

50 TIPS

FOR TEACHING
NUTRITION CONCEPTS
IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION



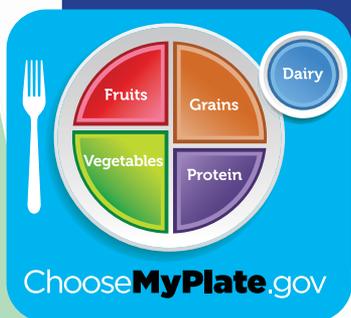
GENYOUTH.
FUELING POTENTIAL. EMPOWERING PLAY.

 **SHAPE** SOCIETY OF HEALTH
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As a physical education professional, you know that healthy eating and physical activity go hand in hand—and you play a vital role in helping students make the connection. That's why GENYOUth teamed up with SHAPE America – Society of Health and Physical Educators, with input from National Dairy Council, to create these practical tips to help P.E. teachers integrate nutrition concepts into their routines. The tips that follow were suggested by educators from across the country—P.E. teachers just like you!

What Are Nutritious Foods?

USDA's MyPlate illustrates the five food groups that are the building blocks for a healthy diet:



Dairy: Get your calcium-rich foods.

Fruits: Focus on fruits.

Vegetables: Vary your veggies.

Grains: Make at least half your grains whole.

Protein Foods: Go lean with protein.

Team Up for Nutrition!

1. Work with your school's nutrition professionals to post a Nutrition Fact of the Week in a visible location, such as in a classroom, the gym, or the cafeteria.
2. Work with your school's nutrition professionals to arrange a taste test of possible offerings in the cafeteria. Taste tests are a fun way to introduce students to new foods.
3. Invite a local farmer to visit your class to talk about the benefits of healthy eating, or go on a virtual tour. Many local dairy councils have virtual tours available on their website. Find your local council here: bit.ly/DairyCouncil

TIP #2

Taste tests are a fun way to introduce students to healthy new foods.



4. Invite a guest speaker — such as a registered dietitian — to speak to students about healthy eating choices. Following the presentation, invite the speaker to participate in physical activity with your students. Find a local registered dietitian involved in the Kids Eat Right program through your local dietetic association or at bit.ly/FindANutritionExpert.
5. Remind students that food is fuel, and it provides energy needed to be physically active and perform at their best. Check out this “Fuel Up First” activity focused on the relationship between nutrients and the variety of activities students perform throughout the day: bit.ly/FuelYourGameDay.

Say ‘Yes’ to Good Nutrition

6. Celebrate National Nutrition Month in March. Share with students the messages of nutrition, activity and fun. Visit bit.ly/AboutNationalNutritionMonth for ideas.
7. Urge students to “rethink their drink.” Water and dairy milk are excellent choices.
8. Brainstorm and post a list of foods which are good sources of nutrients but that many students are lacking in their diets like calcium, potassium, fiber and vitamin D (nutrients of concern).

Add More Vegetables to Your Day

9. Vary your veggies: Eat vegetables in a variety of rich colors.
10. Ask students to talk about a vegetable that is native to their country or heritage, or that is a staple for their family.
11. Try something new! Introduce items that students might not be aware of — such as artichokes — to spark an interest in new foods.

Focus on Fruits

12. Try starting every day by including fruit with breakfast.
13. Add important fiber to your body by eating a piece of fruit instead of drinking fruit juice. Whole fruits provide you with valuable fiber that juice often doesn't.
14. Smoothies are a great way to incorporate more fruit into your diet, and they are loaded with vitamins, minerals and protein (especially when made with yogurt and/or milk).

Make Half of Your Grains Whole

15. Look for nutrition labels that list a whole grain as the first ingredient (e.g., whole wheat, whole oats) and swap out your sandwich bread for a whole grain bread.
16. Choose a whole grain cereal for breakfast. Oatmeal is a favorite, but you can try other whole grains like buckwheat or millet.
17. Enjoy a multigrain bowl by layering a mixture of grains like quinoa, barley or wild rice with some colorful veggies and cheese. Add your favorite protein and a dash of hot pepper sauce for a delicious and nutritious meal.

Get Your Dairy Today

18. Milk contains many nutrients essential for students' growth and performance. Share this handout with your students:
 - 9 Ways Milk Can Help Your Body: bit.ly/13WaysMilk
19. Milk, yogurt and cheese provide more than calcium. They are a nutrient powerhouse of essential vitamins, mineral and high-quality protein needed to support sustained energy and maximum growth potential. Share these handouts with your students:
 - 9 Ways Yogurt Can Help Your Body: bit.ly/9WaysYogurt
 - 8 Ways Cheese Can Help Your Body: bit.ly/8WaysCheese

TIP #19

Dairy is a nutritious powerhouse that supports sustained energy and maximum growth potential.



