

## Spotlight: The New Food Packages Promote Healthier Choices

With the introduction of the new food packages we have a unique opportunity to promote healthier eating habits. Because the new food packages reflect current nutrition practice, we can reinforce the message that WIC is a special supplemental *nutrition* program. The way we communicate the new changes to WIC staff, clients, and providers is very important.

### How the new food packages promote healthier eating habits:

- **Align with Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 which promotes eating more fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and fat reduced milk and milk products.** Fresh fruits and vegetables and whole grain bread/tortillas were added as new food groups to the food packages. Baby foods-fruits, vegetables and meats were added as a new food group for infants. More whole grain cereals were also added as options. Juice is reduced for women and children, and eliminated for infants to provide whole fruits in the food packages instead.
- **Provide less saturated fat, cholesterol, total fat, and sodium.** Eggs, cheese, and milk were reduced in all of the food packages to limit fat and cholesterol intake. Whole milk is limited to one year old children, unless medically indicated for children and women.
- **Provide more choices for clients with diverse cultures.** Clients can use cash value to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables of their choice. Canned beans were added as an option for dry beans, and tortillas for bread.
- **Follows current infant feeding practices.** Baby food-fruits, vegetables, and meats are not available until infants turn 6 months old which follows the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations. The formula for infants is reduced at 6 months to allow for baby foods.
- **Exclusively breastfed infants and their mothers are promoted and supported with the largest packages.** Exclusively breastfed infants receive baby food meats (others do not) and twice as much baby food fruits and vegetables as other infants. Exclusively breastfeeding mothers receive the largest quantity of food.

### The key nutrition messages WIC has for clients are:

- Eat more fruits and vegetables
- Lower saturated fat and cholesterol intake
- Increase whole grains and fiber
- Drink less juice
- Babies are meant to breastfeed

## **Infant Feeding**

We can now tell clients and providers that the infant food packages have been updated to support the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendation on infant feeding and introduction of solid foods.

According to the AAP, breastmilk or formula is all a baby needs to support growth and development for the first 6 months of life. Introducing solids before 6 months does not increase calories or growth rate, but does substitute less nutrient dense foods. Likewise, solids lack the protection that human milk gives breastfed infants.

Infants are born with nutrient stores of iron and zinc proportional to his weight at birth. For most babies, this store lasts around 6 months, at which point they need solids foods to supply these nutrients. Most infants start with iron-fortified infant cereal, and progress to other solids foods: fruits, vegetables, and meats. Meats are an important source of iron and zinc.

### **Starting baby foods at 6 months, instead of at 4 -6 months**

Around 6 months of age, babies go through developmental changes that prepare them to eat solid foods. With the changes in the infant food packages we have an opportunity to reinforce the message to begin solid foods when all developmental signs of readiness are present.

A baby's developmental signs of readiness include when baby:

- Sits up alone or with support
- Holds head steady and straight
- Opens his mouth when he sees food coming
- Keeps tongue low and flat to receive a spoon
- Closes lips over the spoon and scrapes food off as the spoon is removed from the mouth
- Keeps food in the mouth and swallows, rather than pushing it back out onto the chin (the baby has outgrown the tongue-thrust reflex)

### **Fruit juice offers no nutritional benefits for babies**

The AAP has concluded that fruit juice offers no nutrition benefit for babies younger than 6 months old, and juice offers no advantage over whole fruits for infants older than 6 months. Too much juice may fill up a baby, and other food may not be eaten. Instead of giving juice, whole fruits and vegetables prepared for baby are a better alternative.

### **Offer Age Appropriate Amounts of Formula for Partially Breastfed Infants**

Fully formula fed babies will receive more formula at 4 months to correspond with the increased nutritional needs of infants this age. Formula amounts vary, but typically a 4 -6 month old infant will drink about 6 - 8 ounces of formula, 4 - 6 times per day. At 6 – 11 months, formula amounts are reduced. Since the food package provides more nutrients through solid foods, less formula is needed.

