

Eat Your Greens!

Green Mucous and the Common Cold

American Kids Aren't Green Enough!

Team Spotlight



March 2011



# Eat Your Greens!

### Green Salad

Absolutely everything on this salad is **GREEN!**

Ingredients:

- ◆ Lettuce
- ◆ Cucumbers
- ◆ Peppers
- ◆ Snow Peas
- ◆ Avocado
- ◆ Sprouts

The fun of making this salad begins at the grocery store selecting the fixings. Anything green is fit for the mix. Serve with your favorite salad dressing (try Annie's Green Goddess Dressing).

*While we try to teach our children about life, our children teach us what life is all about*

*~Kate Douglas Wiggin*

There is a lot of talk about different diets and which one is healthiest, but there really is no debating the fact that **eating more plants** is a great step towards eating better. Over the last century, the American cuisine has shifted from a predominantly plant-based diet to a more meat-based one, and this is one of the factors in the exponential increase in diet-related health problems in our country.

Eating more green plants (fruits and vegetables) has many known benefits. One of these benefits is the antioxidants these foods possess. These antioxidants take potentially harmful substances in our body ("oxygen radi-

cals") and neutralize them. By doing so, these foods help protect us from many diseases, from visual problems to many types of cancer.

Examples of healthy green foods include:

- ◆ Fruits: avocados, apples, grapes, honeydew, kiwi and lime
- ◆ Vegetables: artichoke, asparagus, broccoli, green beans, green peppers, and leafy greens such as spinach and kale

## Green Mucous and the Common Cold

Symptoms of the common cold in children are frequently mistaken for allergies, sinus infections, or even the flu. They can all cause a runny nose, congestion and a cough, so it's easy to see why some parents get confused. Since children can get sick with a cold so often, sometimes up to six to twelve times a year, it is important to be able to recognize common cold symptoms. So how can you tell the difference?

Children exposed to one of the many viruses that can cause a cold typically develop a runny nose, congestion, and cough. They may also complain of headache and have a fever. In general, common cold symptoms are much milder than flu symptoms, which can include high fever, body aches, and fatigue. Both can result in mucous in a range of colors, from clear to yellow to green, and occasionally bloody or brown.

So, is green drainage from the nose a sign of a bacterial infection, thus needing antibiotics? While that is a common misconception, kids can have green or yellow mucous as a symptom of the common cold. The color of nasal drainage is more related to time (i.e. how long one has

had the cold as it typically begins fairly clear and gets progressively more discolored) and the body's response to the infection. The green color is produced as a result of the body's white blood cells fighting off the infection.

It is more important to monitor how long the sickness lasts and associated symptoms (fever, feeling ill, etc.), not the color of your child's drainage. Typically, common cold symptoms last about a week, and those that are not showing any signs of improvement after 10-14 days may indicate a sinus infection.

Allergies can also be confused with cold symptoms. If your child has green fluid running from his nose and a low grade fever, but it's not his typical allergy season, then he likely has a cold and not allergies. On the other hand, if it is peak allergy season, and he has a dry cough and a runny nose, he may just be suffering from allergies. When in doubt, make an appointment to see us about the cause of your child's symptoms.



## American Kids Aren't Green Enough!

### WHY OUR KIDS NEED TO GO GREEN

There is a lot of talk these days about a global crisis and “going green”, but there is another crisis (perhaps global, but mostly American) happening that needs to be addressed by getting our kids to go green in a different way.

### AN EPIDEMIC OF “INDOOR-NESS”

*“Our children no longer learn how to read the Great Book of Nature” Wendell Berry*

Our children today are spending more time indoors than ever before, and it is taking a toll on their health. In fact, it is probably affecting them in more ways than you may realize.

You have probably heard the numbers on how much time each day the average child is spending on “screen time” (i.e. television, computer, video games). The amount of time that the average child spends sedentary in front of a screen is staggering; yet, it seems that whenever we discuss this with families, the response is predictable—“not my kid”. Everyone feels these numbers don't apply to them, and this may be somewhat true. Perhaps your child is not spending the 4-6 hours/day that is average for American children (though we would challenge you to keep an account for 1-2 weeks; you might be surprised at the total); however, when you add homework to the time spent in front of a screen, there is very little time left for outdoors.

### GOOD FOR THE BODY, GOOD FOR THE MIND

*“Unlike television, nature does not steal time; it amplifies it.” Richard Louv*

The benefits of outdoor time on physical health are fairly obvious (e.g. less obesity, long-term cardiac health, etc.) and well-appreciated, but the mental health benefits are equally important and less appreciated. Time outdoors has been demonstrated to result in significant stress reduction (you likely don't think of your child as being “stressed”, but many

studies would suggest otherwise; if interested in reading more, see *Under Pressure* by Carl Honore), as well as enhancing a child's ability to focus and concentrate. Additionally, creativity is cultivated by unstructured time in nature. Many of our most creative humans throughout history have been ardent observers of the outdoors.

### “BUT MY CHILD IS INVOLVED IN ORGANIZED SPORTS”

In addition to television and homework, another factor that may be stealing time from our children's needs is organized sports. There are undoubtedly numerous benefits to organized sports; however, studies seem to indicate that developmentally our children need *unstructured* time outdoors as well. The amount of time in organized sports has grown exponentially in the last two decades, and interestingly this has coincided with the rise in pediatric obesity and mental illness.

### SOME SPECIFIC IDEAS

- If you are up for it, we recommend doing a one week experiment. Keep a log of time spent in homework, car, screen time, organized sports, and free time outside. You may be surprised at the results.
- Instead of reading to your child on the couch, find a good place to sit outside and read.
- For other ideas, visit the following websites:
  - <http://www.nwf.org/Get-Outside/Be-Out-There/Why-Be-Out-There/What-is-a-Green-Hour.aspx>
  - <http://takeachildoutside.org/activities/gettingstarted.html>
  - Also, if you are interested in learning more, read the excellent book *Last Child in the Woods* by Richard Louv

Our “City Beautiful” shines especially in the spring; encourage your child to discover and enjoy it. Go green—it's good for their bodies and their minds.

## Team Spotlight: Lisa Aldrich



Hometown: Maitland, FL Favorite Movie: The Notebook  
 Kids: 2 sons- Ethan and Cole Favorite Dessert: Crème Brulee  
 Favorite vacation destination: Anna Maria Island Favorite Book: The Time Traveler's Wife  
 Favorite Restaurant: The Melting Pot Why she loves working at Middleton Pediatrics: “I love being a part of such a fantastic change in pediatric care!”  
 Favorite things to do in your free time: reading, camping, baking, going to the beach with my family

A garden is a wonderful part of a healthy home.

For Ideas, visit [www.apenberrys.com](http://www.apenberrys.com)



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