20. Remind students that dairy milk's high-quality protein contains essential amino acids, our body's building blocks, needed to help boost recovery and muscle growth post workout. Check out the National Dairy Council's research overview on milk as a recovery drink at bit.ly/IsMilkGoodForYou.

Use Variety to Your Advantage with Proteins

21. Snack on nuts and seeds, which are good sources of protein. Be sure to follow the recommended serving size, or the calories will add up quickly.
22. Remember that beans and peas, including chickpeas, are another source of protein. They're low in fat and provide a good source of fiber.
23. Add protein to carbohydrate snacks like crackers, pretzels and chips by eating them with dips, such as yogurt, hummus and nut butter.

Make Good Food Choices at School ... and at Home

24. Encourage students to reach for a nutritious snack that contains carbohydrates and protein after participating in vigorous physical activity. Examples include yogurt, fruit with nuts or nut butter, whole-grain granola bars with milk, and fruit/whole-grain granola parfait with yogurt.
25. After vigorous exercise, rehydrate with water or dairy milk.
26. Discuss what makes a healthy breakfast or lunch and how those nutritious foods can help students feel better throughout the day.

Use MyPlate as a Teaching Tool

27. Display a MyPlate poster on the gym wall. Download it at bit.ly/MyPlatePosters.
28. Use MyPlate to talk about the school lunch menu for the day. Discuss as a class which food groups are included.
29. Create a MyPlate bulletin board with fun facts and pictures of foods from all of the food groups. Download graphics at bit.ly/MyPlateGraphics.

Be a Positive Role Model

30. Model nutritious food choices. Let students catch you snacking on a banana or an apple or drinking milk.
31. Show and share with students what you bring for a snack and/or lunch and describe how it helps fulfill the daily recommended MyPlate servings.
32. Share some of your favorite seasonal/cultural recipes with your students and describe how they fit into the recommended MyPlate guidelines.

Take Physical Activity, Add Nutrition, Mix Vigorously

33. Offer a Nutrition and Fitness Class to secondary school students. The class should feature a variety of activities to improve fitness and enhance nutrition, and should offer information and hands-on experiences in preparing, planning and cooking nutritious snacks or meals.
34. Challenge students to keep a Food & Physical Activity Log for two days. Then, have them reflect on their logs, and discuss calories in and calories out.
35. Play Pass the Protein, in which students call out the name of a lean protein food as they catch a ball.
36. Play the Parachute Game. Use foam fruits, vegetables, whole grains, proteins and dairy foods on the parachute, explaining each food as it is incorporated into parachute activities.

TIP #35

Play **Pass the Protein**, in which students call out the name of a lean protein food as they catch a ball.



37. Play Match the Food Group Relay with relay groups of two or three students. Ask a food-group question, and have teams discuss possible answers. Then, on your signal, have one student from each team run to the team's bucket, search for the correct response, and return to the team.
38. Play Food Group Ball Bounce. Place cards across the room with photos of different types of foods on them. Have students use a bouncing ball to move across the room and find foods from each food group.
39. Pick a nutritious food to discuss with students during stretches or cool-down time. Ask students to describe the food's qualities (e.g., taste, smell, texture) and to identify which food group it belongs to.
40. Hold a healthy-food spelling warm-up activity. Here's how: Tape the letters of the alphabet on the four gym walls. Ask students to use locomotor skills (e.g., galloping, skipping, jogging) to reach the letters and "spell" the names of healthy foods.
41. Reward positive-choice nutrition habits with "line-up" incentives. For example, you could say "Line up if you ate breakfast this morning."
42. Focus on a letter of the alphabet each week and discuss nutritious foods that begin with that letter.
43. Have students choose nutritious food items to represent group names. Examples: Cool Cucumbers or Awesome Apples.

Invite Families and the Community to the Table!

44. Hold a health fair for families and community members. Include your students in the planning process.
45. Provide a wellness calendar to students and their families. The calendar should include physical activity ideas and healthy-eating tips.

46. Send a monthly newsletter to parents and students, offering advice on physical activity and family games. Include suggestions for healthy snacks.
47. Encourage students to go grocery shopping with their parents to help teach their families about MyPlate and the healthy nutritional habits they have learned.

Champion the Benefits of Eating Well

48. Remind students that breakfast is an important start to the day because it gives the body energy and helps wake up the brain for classroom activities. Find great breakfast tips at bit.ly/RoadToBreakfast.
49. Teach students the health benefits of water. For more information, visit bit.ly/AboutWaterCDC.
50. Do you have what it takes? Encourage students to take the pledge to become a MyPlate Champion by promising to eat a variety of healthy foods and be active every day. Download the MyPlate Champion certificate here bit.ly/NutritionInfoForKids.

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www.GENYOUthNow.org | www.shapeamerica.org

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