



This newsletter is produced by the *Nutrition Education Network of Washington*, to enhance communication and coordination among those who educate Washington families about nutrition and food. *Energize* shares brief information about programs and materials that support healthful and enjoyable eating.

Tell Us What's New...

What's new with your organization? To submit news to *Energize*, call Martha Marino 206-817-1466, e-mail martha_marino@yahoo.com.

Deadline for submission is the last day of each month.

Subscription Information

Energize can be sent to you electronically each month. There is no charge.

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Energize is a publication of the *Nutrition Education Network of Washington*. Content of newsletter is up to the discretion of *Nutrition Education Network of Washington* staff.

For more information about the *Nutrition Education Network of Washington* or to access past issues of this newsletter, see <http://nutrition.wsu.edu>.



**ENERGIZE YOUR LIFE!
EAT HEALTHY-BE ACTIVE**

Information provided by Washington State University Extension's NEN of WA. This material was funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local DSHS Community Service Office.

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***This Month's Focus:* Lactose Intolerance and Calcium Rich Foods**

Lactose intolerance has been in nutrition news lately, in part because of the National Institutes of Health's Consensus Conference on the topic.



While MyPyramid includes milk group foods as part of a healthful diet, these same foods can be problematic for people who cannot digest lactose, the sugar in milk. In this issue of *Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators*, we take a look at calcium-rich foods, new recommendations, educational tools, and strategies for assisting clients meet their nutritional needs from this food group if they have trouble with milk.

Major Consensus Conference on Lactose Intolerance – In February, the National Institutes of Health gathered experts from across the U.S. to present the latest scientific evidence about lactose intolerance and to develop a statement about its prevalence, health consequences, and dietary management strategies. The group concluded that:

- The true prevalence of lactose intolerance is not known.
- Most people with lactose malabsorption do not have clinical lactose intolerance.
- Many people with real or perceived lactose intolerance don't ingest enough calcium and vitamin D, which may predispose them to decreased bone accrual, osteoporosis, and other health outcomes.
- Most individuals do not need to eliminate dairy consumption completely.
- Evidence-based dietary approaches are needed to ensure adequate intake of calcium and other nutrients found in milk group foods. Even among people with lactose intolerance, small amounts of milk, yogurt hard cheese, and lactose free foods are effective; non-dairy suggestions can be found at www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/milk_tips.html.

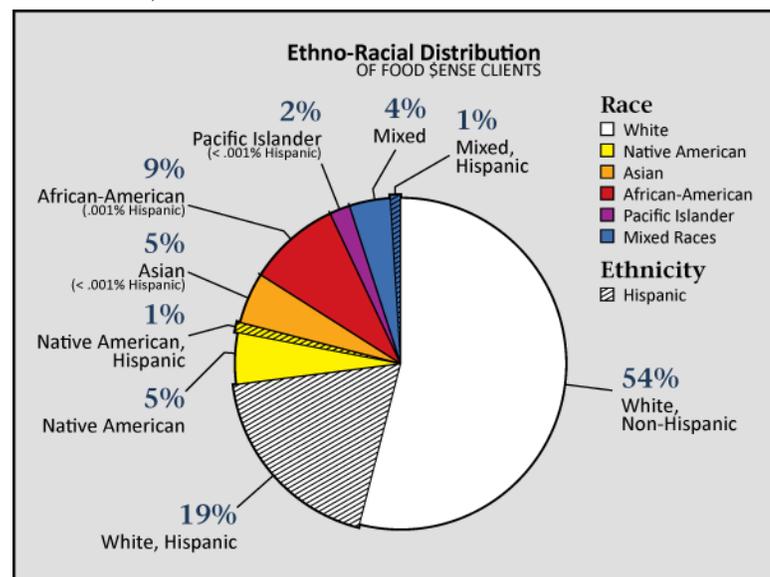
To read the draft consensus statement, go to <http://consensus.nih.gov/2010/lactosestatement.htm>.

