Healthy Protein Alternatives to Meat

Going meatless once a week may reduce your family’s risk of preventable conditions like cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity. Producing meat is also a big contributor to pollution, so eating less meat means healthier, cleaner air for your family to breathe!

Alternative sources of protein include: dairy, eggs, peanut or almond butter, nuts, beans, lentils, whole and sprouted grains, and green leafy vegetables (broccoli, spinach, romaine lettuce, kale).

- Serving alternatives to meat provide an opportunity to introduce your child to new foods.
- The amount of protein your child needs is based on his or her body weight. The average 3 year old needs about 20 grams every day, while the average 5 year old needs about 25 grams.
- A slice of cheddar cheese has nearly 4 grams of protein.
- Two slices of sprouted bread with peanut butter and jelly have about 20 grams of protein (5 in each slice of bread and eight for 2 tablespoons of peanut butter).
- A meal that includes beans, quinoa, lentils, or orzo can easily be anywhere from 15-25 grams of protein. With just one meal, your child can reach the recommended daily allowance (RDA)!
GOAL: Go meatless one day a week. Check out www.meatlessmonday.com for additional tips and ideas.

Try This!

Healthy Recipe: Tasty Tiny Tostadas
Line up some mini whole-grain basket-shaped tortilla chips and fill them with vegetarian nonfat refried beans. Toss in a few black beans for even more protein, fiber and texture, and sprinkle on a little reduced-fat cheese. Bake or microwave your tostadas until the cheese melts, then top each basket with diced tomatoes or mild salsa.

Did you know? A banana is the perfect grab-and-go snack – packed with nutrients, and rich in fiber. Bananas also contain a good source of potassium, vitamin C, vitamin B6.