



SESSION 5: WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

Investigating how salt sneaks into food
Making a meal to share with family and friends
Food Explorers graduation

KEY MESSAGES :

- Too much salt, or sodium, can be hard on our health.
- Salt makes our body hold on to water, which puts extra pressure on our heart and can cause high blood pressure.
- Try to choose products that are low-sodium.
- Herbs and spices are a great way to flavor food instead of using too much salt.
- Eating home-cooked foods is a smart way to limit salt in your diet.
- Have fun making foods at home!

The last session is a time to review all of the key messages students have learned during the Food Explorers course.

PREPARATION :

- Purchase all ingredients necessary for the turkey sweet potato chili.
- Print copies of the recipe for each student.
- Have take-away containers for students to bring food home to their family members if they can't attend the celebration.
- Make graduation certificates for every student (found on the Food Explorers website).
- Order each student a gift of cooking equipment (such as a cutting board, Curious Chef knife, grater, apple slicer, apron, etc.)

- Compile a little booklet with all the recipes used in the course, along with the Food Explorer Key Messages.
- Make copies of post-test survey for evaluation.
- Review Sodium and Your Health sodiumbreakup.heart.org/sodium-411/sodium-and-your-health/

EQUIPMENT NEEDED :

- All paper products for celebration dinner (table cloths, plates, bowls, cups, silverware, napkins)
- 2 large stock pots
- Cutting boards
- Knives
- Vegetable peeler
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Can opener
- Spatulas
- Colanders
- Scissors

SESSION 1

- Real food is found in nature, not processed too much, and filled with nutrients to make you healthy.
- Highly-processed food is made in a factory, stripped of most of its nutrients, contains too much sugar, salt, and/or fat, and has many artificial ingredients.
- The more a food is processed, the less healthy it is.
- Food companies try to trick kids (and their families) into thinking highly-processed foods are healthy.
- Don't be fooled by packaging with super-heroes, exaggerated claims, and asterisks *(the little star that leads to information companies don't want you to see).
- Read labels closely, and try not to eat foods that have lots of ingredients you can't pronounce.
- Do your best to snack on real foods that you make yourself.

SESSION 2

- Companies spend a fortune marketing sodas to young people.
- Athletes don't become great by drinking soda (even though it looks that way in the commercials).
- Soda slows you down!
- Sugar gives you a big burst of energy but then makes you crash.
- When you drink sugar, your brain can't tell you that you're getting full.
- Sugar-sweetened beverages are the largest contributor to childhood obesity in the USA.
- In addition to weight gain, too much sugar can cause diabetes and tooth decay.
- Eating or drinking too much sugar makes it difficult to concentrate at school.
- There's a difference between natural sugars (found in fruits and vegetables) and added sugar. Natural sugar is combined with fiber and nutrients your body needs. Added sugars have ZERO benefit.
- Food with zero benefits (no nutrients) are called EMPTY CALORIES.
- A calorie is a measurement of energy and a young person should consume 1600 to 1800 calories a day.
- A Super Big Gulp has 572 calories—more than a meal should have!
- It's OK to have a sugar-sweetened beverage sometimes, but think of it as a dessert, not a drink.
- It's great to hydrate with water.

- 2 serving bowls for salad
- Serving spoons
- Ladle
- Dressing bottle
- Juicer
- Water pitchers

SET UP :

- Have students assist in setting a long, lovely table for themselves and their friends and family to eat the graduation dinner. Use tablecloths, nice napkins, etc to make it feel special.

DISCUSSION 

We've talked about too much sugar and fat in our diets, but there is one more ingredient that is easy to eat too much of.... any guesses?

SALT! (or another term is sodium)

? Where do we get lots of salt from?

- Fast foods
- Pizza
- Chips
- Highly-processed snack food

? What's the trouble with too much salt?

Salt makes our body hold on to water, which puts pressure on our heart and can cause high blood pressure.

? What are some ways to reduce the amount of salt we eat?

- Choose products that are low-sodium (unsalted or lightly salted nuts and chips, etc.)
 - Show the low-salt chips for today's dinner.
- Use herbs and spices to give flavor to food
 - Today, we'll be cooking with several spices to give our meal flavor—cumin, chili powder, and garlic.
 - Invite students to smell spices.
- Eating home-cooked foods is a smart way to limit salt in your diet.

But before we start cooking dinner, let's review what we've learned over the past 5 weeks in Food Explorers.

? What will you most remember from our investigations and time in the kitchen?

SESSION 3

- A healthy breakfast is essential to a great day!
- A winning breakfast includes protein, whole grains, fiber, and not too much added sugar.
- Whole grains are different than refined grains—they are more nutritious and give you energy for longer.
- You need at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Try to eat a wide variety of colors...eat a rainbow!
- MyPlate can help you create balanced meals.

SESSION 4

- Fast food should be a treat, not a regular part of our diet.
- Fast food restaurants spend billions of dollars trying to convince young people to eat unhealthy food.
- Fast food restaurants use portion distortion—the amount of food served is much more than you need in a meal.
- Fast food is high in calories, salt, and the harmful kind of fat.
- A small amount of the right kind of fat is good for our bodies, but too much of the wrong kinds of fat will lead to heart disease.
- One McDonalds meal has more fat than children should eat in an entire day!
- If you do go to a fast food restaurant, make smart choices—drink water, don't order a large size of anything, and try fresh fruit or veggies if available.

SESSION 5

- Too much salt, or sodium, can be hard on our health.
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ADMINISTER THE FINAL SURVEY

If possible, have one assistant ask and record the open-ended questions at the end (students usually have great things to say but don't want to take the time to write).



COOKING

Today we are making a one-pot wonder—Turkey Sweet Potato Chili! A soup is an easy way to eat lots of delicious veggies. There is plenty of peeling and chopping to do and others can help set the table for our celebration meal.



During the celebration meal, have student detectives share with their family and friends what they have discovered in Food Explorers.

At the end of the course, each student should receive:

- A Food Explorers certificate
- A compilation of recipes used in the course, along with a list of Food Explorer Key Messages
- A gift of cooking supplies (if budget allows)