



Vitamin Values

NUTRITION ACTIVITY #1

Summary:

The group discusses different foods and the vitamins they supply. A drawing helps identify how the body uses the basic vitamins and minerals. A person's outline is traced onto paper and then everyone glues pictures of the foods to the appropriate part of the body. As they do this they review the nutrients that foods supply and how they help us stay healthy.

Why Do This?

Everyone hears, "Eat your broccoli, it's good for you." But rarely does anyone know why it's good. This activity makes the connection between different food types, the nutrients they supply and how they help keep us healthy more apparent.

Some Helpful Information:

There are lots of different vitamins and minerals that help keep us healthy. Iron is a mineral that is in our blood. Without it we would all suffocate because it carries oxygen from our lungs to every cell in our body. Calcium is another mineral. It helps make strong bones and healthy teeth. Vitamin A helps our eyes stay healthy and see in the dark. Vitamin C is one that helps us heal scrapes and bumps. These and others help keep our body functioning optimally so we can stay healthy and get better quickly when we have an illness or injury.

These Vitamins A and C are most often found in fruits and vegetables. That is why it is healthy to eat lots of fruits and vegetables every day. Some of the vitamins our body needs (like B and C) dissolve in water. These vitamins get washed through our body and need frequent replacing for optimal health. Other vitamins are fat soluble (like A, D, E, and K). These do not leave the body as quickly. Our bodies can store up these so we don't need to eat them daily. It is possible to get too much of a vitamin or mineral, especially when taking them in pill or other supplemental form. Eating a balanced diet that includes a different vegetable or fruit five times every day is the best way to get the vitamins and minerals you need.

VITAMIN VALUES • TWIGS NUTRITION ACTIVITY #1

Time:

1 hour

Materials:

newsprint

magazines with pictures of foods

paper and crayons/pens

glue/tape

small samples of; orange, potato, cabbage, carrot, cereal, milk, broccoli, pasta, rice (can use pictures instead of the actual food)

Preparation:

1. Gather materials. Newsprint is inexpensive when roll-ends are purchased from a local newspaper.
2. Label each food with the vitamin associated with it.

Step by Step:

1. Hand out "Vitamin Values." Discuss the illustration. Ask "Where does Vitamin A come from? What part of our body does it help?" etc.
2. Hold up the food samples you brought and have the group tell you what vitamins each contains and what part of the body it helps.
3. Divide into groups and give each group a piece of paper. Choose a person from each group to be traced around.
4. Have the person lie down and trace around them onto the paper.
5. Go through the magazines and cut out pictures of foods that provide vitamins and minerals. If a picture can't be found have the groups make drawings of a food type.
6. Have each group glue the pictures to the drawing on the body part it helps.
7. Have each group share their picture-covered person with the other groups.
8. Have the entire group come up with a day's menu that includes five servings of fruit and vegetables. (Be sure at least three of the servings are vegetables.)

Extensions:

- Have everyone draw what they ate for breakfast and lunch that day and talk about what kind of vitamins they ate.
- Send home a paper that asks them to keep a record of what they eat in the way of fruits and vegetables each day until the next group meeting. This way their families will see the list and may learn about the "five a day" rule.

Handout • Nutrition Activity #1
VITAMIN VALUES

Eyes - Vitamin A
found in carrots,
oatmeal, green
leafy vegetables

Gums - Vitamin C
found in oranges,
kiwis, grapefruit,
berries, potatoes,
peppers

Muscle - Vitamin B
found in whole
grains, green
leafy vegetables,
bananas, prunes,
dried beans,
avocados

Blood - Vitamin K
found in green leafy
vegetables, fruit,
grains

Tissue - Vitamin E
found in multi grain cereal,
wheat germ, green leafy
vegetables

Bones - Calcium
found in green
leafy vegetables,
milk products

