

FORWARD CORNER

July is National Culinary Arts Month

Culinary means "related to cooking" and cuisine arts are often described as the preparation, cooking, and presentation of food. Culinary Arts Month typically recognizes the work of professional cooks and chefs but in light of COVID 19 and the limitations still in place for restaurants, FORWARD suggests we spend the month focused on the healthy foods we prepare in our programs (or family homes): foods that are nutrient rich and build a healthy immune system. As children reenter our programs, let's do our best to keep them (and our staff) well by serving an immune boosting diet, with lots of physical activity, quiet and effective naptimes (enough sleep) and activities and conversations that help children express and relieve stress. In reviewing recipes, writing menus, purchasing and preparing foods, keep these simple facts in mind.

- The immune boosting nutrients: Vitamin A, B, C, D, E, and K along with zinc, selenium, iron, and proteins are found in a variety of plant and animal foods.
- Foods, rich in antioxidants, prevent damage to immune cells, increasing your ability to fight off viruses.
- A diet high in ultra-processed foods and refined sugar can negatively affect a healthy immune system.
- A diet low in fruits and vegetables can promote chronic inflammation of the gut, which suppresses immunity.

With this in mind, FORWARD encourages you to build a diet rich in these twelve immune boosting foods (along with lean meats, legumes, seafood and whole grains):

Citrus Fruit	Red Bell Peppers	Nuts and Sunflower Seeds
Berries	Spinach/Leafy Green Veggies	Yogurt
Kiwi	Sweet Potatoes	Ginger
Broccoli	Oats	Garlic

Share these menu ideas and “kids in the kitchen” tips with your cook, staff and families.

[25 Immune Boosting Recipes](#)

[Getting Kids in the Kitchen](#)

[Cocine con los niños](#)

JOIN THE HEALTHY MOVEMENT TODAY BY TAKING ACTION!

June Call to Action for Families: Keep your family healthy and equipped to fight off the Corona virus (and others) by purchasing and preparing foods that reflect the rainbow — eating 5 to 6 servings a day of different colored fruits and vegetables.

June Call to Action for Early Childhood Providers: Keep your children and staff healthy by redoing your “welcome back” menu to include foods rich in immune boosting nutrients.

For information on healthy eating and activity initiatives in DuPage, check out www.forwarddupage.org.