[Adapted from Colorado WIC Materials]

## **Explaining the New Food Package Changes**

Beginning August 2009, WIC clients will receive new food packages. Their shopping lists will contain new foods with new amounts. Clients will need an explanation regarding the changes to their shopping lists.

First, you may want to ask clients if they have heard about the new food package changes starting in August. You can explain some of the changes they will see on their shopping list. Here are some talking points to use:

### **Infants 0-5 months old**

All infants 0-5 months

- Will receive all of his/her nutrition through breastmilk or formula and will receive other foods when he/she is developmentally ready.

Exclusively breastfeeding infants only

- Will receive mother's priceless breastmilk

Fully formula fed infants only

- Will receive the about the same amount of formula for 0-3 months, and a little more at 4-5 months

Partially breastfed infants

- Will be provided breastfeeding support and receive only the formula he/she required to supplement breastmilk

Infants requiring an exempt infant formula (Class II or III)

- Will need a medical documentation form completed by their health care provider

### **Infants 6-11 months old**

All infants 6-11 months

- Will receive baby foods-fruits and vegetables in place of juice

Exclusively breastfed infants only

- Will receive baby foods-meats

Formula fed infants and partially breastfeeding infants only

- Will receive less formula to make room for baby foods.

Infants requiring an exempt infant formula (Class II or III) only

- Will need a medical documentation form completed by their health care provider

## Children and Women

All children and women:

- Will receive cash value for fresh fruits and vegetables
- Will receive whole wheat/whole grain bread (except non-lactating post-partum women)
- Will receive an option of 4 cans of canned beans/peas (15-16 oz) substituted for dry beans/peas or peanut butter
- Will receive more whole grain options for breakfast cereal
- Will receive less milk, juice, eggs, and cheese to achieve a healthier balance of nutrients in their food package

Children and Women requiring a formula (Class I, II or III) only

- Will need a medical form completed

Children and Women with lactose intolerance and requesting more than 1 lb cheese substituted for milk (3 lb for exclusively breastfeeding women) only

- Will need a medical documentation form completed

Note: Medical documentation form requirements for health care providers and qualifying conditions are covered in the Spotlight: Qualifying Conditions and Medical Documentation.

## Foods Package Types and Amounts

If clients inquire about the specific amounts or types of foods they will receive in their food package and shopping list, below are tables listed by category you can review with them:

### FULLY BREASTFED INFANTS

Foods	Fully Breastfed Infants 0 – 5 months	Fully Breastfed Infants 6 - 11 months
WIC Formula	0	0
Infant cereal	0	24 oz
Baby food fruits and vegetables	0	256 oz (64-4 oz jars)
Baby food meat	0	77.5 oz (31-2.5 oz jars)

### PARTIALLY BREASTFED INFANTS

Foods	Partially Breastfed Infants A: During the first month B: 1-3 months C: 4-5 months	Partially Breastfed Infants 6-11 months
WIC Formula	A: Up to 104 fl oz reconstituted powder B: 364 fl oz reconstituted liquid concentrate or 384 fl oz RTF or 435 fl oz reconstituted powder C: 442 fl oz reconstituted liquid concentrate or 448 fl oz RTF or 522 fl oz reconstituted powder	312 fl oz reconstituted liquid concentrate or 320 fl oz RTF or 384 fl oz reconstituted powder
Infant cereal	0	24 oz
Baby food Fruits and vegetables	0	128 oz (32-4 oz jars)

### FULLY FORMULA FED INFANTS

Foods	Fully Formula Fed Infants A: 0-3 months B: 4-5 months	Fully Formula Fed Infants 6-11 months
WIC Formula	A: 806 fl oz reconstituted liquid concentrate or 832 fl oz RTF or 870 fl oz reconstituted powder. B: 884 fl oz reconstituted liquid concentrate or 896 fl oz RTF or 960 fl oz reconstituted powder.	624 fl oz reconstituted liquid concentrate or 640 fl oz RTF or 696 fl oz reconstituted powder.
Infant cereal	0	24 oz
Baby food fruits and vegetables	0	128 oz (32-4 oz jars)

