

August is recognized as National Immunization Awareness Month and with school starting very soon, immunization shots are very important for a healthy school system. To protect the health of all Americans, it is important that we obtain maximum immunization coverage in all populations. Check out www.cdc.gov/vaccines for more information about why to immunize and/or to get a child, adolescent, catch up, or adult schedule. You can also contact the Clay County Health Department for this type of information. So, remember to keep those shots update for a healthy future.

Vitamins

Last month we concluded looking at the three nutrients that provide energy for the body. This month we will begin looking at the other three that do not provide energy, but help regulate vital body processes. We will start with vitamins. They are compounds that help regulate digestion, absorption, and metabolism of other nutrients. Vitamins do not provide calories, but some of them speed up reactions that produce energy in body cells. Of the 13 vitamins that play a key role in good nutrition, only one –Vitamin D- is manufactured by the body. The rest must be consumed from food. Vitamins are classified into two groups: water-soluble and fat-soluble.

Water-soluble vitamins include Vitamin C and the eight B vitamins and as their name suggests, they dissolve in water and pass easily into the blood during digestion. These vitamins are not stored in the body and excess amounts are excreted in urine, so it is necessary to supply the body with food that contains these vitamins. Vitamin C helps protect against infection, helps heal wounds, promotes healthy teeth and gums, just to name a few things and are found in citrus fruits, tomatoes, broccoli, potatoes, and peppers. B vitamins, each having a different role, help change glucose to energy or fat, produce energy from carbohydrates, fats, and proteins, keep skin healthy, essential to carbohydrate, production of red blood cells, and normal growth, just to name a few. In short, B vitamins are essential for utilizing the energy taken into the body.

Fat-soluble vitamins are absorbed and transported by fat; they include Vitamins A, D, E, and K. Vitamin A has many roles but a few are keeping eyes moist, promote the use of calcium and phosphorus in bone formation, and possible cancer protection. It can be found in milk, green vegetables, carrots, deep orange fruits, and liver. Vitamin D, promotes absorption and use of calcium and phosphorus; essential for normal bone and tooth development. It can be found in milk (which it is added to), eggs, salmon, beef, margarine, and is produced in the skin upon exposure to sunlight. Vitamin E aids the transportation of oxygen through the blood and protects against the destruction of red blood cells. It is found in vegetable oils, nuts, seeds, and wheat germ. Finally, Vitamin K is essential for blood clotting and assists in regulating the blood calcium level and is found in spinach, broccoli, eggs, liver, cabbage, and tomatoes. Fat-soluble vitamins are stored in the body's fatty tissue, the liver, and the kidneys. So it is possible to have too many stored in the body, which can lead to a toxic or damaging effect on the body. As long as you do not supplement your diet with large doses of fat-soluble vitamins, I do not think you would have to worry about that though.

From the Nurse's Desk

Starting this month we will be getting notes only from one of the nurses each month and remember, if you have a child in school, this is an area to get important information about maintaining a healthy school environment for your child and every student in Clay County Schools.

Nurse Teia: As summer winds down, families are getting ready for the new school year.

In addition to school supplies and new clothes, parents of children with chronic health issues need to make extra preparations to assure that their child is taken care of safely at school. Things you need to do if your child has a chronic health issue (asthma, diabetes, allergies, ADHD, migraines, heart condition, etc.):

*Meet school nurse and inform her of your child's health condition

*Fill out proper paperwork

*Bring medication to school, in original container (no medication is supplied by the school)

*Bring in doctor's statement that states medication is required to be taken during school hours

*If your child has an allergy, bring statement from physician listing his/her allergies

*If your child requires an EpiPen or inhaler please bring them to the school nurse on the first day

JUST A REMINDER TO PARENTS:

-If your child has frequent aches and pains, please bring in Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc., we do not supply ANY medication.

-Please let the school nurse know of ANY health condition that your child may have.

Next Time

Minerals will be up next, as we look at the multitude of minerals and the primary functions that they provide for the body. Until then, keep up the efforts for a healthier you.