

# For Immediate Release



**EAT RIGHT MONTANA**

*A coalition promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles*

[www.eatrightmontana.org](http://www.eatrightmontana.org)

**CONTACT: Crystelle Fogle, MBA, RD 406-947-2344**

**MT Department of Public Health & Human Services**

March 1, 2008

## Go Lean and Green for National Nutrition Month®

This year March offers three tasty reasons to improve your personal nutrition. First, at least according to the Irish among us, is St. Patrick's Day - a time to both wear green and eat green. Speaking of eating green, a second reason to celebrate delicious nutrition is the second anniversary of the Fruits and Veggies More Matters® campaign. And, last but not least, March is National Nutrition Month® ([www.eatright.org/nnm/](http://www.eatright.org/nnm/)), created by the American Dietetic Association.

"March is an ideal time to develop a healthy lunchtime routine," says Patricia Hennessey, registered dietitian (RD), Butte native, and a founding member of Eat Right Montana. "Lean corned beef and green cabbage is just one of the wonderful ways to enjoy a balanced springtime lunch. Wherever Montanans are enjoying lunch during National Nutrition Month® - at home, work, school, and even fast food restaurants, they can make smart choices by focusing on lean and green."

Naturally, a balanced lunch means healthful choices from all the food groups: grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat/beans, and oils. Getting inside MyPyramid ([www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/index.html](http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/index.html)) is a great way to learn about smart choices, appropriate serving sizes, and health benefits. Going lean with protein and green with plenty of veggies are just two of the many ways to build a balanced meal that will keep you energized and alert all afternoon long.

As a 50-year member of the American Dietetic Association, Ms. Hennessey knows a lot about helping Montana families enjoy healthful eating and active lifestyles. "Adopting new eating habits is best done step-by-step - rather than as an extreme makeover. Focus on improving one meal at a time - and allow several weeks for the healthier habits to become routine. Here are a few delicious ways to enjoy balanced midday meals this March - by going lean and green at lunch."

- **SOUP:** With split peas and lentils, you can actually go green and lean at the same time. Dried beans and peas (legumes) are the only foods that appear in two different groups - both the vegetable group and the protein (or meat/bean) group.
- **SALAD:** The green side of salads is easy - lettuce, raw spinach, and other leafy greens, as well as broccoli florets, celery, cucumbers, and sliced peppers. Remember to add lean protein with kidney beans, sliced turkey, or low-fat cottage cheese.
- **SANDWICH:** This month's **Eat Right Montana** recipe, an **Apple Tuna Sandwich**, features fish as the lean protein, along with chopped green apples, celery, and lettuce leaves. Lean roast beef with Romaine lettuce would be another option.
- **LEFTOVERS:** Creating 'planned overs' is a super smart strategy at every supper meal. If you make a chicken or lean pork stir-fry with green beans or asparagus, make enough to brown bag or microwave for lunch the next day too.
- **FAST FOOD:** Green and lean is possible in the fast food lane too. Choose a low-fat 6-inch sub (on whole wheat) and pile on the veggies. Order a grilled chicken sandwich, skip the fries, and go with a side salad (garden or Caesar).

"Choosing the right beverage is important too," notes Ms. Hennessey. "Rethink your usual lunchtime beverage and skip those super-size soft drinks. For optimal nutrition, go with a tall glass of refreshing milk - fat-free or low-fat please!"

Past and current issues of Eat Right Montana's monthly packets can be downloaded for free at

[www.eatrightmontana.org/eatrighthealthyfamilies.htm](http://www.eatrightmontana.org/eatrighthealthyfamilies.htm)

**It's All About Balance | Celebrating Healthy Families 2008**