two vegetables or one fruit and one vegetable to equal the total portion size required.)

When juice is served in place of a fruit or vegetable it should be one hundred percent fruit or vegetable juice.

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Nutrition Guidelines

When meals are not provided by the center you should:

1. Notify parents in writing that meals they provide for their children should meet the daily nutritional requirements.
2. Provide adequate refrigeration for keeping potentially hazardous foods (such as meats of any type, cooked potato, cooked legumes, cooked rice, sprouts, cut melons or cantaloupes, milk, cheese).
3. Refrigerate foods requiring refrigeration at 45 degrees Fahrenheit or less and keep frozen foods at 10 degrees Fahrenheit or less until they are cooked or consumed.

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Nutrition Guidelines

Each snack or meal should include a liquid to drink.

1. The drink could be water or one of the required components such as milk, fruit or vegetable juice.

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Snacks/Treats from Home

You may allow parents to bring in snacks for all the children that may not meet the nutritional requirements on special occasions such as birthdays. The snacks provided by parents should be limited to **store purchased**:

- Uncut fruits and vegetables
- Foods prepackaged in original manufacturer's containers

Homemade treats are not allowed.

Special Dietary Concerns

Some children need to eat special foods or to follow a special diet.

This may be due to an allergy or chronic disease such as diabetes. Foods with special textures may be necessary because a child is developmentally delayed. The disability could make it hard for the child to chew or even swallow.

Establishing guidelines for managing a child's special dietary needs will help keep the child safe and ensure that the child's nutritional needs are met. The plan should outline how the child care staff, the child's parent and the child (when developmentally appropriate) will address the need.

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Individual Health Plan

In the case of food allergies, an individual health plan needs to address child care, family, and the child's responsibilities.

Child Care Responsibilities

1. Discuss with the child's parent the current management plan of the allergy. You need to know what foods to avoid, procedures for using the Epi-Pen (if indicated) or other medication, and what to do in case of an emergency. Parents and the child's health care provider will need to complete and sign a Food Allergy Emergency Form.

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Individual Health Plan

Child Care Responsibilities

2. Develop a training protocol that will ensure all new staff and volunteers know how to manage the child's allergy while in care, including prevention strategies and emergency response methods.
3. Make changes when needed to comply with the child's food allergy management plan.

Individual Health Plan

Family Responsibilities

1. Discuss with the provider any reactions the child experiences at home or any changes in the child's health
2. Complete all forms in an accurate and timely manner
3. Meet with child care staff to explain specific needs and demonstrate how to use the Epi-Pen
4. Obtain approval of the plan by the health care provider

Individual Health Plan

Child's Responsibilities (preschool age and older)

1. Do not share foods with other children
2. Tell an adult immediately if an allergic reaction is suspected
3. Know which foods to avoid and ask the adults when uncertain

Individual Health Plan

Contact a health specialist or your local public health consultant for help in formalizing a food allergy management plan or other special dietary needs.

A Food Allergy Statement and a **Food Allergy Emergency Plan** are included in the resources for this training.

Both forms should be signed by a health care provider.

This slide show is complete.

Click on next page to continue with the training.