What Is Lactose Intolerance? Lactose intolerance is the inability to digest significant amounts of lactose, a sugar found in milk and other dairy products. It is caused by a shortage of the enzyme lactase, which is

produced in the small intestine. Lactase breaks down the milk sugar into two simpler forms of sugar called glucose and galactose, which are then absorbed in the bloodstream. Infants of every racial and ethnic group worldwide produce lactase and successfully digest lactose provided by human milk or infant formulas. However, in many of the world's children, by age 3 or 4, their intestines gradually stop producing lactase although they generally do not experience symptoms until adolescence or adulthood. Most affected individuals – referred to as “lactase nonpersisters” – in the U.S. belong to minority groups. Not all people with lactase nonpersistence have digestive symptoms but those who do have lactose intolerance and may experience gas production, bloating, abdominal pain, and diarrhea. In lactose-free milk, lactose has been split into simple sugars and therefore can be digested by people with lactose intolerance. LactAid is a familiar brand; the local dairy Darigold also makes lactose-free milk. Most firm cheeses such as Cheddar, Monterrey Jack, Swiss, and others have little or no lactose because the helpful bacteria that give the cheese its flavor consume the lactose. Yogurt is tolerated by people who do not produce lactase because the “live, active cultures” act on the lactose, making it unavailable or less available to the person eating the yogurt. (Sources: National Institutes of Health Consensus Development Conference: Lactose Intolerance and NIH National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)

Soy Beverage Instead of Milk – Two soy beverage products now have about the same nutrients as milk, and can be consumed as a healthful substitute. Produced from soybeans, soy protein, vitamins and minerals, soy beverage is an option for people with lactose intolerance because it is sweetened with added sugar and contains no lactose. Some nutrition educators advise shaking the container before pouring as some nutrients may settle. Options for clients on the WIC Program are Pacific Ultra Soy and 8th Continent products, www.doh.wa.gov/CFH/WIC/materials/food/update-tofusoy.pdf.

Ethnicities and Races of Food \$ense Clients – Because people of color are more likely to have lactose intolerance, it is useful to know the ethno-racial distribution of low income populations. Based on the 2000 US



Census, the chart at left describes low-income populations reached through SNAP-Ed in 2009, where ethnicity (Hispanic only) appears as a striped overlay on various racial groups. (Contact: Kathleen Manenica, Food \$ense, WSU Extension, 253-445-4598, Manenica@wsu.edu)

Updated Estimates of Lactose Intolerance – It could be that the incidence of lactose intolerance is overestimated and that its prevalence in practical life situations is considerably lower. According to a recent study published in *Nutrition Today*, estimates for European Americans are currently 15% but may actually be about 8%, for African Americans the current estimate is 80% but may be 20%, and for Hispanic Americans the current estimate is 50% but may be 10%. The authors

write that health professionals need to be aware of the misrepresentation of currently estimated lactose intolerance rates and should continue to encourage individuals with lactose intolerance to consume dairy foods first to help meet key nutrient recommendations. (Source: Nicklas T et al, “Prevalence of self-reported lactose intolerance in a multiethnic sample of adults.” *Nutrition Today*, 44(5):222-227, September/October 2009.)

Russian, Spanish, English Handout on Milk - Washington State University Extension provides a free downloadable handout, *Milk: Get Your Calcium-Rich Foods* in three languages. The easy-to-read colorful handout for low literacy audiences tells why milk group foods are important, offers simple tips to incorporate them in diets of kids and adults, and lists serving sizes and amounts for various ages. These widely used handouts are available at <http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/em4932/em4932.pdf>

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New Northwest Handouts on Milk and Cheese – For caregivers of young children, colorful 4-page storybooks with fairy tale “helpers” bring tasty recipes and easy tips for enjoying nutrient-rich milk and cheese every day. Designed to use foods in the WIC food package, the storybooks will help all moms and families eat well and on a budget. The resources were developed by Oregon and Washington Dairy Councils with input from Oregon and Washington WIC Nutrition Program staff. www.eatsmart.org/item.asp?id=2444 and www.oregondairycouncil.org, click on “Milk and Cheese Storybooks,” price is \$0.20 each, available in Spanish.



Tips for Switching to Lower Fat Milk – Moms who want to help their children switch to low fat 1% milk or fat free milk can find tips and reassurance in a handout developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The copy and photos were field-tested with WIC mothers as part of emotion-based messaging education. To download the handout, go to www.eatsmart.org/client_images/milk%20switch%20handout.pdf.



