

State of Alaska
Department of Health & Social Services

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NEWS RELEASE



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Governor Murkowski proclaims March as Alaska Nutrition Month

Research shows that good nutrition lowers people's risk for obesity, many chronic diseases, and some types of cancer.

(Juneau, Alaska) Governor Frank H. Murkowski today proclaimed March 2005 as Alaska Nutrition Month. Cancer, heart disease, diabetes and stroke are among the leading causes of death in Alaska, and almost a third of all heart disease and cancer deaths can be attributed to what people eat. Current research shows that good nutrition lowers people's risk for obesity and many other chronic conditions, including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, osteoporosis and some types of cancer.

The *2005 Dietary Guidelines for all Americans*, published in January 2005 by the U.S. Department of Health and Social Services, encourages individuals to eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy products and lean protein foods.. Fruits and vegetables are an important component of the guidelines, which recommend consuming two cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables per day for a reference 2,000-calorie diet.

Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables each day. In particular, select from all five vegetable subgroups (dark green, orange, legumes, starchy vegetables and other vegetables) such as spinach, kale, broccoli, winter squash, pumpkin, carrots, black beans, lentils, kidney beans, peas, green beans and corn several times a week.

“In many rural village stores in Alaska, fresh fruits and vegetables are often in short supply, of poor quality due to long shipping times, or are too expensive to purchase on a regular basis. Fortunately there are other ways to get your five cups of fruits and vegetables. Frozen, canned and dried fruits and vegetables are just as nutritious as fresh. Most canned and frozen fruits and vegetables have the same amount of nutrients as fresh, serving per serving,” said Richard Mandsager, M.D., DHSS Public Health Director.

Join Alaska in celebration of Alaska Nutrition month by preparing the recipe of the month, Gold Rush Salad, a delicious and simple way to combine fresh, canned, and dried produce. Just one half cup serving of this salad offers a rich source of Vitamin A, C and fiber for minimal calories. This salad was prepared at the Alaska Legislative Health Fair, on February 15, 2005 in Juneau, Alaska. The recipe can be found at the Division of Public Health “Topic of the Month” website:

<http://health.hss.state.ak.us/dph/>. The website also serves as a resource for Alaskans looking for nutrition information during March or for ideas on how to promote nutrition in their communities.

Contact Janelle Gomez, Community Nutritionist for the State of Alaska, at 907-269-8446, or Erin Peterson, Public Health Specialist at (907) 269-8181 for more information.