

Growing Healthy Families

WIC Newsletter • Fall 2016

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VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH • 1-800-649-4357 • www.healthvermont.gov



WIC benefits your family!

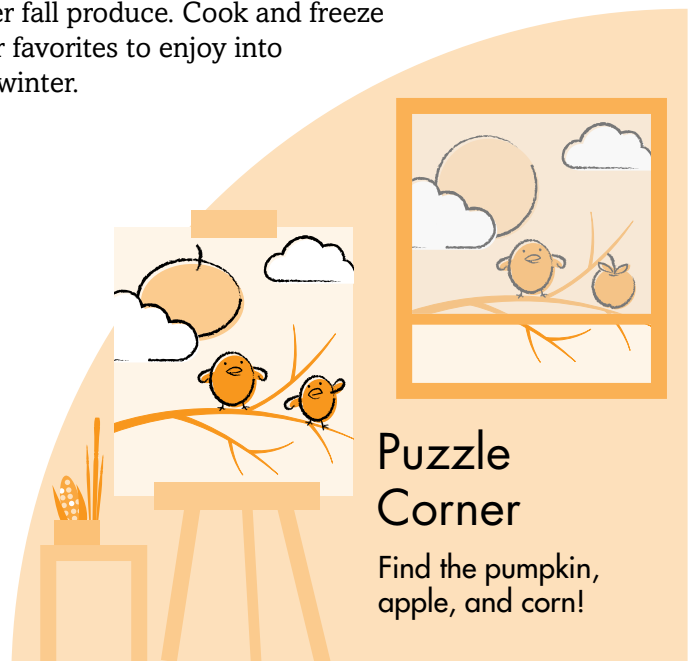
WIC offers many benefits to your family. One is Nutrition Education provided by knowledgeable WIC staff at your WIC appointments at least twice a year. In-between appointments, you also benefit from at least two additional Nutrition Education activities. These opportunities may be offered by your local WIC staff, community organizations, or through www.wichealth.org.

Remember that you need to complete a Nutrition Education activity between your regular WIC appointments to continue to receive your WIC family food benefits. Check the newsletter insert to find out what offerings are available in your community.

Look at your appointment card or call your local WIC office if you have questions about when you need to complete your Nutrition Education, or if you would like to know more about what fun, informative Nutrition Education activities are happening in your community!

Farm to Family coupons — have any left?

Remember to use your Farm to Family coupons before they expire on October 31. Some markets begin closing in late September. It's a great time to stock up on winter squash, apples, and other fall produce. Cook and freeze your favorites to enjoy into the winter.



Puzzle Corner

Find the pumpkin, apple, and corn!

Make half your grains whole

Adapted from www.choosemyplate.gov

Most Americans consume enough grains, such as wheat, rice, and oats and products made from these, but few are whole grains. WIC offers whole grains so that you can aim for at least half the grains your family eats to be whole grains. People who eat whole grains as part of a healthy diet have a reduced risk of some diseases.

Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel — the bran, germ, and endosperm. Examples include 100% whole wheat and whole grain bread and tortillas, oatmeal and brown rice, all of which are WIC-eligible foods. Refined grains (such as white bread and white rice) have been milled, taking away the bran and germ, and also removing dietary fiber, iron, and many B vitamins.

Try these tips to enjoy more whole grains:

- **Simple switches** Substitute whole grain for refined grain products. Eat 100% whole wheat bread or tortillas instead of white bread or tortillas, brown rice instead of white rice. WIC makes it easy for your family to try these foods — there are many different options available with your eWIC card.
- **Save time** Cook extra brown rice or whole wheat pasta to refrigerate or freeze to serve later. Whole wheat pasta cooks as fast as regular pasta. Brown rice can take a bit longer than white rice — try some of quick-cooking varieties WIC offers.

- **Mix it up** Use whole grains in mixed dishes such as brown rice or whole wheat pasta in soups, stews, casseroles or stir-fries.
- **Be a smart shopper** Choose foods with whole grains listed first in the ingredients — whole wheat, brown rice, oatmeal or whole oats, whole grain barley or corn, or whole rye. Foods labeled multi-grain, stone-ground, 100% wheat, cracked wheat, seven-grain, or bran are usually not 100% whole grain products.
- **Snack on whole grains** Snack on ready-to-eat, whole grain cereals such as toasted oat or shredded wheat. Whole grain WIC-approved cereals are marked in your *WIC Program & Food Guide*.

To learn more about whole grains and how many servings you and your family need each day, visit: www.choosemyplate.gov/grains

Rainbow Wrap Adapted from USDA Team Nutrition, www.teamnutrition.usda.gov

Enjoy whole grains and get all of your colors in one delicious wrap! Have all your ingredients ready and kids will have fun helping to create their own rainbow!

Go for color with veggies!

Red: chopped tomatoes, red pepper strips, radishes

Orange: carrot shreds, orange pepper strips, cooked sliced sweet potato

Yellow: corn, yellow pepper strips, sliced summer squash

Green: lettuce, spinach, cucumbers, avocado, grated zucchini, snow peas

Blue/Purple: shredded purple cabbage, radicchio

Other yummy additions

Try cooked beans (red kidney, black beans, etc. — mashed or whole), sliced or shredded cheese, red or green apple slices, toasted sunflower or pumpkin seeds.