## CHILDREN

Foods	Children (1 through 4 years)
Juice, single strength	128 fl oz
Milk	13 qt
Cheese*	1 lb
Breakfast cereal	36 oz
Eggs	1 dozen
Fresh fruits and vegetables	\$6.00 cash value
Whole wheat bread/tortillas	2 lb
Legumes Or Peanut butter	1 lb (16 oz.) dry or 64 oz canned Or 18 oz

## PREGNANT AND PARTIALLY BREASTFEEDING WOMEN

Foods	Pregnant Women and Partially Breastfeeding Women Up to 1 Year
Juice, single strength	144 fl oz
Milk	19 qt
Cheese*	1 lb
Breakfast cereal	36 oz
Eggs	1 dozen
Fresh fruits and vegetables	\$8.00 cash value
Whole wheat bread/tortillas	1 lb
Legumes, And Peanut butter	1 lb (16 oz) dry or 64 oz canned And 18 oz

## POST-PARTUM WOMEN

Foods	Postpartum Women and Breastfeeding Women of Infants Receiving more than the Maximum amount of Formula for Partially Breastfed Infants (Up to 6 Months).
Juice, single strength	96 fl oz
Milk, fluid	13 qt
Cheese*	1 lb
Breakfast cereal	36 oz
Eggs	1 dozen
Fresh fruits and vegetables	\$8.00 cash value
Legumes Or Peanut butter	1 lb (16 oz) dry or 64 oz canned Or 18 oz

## EXCLUSIVELY BREASTFEEDING WOMEN

Foods	Fully Breastfeeding Women and Partially Breastfeeding Women of Multiple Infants Up to 1 Year Postpartum and Pregnant Women of Multiple Fetuses
Juice, single strength	144 fl oz
Milk, fluid	18 qt
Breakfast cereal	36 oz
Cheese*	3 lb
Eggs	2 dozen
Fresh fruits and vegetables	\$10.00 cash value
Whole wheat bread/tortillas	1 lb
Fish (canned)	30 oz
Legumes, And Peanut butter	1 lb (16 oz) dry or 64 oz canned And 18 oz

\*Note: Maximum amount of cheese allowed without medical documentation.

## **Anticipated Client Questions, Rationale for Staff, and How to Respond**

WIC staff and clients will likely have many questions concerning the new foods which have been added, as well as the changes in the food packages. Here are some questions you may encounter, the Institute of Medical (IOM) rationale for staff understanding, and a possible response for clients.

### **Question: Why do women and children receive less milk, cheese and eggs?**

*IOM Rationale for Staff:* To reduce the saturated fat content of the food packages for children and women, several changes were proposed:

1. A modest reduction in the maximum amounts of milk.
2. Limiting the milk to reduced fat, low fat or non fat.
3. The maximum amount of cheese allowed was reduced.

The intent was to be consistent with the current recommendations from Dietary Guidelines for children ages 2 through 4 years and for adult women: limiting saturated fat intake to less than 10 percent of food energy while keeping total fat intake within the range of 20 to 35 percent of food energy for adults, 25-35 of food energy for children 4 through 18 years, and 30 to 35 percent of food energy for children aged 2 through 3 years; and keeping dietary cholesterol intake below 300 mg per day. This is based on substantial data showing that intakes of saturated fat greater than 7 to 10 percent of food energy are associated with increased risk for coronary heart disease and that dietary fat intake exceeding 35 percent of food energy may increase risk for overweight and obesity and often is accompanied by excessive saturated fat intake.

*Possible Response for Clients:* You sound concerned about not having enough food. Milk, cheese and eggs are good sources of some nutrients, but these foods are high in saturated fat and cholesterol that may lead to obesity and heart disease. In exchange for these higher fat foods, you can have fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

### **Question: Why can't women receive whole milk?**

*IOM Rationale for Staff:* Whole milk is a major source of saturated fat in the diet, contributing almost one-third of saturated fat intake in the United States.

