Cooking for ADHD Means Adding a Kick of Flavor

by DR. DONNA

Cooking With Flavor

Children with ADHD can become easily overwhelmed with life, but that doesn't seem to happen with their taste buds! Cooking for ADHD means choosing foods that will minimize or reduce symptoms. If your child is a good eater, then why not let his or her taste buds explode with flavor? It might help to divert some of that mental energy to another part of the body.

To do this, you need to update your spice rack. Make sure you have plenty of rosemary and dill for fish dishes; oregano, thyme and basil for any foods that have tomatoes in them; and fennel, mint, and garlic for other foods where these spices are appropriate or unexpected.

The big key is to slip in the unexpected spices into known salads when first starting out. You could also add a few extra vegetables. Then start adding them to fruit salads. This is easier than you think.

How to Add a Kick of Flavour

Here's an example: you make a lettuce salad with a tomato every day. Now you add celery and fennel to the salad and a bit of fresh pineapple. What a surprise this is to the tastebuds! Then you add a bit of oregano; not that much, just a pinch.

With fruit salads, it's the same thing. You could add a pinch of ginger or mint and see what happens. Coconut is another food that most kids love; try coconut flakes or shredded coconut, or even coconut water as part of the liquid that the fruits marinate in. Presto! Just like that, you have a winning recipe – and then see how your child with ADHD acts. Consider it a humane experiment where you're looking for what foods will create the best behavior of your child. Try these two recipes to get you started.

Tropical Chickpea Carrot Salad

Yield: 3-4 servings (9 servings fruits and vegetables)

Ingredients:

One 15-ounce can chickpeas

2 cups shredded carrots

¼ cup shredded coconut

½ cup pineapple, sliced

½ cup fresh parsley

¼ cup cilantro, sliced

½ cup fresh fennel, sliced

½ cup coconut water

Salt and pepper to taste

Next page: antioxidant salad recipe.

Tropical Chickpea Carrot Salad

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, mix the carrots and chickpeas together. Then add the fresh fennel, parsley and cilantro.
2. Add the coconut water and toss.
3. Top with the pineapple and coconut.
4. Salt and pepper to taste.
5. Serve cold.

Antioxidant Salad

Yield: 4 large servings (12 servings fruits and vegetables)

Every child with ADHD needs more antioxidants. They'll get plenty with this salad. It's great as an accompaniment to any more taste-neutral entrée.

Ingredients:

1 head red leaf lettuce, sliced into bite-sized amounts

2 cups spinach

1 cup arugula

1 cup fresh blueberries

2 cups mushrooms, sliced

1 cup strawberries, sliced

1 cup celery, sliced

½ cup raw walnuts, chopped

Directions:

1. Toss together the lettuce, spinach and arugula. Add the celery.
2. Add the mushrooms and strawberries. Toss lightly.
3. Add the blueberries and nuts.

Do you have any good recipes you know of that calm your child with ADHD? Let us know!