Kids Growin Strong
... a member of California Garden Clubs, Inc.

EAT HEALTHY... GROW STRONG

Nutrients are the things we need to eat for **energy** (working and playing), for **growth** (building and maintaining the body) and for **protection** against infection. It is important that we eat the right foods to get the nutrients our bodies need.

The bright colors of plants please more than just the eye. The color comes from phytochemicals meaning "light" chemicals. These chemicals help plants to grow and stay healthy.

COLORS MAKE US STRONG

There are many different "light" chemicals. Chlorophyll is one of them. It gives plants their green color. Chlorophyll can capture energy from sunlight. We don't have chlorophyll in our bodies. That's why people aren't green. Because we don't have chlorophyll, we need to eat plants (or eat the animals that already ate plants) to get the suns energy to make our bodies work.

The red, yellow and orange coloring in plants comes from carotenoids. These phytochemicals protect the plant from the harmful effects of the sun while the chlorophyll is collecting light. When we eat plants rich in carotenoids, they may also act to protect us from the sun's harmful rays.

Scientists are just beginning to learn how phytochemicals help plants and people. Eating a variety of different colors can help make us strong.

M. Lucas 2004

fruits vegetables and grains • the building blocks of a healthy diet

AND YOU CAN GROW THEM YOURSELF!

NUTRIENTS: What's What

Nutrients	Foods that Supply Them	How They Are Used in the Body
Carbohydrates:		
starch	bread, crackers, noodles, cereal, grain, peas, potatoes, beans	provide energy; starch is a chain of simple sugars linked together; when starches and sugars break down, energy is released
sugars	honey, syrup, fruit, table sugar	
Fats	oils, butter, margarine, whole milk, cheese, eggs, meat, poultry, nuts, olives	provide energy; provide building materials for the body; provide insulation; fats can be stored and may be used later
Proteins	beef, pork, poultry, fish, eggs, milk, nuts	provide amino acids needed for cell growth and repair; a protein is a chain of amino acids linked together—20 different kinds of amino acids link together in different combinations to produce proteins; 12 amino acids can be made by the body, but the other 8 must come from food
Vitamins:		
A	green and yellow vegetables, fruit, egg yolks, liver, milk, butter	healthy eyes, hair, skin
B complex	meat, milk, liver, eggs, grains	releases energy from glucose; help heart and nerves function; healthy skin
C	citrus fruit, tomatoes, potatoes, green leafy vegetables, alfalfa sprouts	healthy bones, teeth, gums; resistance to infection
D	fortified milk, eggs, liver, tuna; made by skin in sunlight	healthy bones and teeth
E	vegetable oils, milk, grains	healthy cells
K	green leafy vegetables, tomatoes, grains	blood clotting; liver function
Minerals:		
calcium	dairy products, fish, eggs, green leafy vegetables	strong bones, teeth, muscles; blood clotting; nerve function
phosphorous	dairy products, beans, meat, whole grains, nuts, broccoli	bones, teeth, nerve and muscle function
potassium	bananas, fruits, meat, vegetables, milk	nerve and muscle function
sodium	table salt, most foods	nerve function; amount of water in body
magnesium	green leafy vegetables, milk, meat, potatoes, grains	nerve and muscle function; making proteins
iron	liver, red meat, egg yolks, nuts, beans, green leafy vegetables	oxygen in red blood cells
iodine	fish, shellfish, iodized table salt	controls rate at which food is used
zinc	meat, eggs, dried beans and peas, milk, green vegetables, eggs, seafood	healing wounds; making proteins
Water	most foods	needed for chemical changes and most body functions; needed in greatest quantity

Grain is really just **seeds**. Plants pack their seeds with energy and nutrients. For example, rice, oats, nuts and soybeans contain carbohydrates and fats for energy, protein for body building and vitamins and minerals for protection. What is good for the baby plants is good for us, too. Eat whole grains food at **EACH MEAL.**