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EAT RIGHT MONTANA

A coalition promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles

July, 2006

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the sixth issue of Eat Right Montana's 2006 Healthy Families Campaign. The summer is in full swing and the bounty of freshly grown, local produce is abundant and delicious. We'll take time this month to explore two topics that fit wonderfully under the subtopics of "local" and "healthy living."

This month's press release and *Eat Local* handout focus on Farmers Markets as a source of fresh, locally produced food. You'll find tips for locating farmers markets in your area along with information on the important role of Farmers Markets in the local food system.

The *Play Local* handout and the *Press Release* explore hiking on local trails as a physical activity option for the whole family. Tips for planning hikes, healthy hiking foods and proper hydration are all included in this month's information.

As always, Eat Right Montana thanks the generous donors listed at the left. Through their support, the production of these monthly Healthy Families packets is possible. Eat Right Montana is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of healthful eating and active lifestyles. New members to this organization are always welcome and may contact one of the individuals listed below for membership information.

Your feedback is important to us; please let us know what you think. For a complete archive of past Healthy Families packets, go to:

www.montanadieticassociation.org/promo.html

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Physical Activity



Enjoy Your Local Trails... Take A Hike!

Hiking is an activity that spans generations with participants ranging from small children to seniors. The health advantages of hiking are many and include controlling weight, maintaining mental health and decreasing the risk for many chronic diseases including heart disease and type 2 diabetes. With the added benefits of spending time with family and friends and exploring your local trails, hiking sounds like a wonderful option for staying physically active in your local community. Some hints for helping to make your hiking experience both enjoyable and healthy follow.

Choosing a Trail

It is important to take a good look at your whole group when choosing which trail to explore. The appropriate trail can mean the difference between tears and smiles – especially when hiking with children. Early in your hiking endeavors, choose shorter, loop trails that are not too hilly. Build up to those steeper and longer trails. A “jackpot” at the end of the trail, such as a cool mountain lake or stream to splash in, is often a great motivator. Keep in mind, when hiking with children, a positive first experience is critical to maintaining their interest in hiking.

Healthy Trail Snacks

Being properly fueled for your hike is an important consideration. Not eating enough or choosing foods of little nutritional value can leave you feeling weak, dizzy or nauseous. Here are some suggestions for nutritious and portable hiking foods:

- **Gorp:** The old “tried and true” hiking food. This is a mixture (often homemade) of dried fruits, nuts, seeds, whole grain cereal and sometimes chocolate bits!
- **Peanut Butter and Apple Slices on Whole Grain Tortillas:** Delicious, nutritious and crunchy!
- **Fresh Fruit:** Portability is key here – apples and oranges transport well.
- **String Cheese, Almonds and Dried Apricots**
- **Energy Bars:** These tend to be more expensive but are formulated with nutrients to replenish and refuel.



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Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate!

Hiking during the hot summer months can increase a person's risk of becoming dehydrated.

Dehydration negatively affects your overall feeling of well-being, saps your energy and leaves you listless on the trail. Even worse, dehydration can lead to very dangerous situations of heat-related illness such as heat stroke. So, drink up and get the most enjoyment and health benefit out of your hike. Here are some tips for staying hydrated.

- **What to Drink?** Water is usually the best choice. However, for individuals who are exerting themselves over long periods of time (>60 minutes), sweating and using lots of muscle energy, sports drinks (Gatorade™, Powerade™, etc.) may be best. Sports drinks are formulated with added electrolytes and glucose to replenish both the sodium and potassium lost in sweat plus the glucose helps replace the energy used by working muscles.
- **When and How Much to Drink?** Hydrate before, during and after your hike. Here is a recommended hydration strategy:

Time	Amount to Drink
Before Hike	2 cups (16 ounces) of cold fluid
During Hike	½ to ¾ cup of fluid every 15 minutes
Immediately After Hike	2 cups (16 ounces) of cold fluid for every pound of body weight lost
Later on and next day	Drink fluids liberally – can take up to 36 hours to rehydrate completely!

