



September 2011

Welcome to the seventh edition of **Healthy Carroll Families (HCF)**. It will continue to be provided in January, May, and September each year. HCF is an electronic media campaign, designed to help you take the next step in your family-based approach to achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.

HCF packets may be downloaded from our web site, [www.HealthyCarroll.org](http://www.HealthyCarroll.org) by individuals, agencies, schools, the news media – any interested party – at no charge. **We encourage you to make copies and distribute** this information to your clients, customers, students, PTA, family, friends...everybody! Each packet includes nutrition and physical activity information AND a simple recipe to help us eat healthier.

The September 2011 theme focuses on information useful for the school year. Our handouts are **Family Meals Matter**, which discusses the importance of eating together for health and nutrition benefits. The recipe, a **Simple Stir Fry** includes a template to create your own quick and healthy stir fry dinner, and **4 Straight Facts about Video Games and Fitness** provides information about the role of video games and fitness.

With this edition, we have added an additional attachment that includes information on *what you need to know* about the seasonal flu and *staying well* during the flu season. This attachment includes CDC's recommendations concerning flu immunizations. Also included are four tips for staying well, adapted from the *Eat Right Montana* project.

Emphasizing **Lifestyle, Education, Activity and Nutrition (L.E.A.N.)**, we first issued the *L.E.A.N. Carroll* call to action in April 2008. A resource guide for people who want to focus on healthy eating and a more active lifestyle was published in 2009 titled **HEALTHY CARROLL**. With information about weight and activity targets by gender and age, great places around our community to get active, farmers markets and much more, you'll find this useful too. Download **HEALTHY CARROLL** for free from our web site or call 410-871-6373 to obtain a printed copy.

Good luck and stay tuned for more information.

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## Straight Facts about Video Games & Fitness

Active video games have become very popular in the past few years. They are found in family living rooms and even in school gyms. The important question is: Can these games actually improve fitness in our increasingly sedentary society? The answer: **It depends!**

1. Active video games can provide moderate activity.

Based on independent research (not on company claims), games can expend more energy than just sitting on a couch watching TV or playing a regular video game. The energy expended is, however, highly variable from person to person. Overall, the calories burned by active video games are generally in the same range as moderate walking.

2. Active video games can help very sedentary folks.

One of the best uses for active video games may be helping very sedentary children and adults (including older adults) become more confident in their ability to do physical things. The games allow people to experiment in the privacy of their own homes - and to discover that they are able to enjoy moving their bodies in different ways.

3. Active video game measurements may be flawed for kids.

Several experts in kinesiology (the science of human movement) have questioned the accuracy of the measurements, such as BMI (Body Mass Index) and calories burned, reported in active video games. In particular, the BMI calculators on some games may not be using data that is accurate for children, whose BMI is calculated differently than adults.

4. Active video games are not a substitute for outdoor play.

*“Go outside and play”* had been the mantra of parents for generations, until the advent of what some are calling the ‘Playstation Generation.’ The work of researchers around the world is confirming the wisdom of the advice to be active outside. Several recent studies have noted the physical, mental, and psychological benefits of outdoor activities.

To learn more about activity opportunities, check out the Healthy Carroll Resource Directory found at [www.HealthyCarroll.org](http://www.HealthyCarroll.org)

For more information on parks and facilities visit: [ccgovernment.carr.org/recreation](http://ccgovernment.carr.org/recreation)

Source: Eat Right Montana September 2010

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[www.HealthyCarroll.org](http://www.HealthyCarroll.org)



# Family Meals Matter



October is **Eat Better, Eat Together** month, a national observance to remind us that there are many important reasons to make family mealtimes a priority - even during the busiest times of the year.

Children and teens who share family meals 3 or more times per week are more likely to be in a normal weight range, have healthier overall diets and eating patterns, and are less likely to engage in disordered eating than those who share less than 3 family meals per week. (Pediatrics, Volume 127, June 2011) Beyond health and nutrition benefits, family meals provide a great opportunity to get to know more about each other, and create stronger family connections.

It can be a big challenge to find the time to plan, and prepare family meals, then be relaxed enough to enjoy them- but it is worth the effort.

## Tips on how to have more family meals:

- Look over your family calendar and pick a time when everyone can be there for a meal; breakfast and lunch count too.
- Even if you can only manage to eat together once a week, it is a start. Work your way up to 3 times/week over time.
- Family meals can be shared at home, in a park, or at the ball field.
- A meal together doesn't have to be complicated or home cooked.
- Plan menus in advance with input from the family. Let family members have a chance to include their favorites.
- Use quick and easy cooking methods: stir-fry, microwave, grill or use a crock-pot.
- Collect fast and healthy recipes. Use plenty of fruits and vegetables, whole grains and lean protein. Be moderate in your use of fats and salt.
- Double up on your recipes and plan for leftovers.

## When the meal gets to the table:

- Keep mealtime pleasant and enjoy being together as a family without distractions. Turn off the television and cell phones, and talk.
- Give everyone a chance to talk, learn more about each other, plan family activities, etc.