Makes 1 serving

- 1 whole wheat tortilla
- 1–2 Tbs. cream cheese, hummus, Ranch dressing, pesto or other favorite spread
- 1 cup veggies

Get started: Lay tortilla flat.

Paint the sky: Put favorite spread on tortilla.

Get colorful: Use veggies to create a rainbow on tortilla, leaving room around edges.

Roll it up: Fold in sides of tortilla. Start at one end and roll tortilla up tight.

Cut in half and taste the rainbow!

Nutrient analysis per serving (with hummus and mix of veggies): calories 150; protein 7 grams; carbohydrate 31 grams; fat 3.5 grams; sodium 310 milligrams, fiber 6 grams.



Ask Dr. Lewis First

Q: What is happening in my child's brain in the first 3 years of life that makes those years so important for his development?

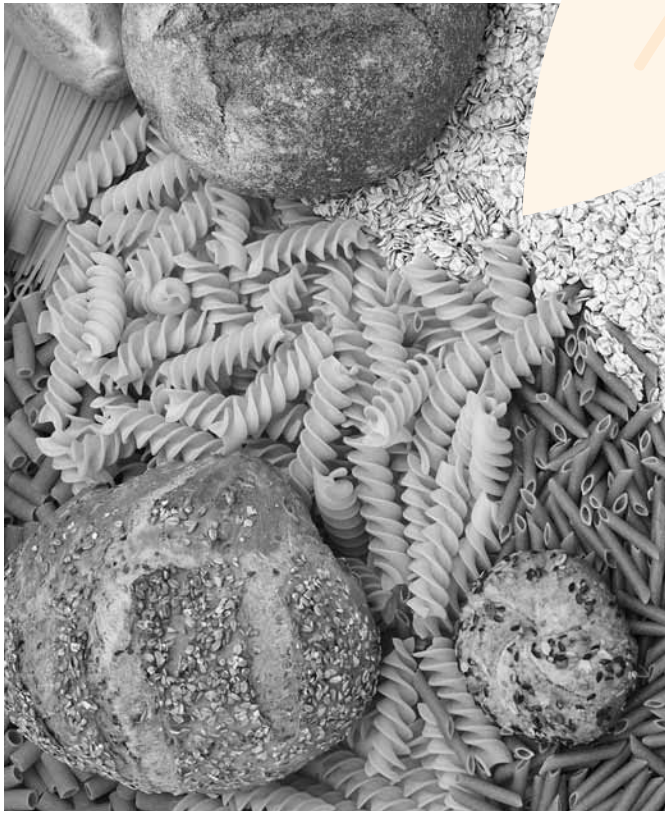
Dr. First: Brain development is a complex dance between the genes babies are born with and the environment in which they experience life which then determines how they will develop and cope with the stressors they will encounter as they get older. What is even more remarkable is that 75% of the brain's growth occurs in the first three years. Years two and three are when the brain does the most developing to instill mental and physical abilities, confidence and self-worth into a child so he or she can deal with adversity in later years.

An infant's brain grows best in a stable, safe, and nurturing environment. Parents play a key role — the more protective and nurturing the home environment, the more the brain grows and develops healthy coping skills. When early experiences cause an infant or toddler to feel insecure, not loved or nurtured, then unhealthy coping skills result which set the child up for a tough road in life as he or she gets older.

Promote the type of brain growth that sets a positive course for a child for the rest of his or her life by providing an environment that advances a child's physical development through proper nutrition (e.g. ample fruits and vegetables, dairy products, protein and healthy grains), and plenty of exercise through active play. Introduce toys that generate discovery, creativity and curiosity such as blocks, puzzles, and books. Avoid having them passively watch videos that do not foster creative thinking. Talking frequently with and reading to your child every day is the most important thing you can do to grow the language skill areas of the brain. There are no limits to how much love and attention you can give your children at this age.

Hopefully this information will grow and develop your own understanding of why your role as a parent is so critical — and how important that role is in your child's first three years of life.

Dr. Lewis First is Chief of Pediatrics at the University of Vermont Children's Hospital.



eWIC food news

WICShopper App

WIC has expanded the selection of foods available with the eWIC card. Download the free WICShopper App to your Smartphone to scan items at the store to find out if they are WIC-eligible. Check out a new feature that lets you take a picture of your most recent receipt listing your remaining food balance for the month.



WIC Approved shelf tags

While shopping, look for Vermont WIC Approved Food shelf tags to help you find foods on your Family Food Benefit list.

Vermont WIC
Approved Food

New guide coming

Watch for a new *WIC Program & Food Guide* coming out this fall — pick up a copy at your next WIC appointment, or find it online on the WICShopper App or www.healthvermont.gov.



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WIC Newsletter • Fall



The tints of autumn...a mighty
 flower garden blossoming under
 the spell of the enchanter, frost.

~John Greenleaf Whittier



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