*Possible Response for Clients:* Actually, low fat milk is better for your whole family. The amount of fat is the only difference. This is the unhealthiest kind of fat. Whole milk contains higher amounts of saturated fat and cholesterol and may lead to obesity and heart disease.

**Question: Why do women receive less juice?**

*IOM Rationale for Staff:* Reducing the quantity of juice helped allow for the inclusion of whole fruits and vegetables while containing cost. The reduced amount of juice for women is consistent with the recommendation of the Dietary Guidelines 2005 that whole fruits be used for a majority of the total daily amount of fruit.

*Possible Response for Clients:* You sound concerned about not getting enough food. While juice may have some nutrients, eating whole fresh fruits and vegetables provides more nutrients and fiber than juice.

**Question: Why don't infants get juice?**

*IOM Rationale for Staff:* The revised food packages for infants provide less food energy (removed juice and cereal) after the age of 4 months (except for fully breastfed infants) which addresses obesity concerns. Deleting the quantity of juice helped allow for the inclusion of whole fruits and vegetables while containing cost.

*Possible Response for Clients:* You sound concerned about feeding your baby. It is easy for children to drink too much juice and have enough room for more nutritious food. WIC is now giving baby food fruits and vegetables to replace your baby's juice, because they have more nutrients and fiber than juice.

**Question: Why do infants have to wait until they are 6 months to receive baby foods?**

*IOM Rationale for Staff:* This is the age at which most healthy infants are developmentally ready to handle complementary foods. Infants ordinarily do not need complementary food for nutritional reasons at younger ages. It is also consistent with the most recent dietary guidance on complementary food by the AAP.

*Possible Response for Clients:* You sound concerned about feeding your baby. Most babies are not ready for baby foods until about 6 months old. Also, when they eat baby foods too soon, they don't get all of the important nutrients from their mother's breastmilk.

**Question: Why do fully formula fed and partially breastfed infants receive less formula when they are 6-11 months old?**

*IOM Rationale:* The revised food packages provide essential nutrients without providing excess food energy and reinforce the nutrition education message to initiate the routine feeding of complementary foods beginning around six months of age. For fully formula fed infants 6 through 11 months the formula is reduced to 312 fluid ounces of concentrate per month. The rationale is to provide an increasing amount of nutrients through complementary foods while reducing intake of formula.

*Possible Response for Clients:* You sound concerned about feeding your baby. Usually, around 6 months babies start eating foods. Reducing the formula amount allows for babies to begin eating baby food fruits and vegetables, which provide different textures and tastes.

**Question: Why can't a 2-4 year old child get whole milk?**

*IOM Rationale for Staff:* Whole milk is a major source of saturated fat in the diet, contributing almost one-third of saturated fat intake in the United States. The recommendations for the milk fat content are consistent with AAP recommendations of whole milk for children who are one year of age and fat reduced milk for older children.

An IOM report on reducing exposure to dioxins and similar compounds through the food supply specifically recommended the substitution of fat-reduced milk for whole milk for WIC children, in order to reduce the exposure to these compounds that occurs through consumption of animal fat.

*Possible Response for Clients:* Actually, low fat milk is better for your whole family. The protein, vitamin, mineral, and calcium contents of whole milk and low fat milk are about the same. But lower fat milk, especially fat free or 1% milk, is lower in saturated fat and cholesterol, two things that may lead to heart disease and obesity.

**Question: Why was the amount of juice reduced for my child?**

*IOM Rationale for Staff:* Reducing the quantity of juice helped allow for the inclusion of whole fruits and vegetables while containing cost. The reduction in the amount of juice provided for older children to about 4 ounces per day is consistent with the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) recommendation for that age group. The AAP also notes that juice does not provide any additional nutritional benefit beyond that of whole fruit.