1% or Less Campaign – Well before the 2005 Dietary Guidelines and MyPyramid recommended low fat 1% or fat free milk, the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) had been promoting the idea. CSPI’s “1% or Less Campaign” is a health education program that aims to reduce total and saturated fat by switching to lower fat milk. It focuses on milk because of its important contribution to health and disease, but whole and 2% milk are also big contributors to saturated fat in Americans’ diets. The campaign includes a handbook with camera-ready materials that can be localized, such as fact sheets, signs, handouts, and suggestions for taste tests. To order the handbook (\$65.00 per copy), go to www.cspinet.org/nutrition/1less.htm. To read a research article demonstrating the effectiveness of the program, go to www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1308411/pdf/pubhealthrep00032-0036.pdf

Revision of Calcium and Vitamin D Recommendations – New recommendations for Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs) for calcium and vitamin D are anticipated to be released by late summer, and will replace the 1997 DRIs. The final committee meeting of the National Academies of the Institutes of Health was held in March. For more information, see www.iom.edu/Activities/Nutrition/DRIVitDCalcium.aspx

IN THE MEDIA

Do Food Stamps/Basic Foods Cause Obesity? One might think so, based on media coverage of a study showing that women participating in the SNAP/Food Stamps/Basic Food Program (different names, same program) had higher Body Mass Index (BMI) than women not enrolled in the program. Researchers also found that BMI increased before, during and after participation in the program, but was greatest while during the program. The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC – see article below) says there is an important caveat not covered by the press. The authors didn’t control for food insecurity, and a number of research studies have found associations between food insecurity and obesity as well as low income and obesity. (Source: Zagorsky, JL and PK Smith. “Does the U.S. Food Stamp Program contribute to adult weight gain? *Economics and Human Biology* 7(2):246-258, July2009)

New Poverty Measure in 2010 Census Report – The Commerce Department’s US Census Bureau will develop a Supplemental Poverty Measure using new methodologies to measure how federal policies affect people living in poverty. The current poverty measure, which has been in place since 1964, is based mainly on a family’s or individual’s cash income. This measure will remain the definitive statistical measure. The supplemental measure will be more complex, including such additional items as tax payments and work expenses and will be designed to gain a better understanding of economic conditions and trends. The new measure will be released in the fall of 2011 at the same time that the official income and poverty measures will be announced from the 2010 Census. The supplemental measure will not be used to determine eligibility for government programs. To read more, go to www.census.gov/hhes/www/povmeas/SPM_TWGObservations.pdf

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TOOLS OF THE TRADE

New Newsletter on Obesity and Poverty – The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) launched a new electronic newsletter last month that focuses on obesity as it relates to low-income children and adults. Each issue will highlight research and reports from academia, government agencies and advocacy organizations that examine the interrelationship of obesity, income, food insecurity, federal nutrition programs, and federal food and nutrition policy. See http://frac.org/pdf/focus_poverty_obesity_1_mar10.pdf. To receive future newsletters (free), register at <http://org2.democracynaction.org/o/5118/t/1472/signUp.jsp?key=49>, at the bottom select the box for FRAC Focuses.

LOCAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

Local School Makes Good (Video!) – Lincoln Elementary in Mount Vernon, WA, is one of just four finalists in a national contest to create a video promoting food from farm to school. The contest, sponsored by the National Farm to School Network and the Lunch Box Project, challenged kids from kindergarten to college to complete the phrase, “Real Food Is...” Lincoln is the only Washington school in the final four, so we wish our local school all the best! Winners will be announced April 13. To see “Lincoln’s Journey to Real Food” and videos produced by other finalists, go to www.farmtoschool.org/vote.php.

WASHINGTON GROWN

Fresh This Month – When the warm, sunny weather arrived early, many home gardeners watched their rhubarb grow like gangbusters! A baby-boomer mentioned that she hums “This is the dawning of the age of asparagus” as she enjoys the vegetable that heralds the end of winter and the coming of spring. Now is a good time to put seeds in the ground for late spring bounty. Nutrition educators eager for their students to harvest vegetables before the end of the school year recommend planting seeds for lettuce, peas, snowpeas, chard (rainbow chard is fun), spinach, and carrots. And radishes, whose Greek name *raphanus* means “quickly appearing.” (Contact: Diana Dillard, Culinary Arts and Foods Instructor, Shorewood High School, Shoreline, WA, 206-361-4372, Diana.dillard@shorelineschools.org.)

DID YOU KNOW?

Can a spatula-wielding child fight obesity? A new magazine called *ChopChop* thinks so. The quarterly color publication’s inaugural issue will be distributed to 150,000 pediatricians’ offices and hospitals with the intent to lure elementary school age children into the kitchen. The first issue includes 11 recipes, cooking tips, descriptions of kitchen tools, and a food-related word search. What it deliberately does not include is any mention of childhood obesity or advice about what to eat and what to avoid. Recipes use inexpensive ingredients and include very simple instructions, such as “throw the shells away” after cracking an egg. The *ChopChop* advisory board includes children as well as health professionals. In time, a companion website will be developed, www.chopchopmag.com.



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