Healthy Choices Count!

Did you make a New Year’s resolution? If you’re like many others who participate in this tradition each January, you made a goal to improve your health. **5-2-1-0** Healthy Choices Count can help! It’s an initiative to help children (it’s good for adults, too) develop good habits. Each number in the name stands for a health-related goal to strive for each day:

- 5 = Eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables.
- 2 = Keep recreational screen time to under 2 hours.
- 1 = Be active at least one hour a day.
- 0 = Limit sugary drinks. Choose water.

Change is not easy for most people. Try starting small and replacing an old behavior with a new behavior that is healthy – and enjoyable. For ideas and tips to meet your goals, go to www.iowajudniesstate.com/5210.

Take in the Sunshine

Getting outdoors and breathing in fresh air is important year round, not just in the spring and summer. Does going out in the cold and snow feel a bit daunting? Putting on the hats, mittens, and boots can feel like a lot of work, but it makes the cold temperatures more tolerable.

Try heading out on a sunny day; the sunshine is often an instant mood booster. If you’re really struggling, set a timer for 20 minutes and agree to stay out that long. Often everyone is having so much fun when the buzzer goes off, you won’t even want to go back in just yet!

Winter Squash

- Warm up with winter squash! It grows in Iowa and is in the gourd family. It’s different from summer squash in that it has a hard outer skin, called the rind, that is not eaten.
- Be a brave taster (like we say with the kids in class) and try different kinds of squash.
- Don’t worry about not using it right away; whole, uncut squash will keep in a cool, dark place for a month or longer.
- Enjoy the convenience of canned pumpkin. It’s good for baking or can be mixed with vanilla yogurt and topped with granola for a snack.
Squash

Squash are vegetables. Depending on the variety, they either grow on vines or bushes.

Squash originated in North America over 5,000 years ago. It was one of the “three sisters” planted by Native Americans, along with maize (corn) and beans. Squash was grown and eaten by early Europeans that settled in America.

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Squash are in the same gourd family as melons and cucumbers.

VARIETIES

Squash are commonly divided into two groups:
• Summer squash — the rinds are rich in beta-carotene and can be eaten. Zucchini is the most popular variety in the United States.
• Winter squash — usually have a hard rind which is not eaten. Some popular varieties are pumpkin, butternut, acorn and spaghetti squash.

Squash are grown in Iowa.

NUTRITION FACTS
• Fat free
• Cholesterol free
• Sodium free
• High in vitamin C

USES

Squash is often cooked, but some summer squash may be eaten raw (try with vegetable dip or add to salads). You may steam, sauté, grill or bake squash. Add to stir-fries, soups and casseroles. Bake in breads, cakes and pies. Sometimes the seeds are eaten.