

# Making School Meals Healthier – Fat

## Menu Planning Goals for Fat and Calories

- ☞ A weekly lunch menu averages 30% of its calories from fat.
- ☞ School lunch entrée 12-15 grams of fat.
- ☞ Between 600-900 calories per lunch per day.

## Menu Planning Practices to Lower Fat

- ✓ Serve butter or margarine on the side when bread/rolls are served.
- ✓ Offer pre-portioned condiments (e.g., butter, peanut butter, salad dressings).
- ✓ Use low-fat cheeses such as part-skim mozzarella, ricotta, etc., to replace all or some of the higher fat cheeses such as cheddar or American.
- ✓ Plan low-fat food items in a menu when a high-fat food item is planned.
- ✓ Plan fried foods less frequently on the menu.
- ✓ Encourage low-fat (2%, 1%) and skim milk.
- ✓ Offer reduced calorie or non-fat dressings.
- ✓ Minimize the use of high-fat sauces and gravies.
- ✓ Replace higher fat desserts with fruit.
- ✓ Calculate grams of fat for the menus served.

## Purchasing Practices to Lower Fat

- ✓ Purchase 80/20 ground beef or leaner.
- ✓ Buy lower-fat versions of processed meats (hot dogs and cold cuts).
- ✓ Purchase prepared meat products such as nugget and patties with no breading.

## **Recipe Modification Practices to Lower Fat**

- ✓ **Eliminate:**
  - ▶ Added butter, oil, and margarine.
  - ▶ Skin from chicken before cooking.
  - ▶ Deep-fat frying of meats, French fries, and tater tots.
  
- ✓ **Reduce:**
  - ▶ Grease from all cooked meats by draining thoroughly.
  - ▶ Added fat by using non-stick spray or paper liner instead of oil or shortening in baking pans.
  - ▶ The fat in soups and stews by refrigerating and skimming the solidified fat.
  
- ✓ **Substitute:**
  - ▶ Reduced-fat mayonnaise and salad dressings for regular ones.
  - ▶ Plain low-fat yogurt for ½ of mayonnaise or salad dressing.
  - ▶ Par-skim Mozzarella cheese for at least ½ of the cheddar cheese or American cheese in recipe or sandwich.
  - ▶ Whole grain breads and muffins for croissants and doughnuts.

## **Food Preparation Practices to Lower Fat**

- ✓ Prepare items from scratch so that you can control the amount of fat.
- ✓ Eliminate butter or margarine from cooked vegetables.
- ✓ Use lean ground poultry in combination with ground beef or pork.
- ✓ Used cooked dry beans or canned beans in entrees to help meet the meat/meat alternate requirements.

Adapted from: A Game Plan for Success in Implementing the Dietary Guidelines, Nutrition Education and Training Program, Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Programs, ND Dept. of Public Instruction, Bismarck, ND.