



## KEEPING KIDS HEALTHY

Less than 25% of kids eat the daily recommended servings of fruits and vegetables and few get regular physical activity. While moms and caregivers are aware of the importance of healthy eating and physical activity habits, they struggle with the best way to incorporate them into daily family life. With obesity rates rising among children and adults, it's important for parents to find useful information and realistic tips for making and sustaining healthy choices for kids. This month's issue of HealthWatch is devoted to helping parents and kids in their pursuit of balanced nutrition and physical activity for the mind and body.

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## GET MOVING

Exercise has many benefits. It builds strong muscles and bones while increasing strength, endurance and flexibility. It also controls body fat, reduces obesity and decreases the risk diabetes. In addition to the health benefits of regular exercise, kids who are physically fit sleep better and are better able to handle the physical and emotional challenges that a typical day presents - be that running to catch a bus, bending down to tie a shoe, or studying for a test. One of the best ways to get youngsters moving is to limit the amount of time spent in sedentary activities, especially watching TV and playing video games. Help your child participate in activities that are appropriate for their age.



<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/everyone/recommendations/children.htm>

## EATING RIGHT

Plain and simple, fast food can affect your game plan. Youngsters have been consuming more fast food since the 1970's and, coincidentally, there's been a rise in teenage obesity and diabetes. Not fun! Fast foods are high in unhealthy fats (saturated and trans fats), sugar, high fructose corn syrup, chemical flavor enhancers and fake color. Also, in highly processed foods, the vitamins and minerals typically get destroyed. Check your local fast food restaurant for fresh, healthy options such as healthy chicken and fish dishes, salads, vegetable soups, fruit plates and low-sugar drinks. When eating at home, it's best to favor low-fat meats, healthy dairy products, whole grains, vegetable dishes, fruit and nuts. If it's hard to eat nine servings of fruits and vegetables every day, a good quality multivitamin can help - it provides "insurance" when it comes to getting a wide spectrum of nutrients each day. Check out [HealthCorps.org](http://HealthCorps.org) for additional information.



Visit [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov) and use the USDA's Food Pyramid as an effective tool to help children make healthy choices.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR EVERYONE

VIRTUALHEALTHinfo.com



## Fruit Intake During Childhood May Help Curb Cancer Later In Life

According to a long term study involving almost 4,000 people in the United Kingdom, it appears that a childhood diet rich in fruit may protect against the development of certain cancers. The findings, published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, are based on a 60 year follow-up with a group of individuals who completed a food inventory checklist sometime in the 1930's. The researchers successfully traced almost all of the men and women who had been children in the 1930's and were able to assess their death and cancer records to arrive at their conclusions. Further prospective studies, with individual measures of diet are required to fully explain the researchers' conclusions. For more information go to the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, Volume 57, 2003.

## FUN ACTIVITIES

1. Tumbling and gymnastics
2. Dancing such as ballet, jazz, tap, hip hop, etc.
3. Yoga
4. Hiking
5. Walking your dog
6. In the winter, making snow angels
7. Biking
8. School sports



# HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE SNACK IDEAS

Say "NO WAY" to:

Soda pop

Potato chips

Fruity hard candy

Pizza

cookies

Ice cream

Say "OH, YES" to:

100% pure fruit juice – for a treat mix sparkling mineral water with juice

Baked low-fat soy crisps or baby carrots dipped in hummus

Fruit fruit roll ups or dried fruit

Monterey Jack cheese, sliced tomatoes and raw veggies baked on whole wheat crust or tortilla

Whole wheat graham crackers with peanut butter and bananas or assorted roasted nuts

Yogurt with crunchy granola and fruit topping or fresh fruit smoothie

## Bone Health Impacted by Fruits at any Age



It's no surprise or secret that regular intake of fresh fruits and vegetables can have a healthy impact on the bones of older people. But researchers in Cambridge, United Kingdom, recently studied the impact of fruits and vegetables on young people's bones as well. Fruits seemed to play a bigger role in bone health than vegetables, with "significant positive associations" between fruit intake and bone health in adolescent boys, girls, and older women. The study concluded, "Higher fruit and vegetable intakes may have positive effects on bone mineral status in both younger and older age groups." For more information go to the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, Volume 83, 2006.