

# Jr. Chef Club - Level II

## NEWS PARENTS CAN USE

Lesson 4

Cooking for a Healthy Digestive Tract

Skillet Granola

### Discovering the Digestive Tract

Jr. Chefs cooked foods that make for a healthy digestive tract today. They learned about the many parts of their body that work together to turn food into fuel and how to keep those parts in good working order!

Digestion starts in the mouth with saliva. Saliva begins the break down of carbohydrates (starch). From there, muscular movement carries food to the stomach where strong digestive juices break down food. Then food passes into the small intestine. This is where the main action occurs in the digestive tract. In the small intestine foods are further broken down and then absorbed. As food goes into the large intestine, also called the colon, the last of the nutrients and fluid are “wrung out” and absorbed. What’s left moves on through to be excreted.



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### Healthy on the Inside

What makes for a healthy digestive tract? There are two kinds of foods we can eat every day to help keep our insides working well.

*Fiber:* Fiber is found in foods that come from plants. Examples are whole grains, vegetables, legumes (dried beans, split peas and lentils), fruits, nuts, and seeds. There is no fiber in foods that come from animal sources, such as meats and milk. Fiber acts like an internal broom, sweeping the colon clean. Fiber may help prevent colon cancer.

*Yogurt:* The large intestine has many different types of bacteria living in it. Some bacteria are considered to be “friendly bacteria.” These friendly bacteria may help prevent intestinal diseases. They also keep the “bad” bacteria in check. A great source of friendly bacteria is yogurt with live cultures, or milk with acidophilus. Acidophilus is a type of friendly bacteria.

## Skillet Granola

Makes about 10 ½-cup servings.

### Ingredients:

- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 1 Tablespoon water
- 4 cups dry, quick-cooking oatmeal
- ½ cup raisins or coconut flakes

### Directions:

1. Stir oil, brown sugar, and water together in a large skillet.
2. Stir in oatmeal and mix until coated with sugar and oil mixture.
3. Heat over medium heat. Stir until oatmeal is slightly brown. Stir in raisins or coconut if desired.
4. Cool and store in a large jar with tight lid.

## Fruit and Yogurt Parfaits

Makes 4 parfaits

### Ingredients:

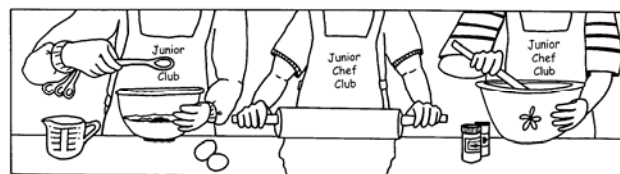
- 1 cup fruit #1 of your choice
- 1 cup fruit #2 of your choice
- 1 cup nonfat or low fat plain yogurt
- ½ cup low fat skillet granola

### Directions:

1. Use any fruit, fresh, canned or frozen.
2. Using a clear glass, layer the ingredients, starting with fruits then yogurt then top with granola. Repeat until glass is full.



**Did you know?** Together the small and large intestines are about 25-feet long. The inside surface of the small intestine is full of ridges and dips to increase absorption. If you were to smooth out the internal surface of the small intestine, it would be as big as a tennis court: all the more reason to feed it well!



## Just Do It!

Give your family the fiber they need. Serve whole grain foods and legumes often. Serve about 2 cups of vegetables each day, along with 1½ cups of fruit. Sprinkle nuts and seeds onto salads and main dishes.

Next, serve yogurt or acidophilus milk each day. Ask your Jr. Chef to help you choose yogurt with a statement on the label that it “Contains live, active cultures.” Choose ones low in fat and added sugar then you’re on the way to a healthy digestive tract.