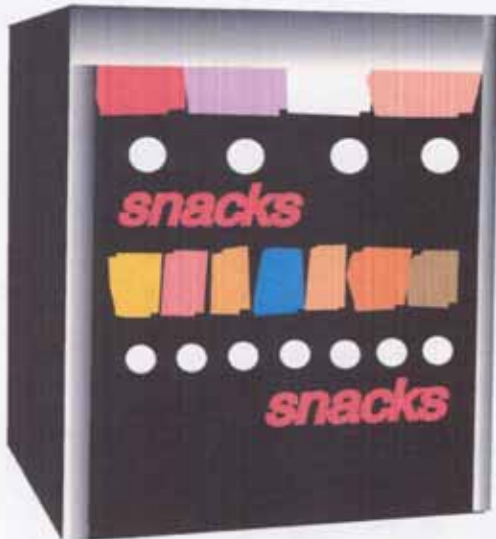


Vending Machines – Use the Right Sense



We all know the lure of the vending machine. The fancy packages and fun buttons are there to tempt us when hunger strikes. Unfortunately, this easy way to get a snack can often give you more than you bargained for on your waistline.

Many of the foods inside a vending machine are calorie dense and loaded with sugar, fat and sodium, not to

mention artery-clogging trans and saturated fats. The more often you depend on foods from them, the more stringent you need to be when making your choice about which button to push. Here are some common sense tips to help you use your cents wisely:

- Make your own vending machine drawer at work or in your locker at school. Keep healthful, shelf-stable items such as bottled water, raisins and other dried fruits, dry whole-grain cereal boxes, healthful trail mix, whole-grain crackers and canned fruits on hand.
- Some vendors are offering better choices. Know what is available in machines that are near you. It is best to take a look at them when you are not hungry so you can make a better decision when your stomach begins to grumble and you are caught without a snack.
- Keep a log of when you use the vending machine and what you eat (include calories too!). This will help you be aware of what you are consuming. It may also help you plan ahead better if you see the same times and days being logged.
- Give yourself a vending budget, and stick to it. Try not to keep loose change around or limit the amount that you carry.
- Be familiar with the list on the right so you know what to choose and what to skip.

Best Vending Choices

Overall, the better vending choices are whole foods: fruits, nuts, 100% fruit juices, skim milk and whole-grain cereal bars.

Here is a list to look for:

Foods:

- Nuts/peanuts
- Dried fruits
- Canned fruits
- Trail mix
- Whole-grain cereal bars
- Pretzels
- Baked chips or crackers

Beverages:

- Bottled water
- 100% fruit juice
- Diet soda
- Tea (unsweetened or diet)
- Skim milk

Worst Vending Choices

Items that are high in fat and/or sugar are the least healthful choices. Often these items contain artery-clogging fats and are nutrient and fiber void. They are for emergency use only!

Here is a list:

Foods:

- Cookies, especially high fat
- Candy bars
- Chips
- Crackers, especially high fat
- Cakes and snack cakes
- Sausage meats

- Sandwich crackers

Beverages:

- Sugared soda
- Sugared punch
- Whole milk



The ABCs of 5-9 A Day

Eating more fruits and vegetables is a positive step toward better health and weight management. There are 26 letters in the alphabet – if you use one of these tips every two weeks you will have a healthier year!

- A = Apple** – Keep a crisp one in your refrigerator – it will be ready for a sweet snack.
- B = Banana** – A banana can make a breakfast on the run, snack or a dessert.
- C = Carrots** – Buy carrot matchsticks or grated carrots and use them on tossed salads.
- D = Dried fruit** – Keep raisins on hand for snacks and cereal toppers. Try cranberries, blueberries, dates or plums.
- E = EVERY DAY – EVERY MEAL** – Shoot to have at least one fruit or vegetable with every meal, every day!
- F = Fruit!** Keep plenty of fruit on hand so you enjoy it every day.
- G = Grapes** are available all year. Wash and put in a bowl; no muss, no fuss!
- H = Herbs** – Use fresh herbs such as cilantro, parsley and basil to brighten your salads, soups and pasta dishes.

I = Italian – Don't know what to make for dinner? Go ITALIAN! Pasta with tomato sauce is always a good idea. If you really want to earn a nutrition star, add some mixed vegetables to the sauce.

- J = Juice** – 100% fruit juice is a good option when on the go.
- K = Kale** – This nutrition powerhouse is easy to use; use it in pasta, stir-fry and soup dishes.
- L = Lettuce** – Keep a bag of lettuce on hand at all times for salads; try assorted greens.
- M = Melons** are low in calories, delicious to eat and good sources of fiber.
- N = Nuts** – Sprinkle a little on your salads, yogurt parfaits and fruit salads for crunch.
- O = Oranges** are very versatile and they keep for a long time in your refrigerator. Eat them plain or toss them into salads.
- P = Potatoes** – Keep potatoes on hand for baked potatoes, baked potato salad and quick mashed potatoes.
- Q = Quick** – The microwave will cook most vegetables very quickly!
- R = Raspberries** are a delicious

treat that can be used in cereal, yogurt and fruit salads.

- S = Strawberries** – Fresh strawberries are a delight. Remove their tops, cut them in half and store them in the fridge. They will be ready to go for snacks, to top cereal and yogurt.
- T = Tomatoes** – Grape tomatoes are great for kids and singles; they keep well in the refrigerator and require no slicing.
- U = Ultimate** – The ultimate topping for salads is oil and vinegar. These are cheap, come in fun varieties and most important, don't contain lots of added sodium the way commercial dressings do. Use oil sparingly!
- V = Vegetables** – Purchase an assortment of frozen vegetables. Keep these on hand for easy meals – stir-fry dishes, pasta, soups and more. They require no chopping, peeling or dicing and they have a longer shelf life than fresh.
- W = Watermelon** is available almost all year and it comes seedless, too. Keep it sliced for a cool treat.
- X = eXplore** – Take time to pick out a new fruit or vegetable in season.
- Y = Yams** or sweet potatoes make a great snack. Microwave them and top with reduced-calorie syrup or cinnamon.
- Z = Zucchini** – This delicious summer squash can be used in muffins, omelets, stir-fry dishes and kabobs.

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Your Burnett County Nutrition Education Program Educators have been trained to help individuals and families stretch food \$\$ by creating spending plans and preparing low-cost nutritious meals. For this FREE service, call or stop by our office.

*Julie Yezek,
WNEP Educator
715-349-2151*

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