



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT: Shelley L. Walker
615.741.3111 (office)
615.804.9972 (cell)

TENNESSEE WIC PROGRAM BRINGS MORE TO THE TABLE

Supplemental Food Packages Change October 1, 2009

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Participants enrolled in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, known as WIC, are preparing for an exciting change. The food packages are changing effective October 1, 2009 to better meet the nutritional needs of WIC families. New foods will include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, soy products and baby foods.

“These changes are based on the USDA’s Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and will reduce the amount of saturated fats and increase healthy fiber in the diets of program participants,” said Cathy Taylor, DrPH, MSN, RN. “The new package also offers more food choices to WIC families.”

The new Tennessee WIC food packages for women and children will include a cash value voucher for fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables; whole grain cereals, breads, brown rice, bulgur or soft corn or whole wheat tortillas; and will only provide whole milk for children aged 12 through 23 months. The choices of fish for mothers who exclusively breastfeed have also expanded to include salmon and sardines along with light tuna.

The new food packages better promote and support long-term breastfeeding and strengthen WIC’s breastfeeding promotion efforts. Mothers who exclusively breastfeed receive more variety and larger quantities of foods, including a monthly \$10 cash value voucher for fruits and vegetables. Infants that are exclusively breastfed receive larger quantities and more types of baby food at six months of age.

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**CORDELL HULL BUILDING, 3RD FLOOR
425 FIFTH AVENUE NORTH
NASHVILLE, TN 37243
WWW.TENNESSEE.GOV/HEALTH**

WIC provides low income pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, new mothers, infants and children up to age five with nutritious supplemental foods. The program also provides nutrition education and referrals to health care services. WIC foods currently include iron-fortified adult cereal, vitamin C-rich fruit or vegetable juice, eggs, milk, cheese, peanut butter, dried beans and peas, canned fish and iron-fortified infant formula and cereal. Special therapeutic infant formulas and medical foods may be provided when prescribed by a physician for a specified medical condition.

More than 175,000 Tennesseans receive WIC benefits each month through this federally funded nutrition assistance program. The Food and Nutrition Service, which administers the program at the federal level, provides these funds to WIC state agencies. For more information, call 1-800-342-5942 or visit the WIC Web site at <http://health.state.tn.us/wic/>.

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