*Possible Response to Clients:* You sound concerned about feeding your child. It is easy for children to drink too much juice and have enough room for more nutritious food. WIC is now giving fresh fruits and vegetables to replace your child's juice, because they have more nutrients and fiber than juice.

**Question: Why can't my child get white bread instead of whole wheat bread or tortillas?**

*IOM Rationale for Staff:* The new dietary guidance to consume at least three servings per day of whole grains can reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and type 2 diabetes, help with body weight maintenance, and increase intake of dietary fiber. It was recommended to allow breakfast cereals for children and adults include iron fortified whole grain cereals and add whole grain breads and allowable substitutions (including tortillas).

*Possible Response for Clients:* Sometimes trying new foods isn't successful the first time. These whole grain foods were chosen to help your family get more fiber and have a healthy body weight. Adding whole grains also helps prevent heart disease and diabetes. WIC recommends eating half of grain foods as whole grains.

## Resource List for more information on the New Foods

With the food package changes, nutrition educators have a unique opportunity to educate clients about the advantages of making healthy food choices. Here are some Internet resources to assist you in planning.

### Fruits and Vegetables

WIChealth.org

Be Healthy with Fruits and Veggies <http://www.wichealth.org>

WIC nutrition education modules for clients

WIChealth.org

Fruits and Veggies Grow Healthy Kids <http://www.wichealth.org>

WIC nutrition education modules for clients

USDA

Fruit and Vegetable Resource Guide

[http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning\\_Center/FP/Fruits\\_Vegetables.pdf](http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning_Center/FP/Fruits_Vegetables.pdf)

This is an excellent resource for nutrition educators with links to materials regarding fruits and vegetables.

Fruits and Veggies: More Matters

Eat More Fruits and Veggies [http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/downloads/eat\\_more\\_fv.pdf](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/downloads/eat_more_fv.pdf)

Encourage Kids to Eat More Fruits and Veggies

[http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/downloads/kids\\_fv\\_tips.pdf](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/downloads/kids_fv_tips.pdf)

Can Eating Fruits and Vegetables Help People to Manage their Weight?

[http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/nutrition/pdf/rtp\\_practitioner\\_10\\_07.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/nutrition/pdf/rtp_practitioner_10_07.pdf)

Three Simple Steps to Eating More Fruits and Veggies

[http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/downloads/Low\\_Literacy\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/downloads/Low_Literacy_Brochure.pdf)

True or False? Test Your Fruit and Veggie IQ

[http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/downloads/true\\_or\\_false.pdf](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/downloads/true_or_false.pdf)

USDA Sharing Center-USDA

WIC Preschool Activity Sheets (PDF) in English and Spanish (12 sheets for preschoolers)

[http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing\\_Center/preschool.html](http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing_Center/preschool.html)

## Whole Grains

WIChealth.org

Healthy Whole Grains <http://www.wichealth.org>

WIC nutrition education modules for clients

USDA

Whole Grain Resource Guide

[http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning\\_Center/FP/wg\\_resource.pdf](http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning_Center/FP/wg_resource.pdf)

This is an excellent resource for educational materials regarding whole grains.

The Whole Grains Council

What is a Whole Grain? <http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org/files/WhatIsAWholeGrain.pdf>

Spanish version <http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org/files/WhatisaWholeGrainSP.pdf>

Getting Enough Whole Grains <http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org/files/EnoughWG.pdf>

Spanish version <http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org/files/EnoughWGSP.pdf>

Whole Grains Made Easy

<http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org/files/WholeGrainsADAFactSheet.pdf>

Spanish version <http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org/files/WholeGrainsADAFactSheetSP.pdf>

USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion

Get on the Grain Train

<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2000/GrainTrain-revisedMar08.pdf>

USDA Sharing Center-Florida

The Whole Grain Choo-Choo Train (for preschoolers)

