

happy national nutrition month!

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## School Nutrition Newsletter March 2017

### National Nutrition Month

by Katherine Ancona, R.D.

February is finally here, which means it's time to highlight our Fruit of Happy National Nutrition Month! Here at Whitsons we are excited to celebrate the start to a new healthier you.

The theme for 2017 is to "Put Your Best Fork Forward." The main purpose of this theme is to provide the idea that you always have the power to make your life more positive and healthier. Through small changes started this month and continued on, you can make improvements to your health forever!

So how do you put for best fork forward? First, aim to fill half your plate with more fruits and vegetables. By increasing the amount and variety of produce in your diet, you are sure to give your body the essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber that it needs. Secondly, try to make sure that half your grains are whole grains. Whole grains can be whole-wheat breads, whole-wheat pastas, brown rice, and whole grain cereals; aim for items with 3 grams or more of fiber per serving. Other important foods to include on your plate are: low-fat and reduced fat dairy, protein foods including seafood, lean meats, nuts, and poultry, as well as healthy fats such as corn oil, olive oil, and sunflower oil. Lastly, try and drink more water. When you stay hydrated you allow yourself to concentrate, and your body is then able to perform at its best. These are all excellent items to include in your daily meals.

There are also some actions we can take while we are eating as well. It is important to start each day with a balanced breakfast. Also, try putting your fork down in between each bite; this will allow you to fully enjoy and appreciate each bite of food. It takes about 20

minutes for our stomachs to communicate to our brains that we are full, so definitely take the time to sit down and take it all in.

Many of us are always busy and thinking about the next thing that we have to get done, but recognizing where your food is coming from, and all of the steps it took to make it to your plate is sure to help you slow down. Evidence has also been found that helps to show that making dietary and healthy lifestyle changes today, can help prevent diseases in the future. Many people find it helpful to look for activities that all family members can enjoy; try activities together including various sports, bike riding, walking, or swimming.

When you combine these practices, both you and your entire family are on the way to being the healthiest you can be!

Here at Whitsons we are also fully onboard with supporting local and fresh ingredients for our meals. So when we put our best fork forward, we are constantly looking ahead to see what will benefit you and your family.



### Get to Know the Whitsons Registered Dietitians

Meet our Registered Dietitian, Katherine Ancona. Katherine is a nutrition expert and an advocate

for healthy eating. She received her Master's Degree in Food, Nutrition, and Culinary Science from Clemson University in 2013. While attending Clemson University, she led a team of undergraduate students in modifying recipes to be healthier. She is most interested in wellness, pediatric, and culinary nutrition, and she also serves as a volunteer for the Kids Eat Right Campaign. Katherine completed her dietetic internship at Oklahoma State University in 2014, and began working for Whitson's Culinary Group as a Registered Dietitian in August of 2016. Katherine is available to answer your questions about nutrition. Just email her at [nutrition@whitsons.com](mailto:nutrition@whitsons.com).