

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**‘Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right’ during National Nutrition Month**

EAU CLAIRE, Wis. –March 12th, 2014– The Eau Claire-City County Health Department encourages you to join the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics during National Nutrition Month to a campaign that encourages Americans to return to the basics of healthful eating. Initiated in 1973 as a week-long event, “National Nutrition Week” became a month-long observance in 1980 in response to growing public interest in nutrition. This year’s theme, “*Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right*”, focuses on combining taste and nutrition to create healthy meals.

Many factors play a role in the foods people choose to eat. Social, emotional, financial, and health factors influence our choices, but the foods we *enjoy* are the ones we eat most. It is important to find a balance between choosing foods that we like with those that provide nutrients needed to stay healthy. This year’s theme reinforces that the two choices are not mutually exclusive.

A healthy eating pattern starts with an emphasis on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein foods. Here are a few practical ways to add nutrient-rich foods and beverages to your daily diet from the food and nutrition experts at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

- Top foods with chopped nuts or reduced-fat sharp cheddar to get crunch, flavor and nutrients from the first bite.
- When eating out, look for nutrient-rich choices, such as entrée salads with grilled seafood and low-calorie dressing, baked potatoes topped with salsa, grilled vegetables and reduced-fat cheese and yogurt parfaits made with strawberries and blueberries.
- Drink nutrient-rich, low-sugar beverages such as low-fat or fat-free milk or 100-percent fruit juice.

In Eau Claire County, 74.8 percent of adults reported eating fewer than 5 servings of fruits/vegetables per day. “It is essential to eat a fresh, healthy and balanced diet in order to maintain a healthy weight and prevent chronic disease,” says Beth Draeger, Eau Claire City-County Health Department WIC Director. Numerous studies have shown a clear link between the amount and variety of fruits and vegetables consumed and rates of chronic diseases, especially cancer. Beth adds, “National Nutrition Month is a great time for everyone to take a look at their diet and make positive changes.”

Visit the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ National Nutrition Month website ([www.eatright.org/nnm](http://www.eatright.org/nnm)) to find a variety of helpful tips, fun games, promotional tools and nutrition education resources, all designed to spread the message of good nutrition around the “*Enjoy the Taste of Eating Right*” theme.

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