[http://www.doh.state.fl.us/family/wic/pages/nutrition/whole\\_grain\\_choo\\_choo\\_train.htm](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/family/wic/pages/nutrition/whole_grain_choo_choo_train.htm)

## **Milk**

WIChealth.org

Build Strong Kids with Dairy Foods <http://www.wichealth.org>

WIC nutrition education modules for clients

National Dairy Council

Low Fat Milk is a Healthy Choice for You and Your Family

<http://www.nationaldairyCouncil.org/NR/rdonlyres/F83118EC-D599-4B22-A332-DEBA07039B76/0/LowFatMilkEducationalHandout.pdf>

Spanish version <http://www.nationaldairyCouncil.org/NR/rdonlyres/8E0234B4-AD24-46F5-9620-4225144591C4/0/Spanishlowfatmilkpieceprinterversionfinal.pdf>

USDA Sharing Center-Virginia

Moove to Low Fat Milk [http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing\\_Center/VA/milk\\_handout.pdf](http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing_Center/VA/milk_handout.pdf)

USDA Sharing Center-Texas

Make the Move to Low Fat Milk (English and Spanish)

[http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing\\_Center/gallery/wic\\_foods2.htm#fo6a1](http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing_Center/gallery/wic_foods2.htm#fo6a1)

USDA WIC Works Resource System (staff handout)

Helping Participants Make the Switch to Low Fat and Fat Free Milk

[http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning\\_Center/FP/Milk.pdf](http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning_Center/FP/Milk.pdf)

## **Feeding Infants and Young Children**

USDA Sharing Center-Colorado

Selecting, Serving, Storing Commercially Prepared Baby Food

[http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing\\_Center/CO/Select.Serve.Store.pdf](http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing_Center/CO/Select.Serve.Store.pdf)

## **Shopping/Handling Food in the Home**

Food Market Institute

Consumer Guide to Food Quality and Safe Handling

<http://www.fmi.org/docs/consumer/foodguides.pdf>

University of Tennessee Extension

A Guide to Buying Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

<http://www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/spfiles/SP527.pdf>

## Other Helpful Resources for WIC Staff:

Michigan WIC

Updated information related to the New Food Packages

<http://www.michigan.gov/wic>

Michigan WIC

Client-focused video vignettes – topics include:

General Overview of the New Food Packages

Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Whole Grain Breads and Tortillas

Feeding the Baby

Breastfeeding Moms & Babies

Canned Beans/Peanut Butter/Dry Beans

<http://www.michigan.gov/wic>

Federal Register Interim Rule <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/regspublished/foodpackages-interimrule.htm>

USDA/Food and Nutrition Information Center

Institute Of Medicine WIC Food Packages: Time for a Change--full report

[http://www.fns.usda.gov/oane/MENU/Published/WIC/FILES/Time4AChange\(mainrpt\).pdf#xml=ht tp://65.216.150.153/tehis/search/pdfhi.txt?query=Institute+of+Medicine+report+on+WIC&pr=FN S&prox=&sufs=&order=r&mode=&opts=&cq=&sr=&id=4919e1a411](http://www.fns.usda.gov/oane/MENU/Published/WIC/FILES/Time4AChange(mainrpt).pdf#xml=ht tp://65.216.150.153/tehis/search/pdfhi.txt?query=Institute+of+Medicine+report+on+WIC&pr=FN S&prox=&sufs=&order=r&mode=&opts=&cq=&sr=&id=4919e1a411)

USDA/Food and Nutrition Information Center

Resources for Nutrition Educators (includes Ethnic/Cultural information)

[http://fnic.nal.usda.gov/nal\\_display/index.php?info\\_center=4&tax\\_level=1&tax\\_subject=252](http://fnic.nal.usda.gov/nal_display/index.php?info_center=4&tax_level=1&tax_subject=252)

USDA

Whole Grain Calculator

[http://riley.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/resources/whole\\_grain\\_form.php](http://riley.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/resources/whole_grain_form.php)