For beginner hikers, the following website provides many tips and hints to make your hiking experience most enjoyable:

Hiking for Beginners

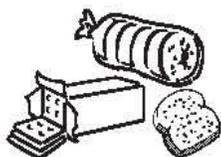
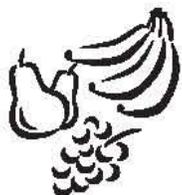
<http://www.compassmonkey.com/skills/browse.php/as/hiking/beginners>



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Healthy Eating



The Farmers Market **A Wonderful Way to Enjoy** **Fresh, Local Food**

Farmers markets are as much a part of summertime as flip-flops and tank tops. Across the nation, each summer, the tables and booths are set up and local farmers bring their freshly harvested bounty to be purchased by members of their community. Many farmers markets have evolved to include live entertainment and the wares of local artists and craftsman as well. Farmers markets are one of the simplest means of bringing locally produced food to a community.

Who Benefits from Farmers Markets?

Farmers Markets are a wonderful way of connecting the local food producer to the local food consumer.

- The farmer benefits: The expenses associated with transporting harvested food great distances to be sold are eliminated.
- The consumer benefits: Access to fresh, nutritious and delicious food is enhanced.
- The community benefits: Local dollars are kept within the community.



Why Shop at a Farmers Market?

There are many different beliefs and motivators that drive individuals to shop at a local farmers market. Some of these are:

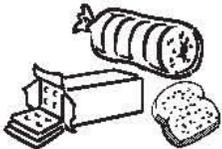
- Freshly harvested produce tastes better
- Enjoy the seasonal produce as it becomes available
- Support local farmers
- Protect the environment
- Know where you food comes from
- Nutritious choices
- Connect with your community



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Healthy Eating



How to Locate a Farmers Market in Your Area

The Agricultural Marketing Service of the United States Department of Agriculture has developed a very user-friendly online map to help individuals locate farmers markets in their area. Go to the following website to find your closest farmers market:

Find a Farmers Market in Your State

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/map.htm>

Farmers Markets and Low Income Households

The WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (WIC FMNP)

The WIC FMNP is associated with the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, also known as WIC. WIC serves eligible pregnant, breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding post-partum women, and infants and children up to 5 years of age. The WIC FMNP was established in 1992, to provide fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC participants. For more information on the WIC FMNP, go to:

WIC Farmers Market Program:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/FMNP/FMNPfaq.htm>

Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)

The SFMNP began in 2001 and provides low-income seniors with coupons that can be exchanged for fresh, locally grown produce at farmers' markets. For more information on this program, go to:

Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/SeniorFMNP/SFMNPmenu.htm>



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EAT LOCAL, PLAY LOCAL, LIVE HEALTHY
Celebrating Healthy Families 2006

Hiking: A Healthy Activity for the Whole Family

The dog days of summer are upon us. The temperatures are soaring and our personal energy levels fall as the mercury climbs. The remedy for these low-energy blues may be closer than you think. Local hiking trails are beckoning to be explored! With many of the most alluring trails located at higher elevations, slightly cooler temperatures, shaded trails and cool creek water just add to the pleasure of the experience.

The rising obesity rate in America is now common knowledge. The advice to eat less and exercise more continues to be broadcast. However, perhaps the perception of exactly what "exercise" is turns off many people. The concept of a painful workout is enough to sap the motivation to move for many. Hiking just may be that bridge to enjoyable activity for the hesitant mover.

The American Heart Association advises walking 30 to 60 minutes three or four times per week. The good news is that even low to moderate intensity walking can have short- and long-term benefits. These benefits are numerous and include controlling obesity, preventing heart disease and decreasing the risk for type 2 diabetes.

Hiking can also be a family activity. One of the most disturbing realities of the current obesity "epidemic" in America is the impact on our nation's youth. Nationwide, over 17% percent of children and teens are overweight and risk factors for "adult" diseases such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes are showing up in children. Hiking in the great outdoors can be part of the solution in helping children and teens become more active, and it has been found to have emotional benefits for children as well.

A recent study at Cornell University found that children deprived of regular access to nature were more vulnerable to stresses faced at school. Nature appears to have a calming and restorative effect on children, thus helping them to handle the stresses of life.

Finally, hiking on local trails can provide the spark that many people need to start a cycle of healthy living. As long as an individual is staying within their capabilities, the feelings of well-being that follow a walk in nature are abundant. According to the American Hiking Society, after a hike, "Your body will feel better, your head will feel clearer, and your stress level will have decreased. You'll want to hike again." Bottom line - take a hike.

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