**Start a family tradition of eating better by eating together!**



# Simple Stir-Fry

1 + 1 + 1 = Success

### Meat/Protein

**1 pound, choose one:**

- Chicken
- Beef
- Pork
- Tofu
- Shrimp
- Eggs (1-2 beaten)

### Vegetables/Fruits

**Choose as many as you like**

- Mushrooms
- Broccoli
- Green beans
- Cauliflower
- Asparagus
- Mixed frozen vegetables
- Carrots or sugar snap peas
- Peppers, onions, celery
- Pineapple
- Coleslaw mix

### Sauce

**Choose one**

- Low-sodium soy sauce
- Teriyaki stir-fry sauce
- Low-sodium soy sauce & chicken broth
- Peanut Sauce
- Any commercial Asian stir-fry sauce
- Curry Sauce

## Instructions:

1. Prepare meat/protein by cutting into bite-sized strips.
2. Prepare vegetables by washing and cutting into bite sized pieces.
3. Heat a 12-inch non-stick pan, cast iron skillet, or wok on high heat.
4. Add 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil or olive oil to pan and let it get hot.
5. Add meat/protein to pan and cook for 3-5 minutes or until cooked through. Put onto a clean plate.
6. Add chopped produce to pan (you may need to add a little water or oil) and stir-fry for 2-3 minutes.  
If vegetables begin to stick add a little water to the pan. You can also add a teaspoon or two of chopped garlic or ginger.
7. Add meat/protein back into pan. Add sauce or glaze of your choice and heat 1-2 minutes.
8. Serve over brown rice.



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[www.HealthyCarroll.org](http://www.HealthyCarroll.org)  
Recipe Source: Eat Right Montana March 2010

# Seasonal Flu Vaccine



Flu can cause severe complications including pneumonia, bronchitis, and sinus and ear infections. The flu can also make chronic health problems worse. Each year, on average, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized and 36,000 people die from seasonal flu complications in the United States. The CDC recommends a yearly seasonal flu vaccine as an important step in protecting yourself from influenza. The 2011 -2012 flu vaccine will protect against “influenza A” virus, “influenza B” virus and the “2009 H1N1” virus.

The vaccine is available as a “flu shot” or as a nasal spray. For the first time in 2011-2012, an Intradermal Flu Vaccine is available which deposits vaccine into the top layer of skin as opposed to the traditional muscle injection. The best time to get your vaccine is October or November, but getting vaccinated later in the year can still be beneficial.

## The CDC recommends the following individuals receive seasonal flu immunizations yearly:

- Anyone over 6 months old
- Pregnant women
- Adults 50 years and up
- Individuals with chronic medical conditions
- Residents of long term care centers or assisted living centers
- People who live with individuals of high risk category
- Health care workers
- Caregivers of children less than 6 months of age

## Seasonal Flu Vaccine is not recommended for use by the following groups:

- Is allergic to chicken eggs
- Has had severe reaction to influenza vaccine in past
- Has a history of Guillain-Barre’ Syndrome
- Is a child less than 6 months
- Has a moderate to severe illness with fever (you should wait until symptoms are gone)

**Flu Shot Side Effects** are mild and can include soreness, swelling or redness of arm, and fever. Side effects are usually gone in 1-2 days.

**Nasal Vaccine Side Effects** are runny nose, wheezing, headache, vomiting, sore throat, cough, aches, and fever. Side effects are usually gone in 1-2 days.

You can receive your influenza vaccination by contacting your primary care provider.

If unable to leave home due to a medical condition, contact a home health care agency such as Carroll Home Care (410-871-8000) and arrange for a home visit.



# Stay well during the upcoming flu season



## 1. Keep your hands clean

One of the best ways to stay healthy is to wash your hands properly and frequently. Washing your hands well will help protect you from all germs, including seasonal flu and the H1N1 virus. Wash hands for 15 to 20 seconds using soap and warm water. When soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand wipes or gel sanitizers.

## 2. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables

Produce is packed with the nutrients that your immune system needs to fight viruses and bacteria of all types. Go for all types of brightly color fruits and veggies. They will have more of the disease-fighting antioxidants, like vitamin C and beta-carotene. All varieties of produce including fresh, frozen, dried, canned (in juice) and 100% fruit juice offer health benefits.

## 3. Drink plenty of fluids.

Water is always a refreshing choice. Tea, especially antioxidant-rich green tea, can be a nice way to warm up and stay hydrated anytime. 100% orange or other juice is also good, but don't overdo it; a small glass a day is plenty. Drinking enough fluids (6 to 8 cups a day) will help keep your mucous membranes moist and able to fight off germs.

## 4. Choose nutrient-rich snacks.

During flu season, your body needs every drop of nutrition it can get, so don't waste your calories on 'empty' snacks. Skip the chips, cookies, and colas. Feed your body well with a variety of tasty nutrient-rich items. In addition to fruits and veggies, go for sunflower seeds, nuts, low-fat yogurt, and beef jerky.

For more information about seasonal flu  
visit us at [www.HealthyCarroll.org](http://www.HealthyCarroll.org)

Adapted with permission from *Eat Right Montana*

