

Fit Kids = Happy Kids



Six Simple Steps to a Healthy Weight for Kids



Be active by playing together inside and outside.

For a healthy weight, kids and adults need 30 to 60 minutes of daily physical activity. Play with your kids every day – fun for them, fun for you too!

- ❖ **Play inside:** Turn off the TV and play an old-fashioned game of hide-and-seek. Clear a space for wiggling, dancing, and playing with soft-foam balls or squishy toys.
- ❖ **Play outside:** The options for outdoor play are unlimited: bikes, trikes, scooters, balls, kites, Frisbees, jump ropes, squirt guns, hula-hoops, hopscotch, and tag.
- ❖ **Play at the park:** Most towns have fun park facilities, sometimes close enough to walk or ride a bike. When the weather is nice, take a picnic and play before dinner.



Make family meals a special time to eat together.

Eating more meals together can make a big difference in your family's health, happiness, and finances. Dinners at home are easier (and cheaper) than you think!

- ❖ **Plan a weekly menu:** Make it simple or make it detailed – the key is to have a plan. Involve the whole family; let each person have a night to pick their favorite dishes.
- ❖ **Cook once, eat twice:** Cut down on prep time. Cook and freeze key ingredients, like ground beef for tacos and spaghetti sauce, or main dishes, like lasagna and casseroles.
- ❖ **Keep the cupboard stocked:** Pack your pantry (and freezer) with staples like canned beans, tuna, and fruit; pasta, rice, and baking mixes; and frozen vegetables.



Save fast food for a once or twice a week treat.

Fast food is loaded with calories, fat, and sugar. Whether you drive-thru or go inside, here are some smart tips to help you eat better in the fast food lane.

- ❖ **Share a super size:** There's a way to make mega portions work for you: share them! By sharing a large order of fries, you eat fewer calories, less fat, and save money too.
- ❖ **Rethink your drink:** A 32-oz. soft drink has over 300 calories, almost 1/2-cup sugar, and no nutritional value. Switch to low-fat milk for protein, calcium, and more than a dozen other bodybuilding nutrients.
- ❖ **Choose nutrient-rich options:** Many national chains now offer tasty, fun choices in kids' meals – like flavored milk instead of pop and mandarin oranges instead of fries.

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Enjoy tasty fruit and veggie snacks together.

Serve a rainbow of produce every day – at least 5 juicy, crunchy, crispy, tasty fruits and vegetables. Fresh, frozen, dried, canned, and juice – they all count for 5 A Day!

- ❖ **Enjoy green fruits and veggies:** For snacks or dinner, green comes in dozens of delicious flavors – like sliced kiwi fruit or broccoli trees with light Ranch dip.
- ❖ **Enjoy yellow-orange fruits and veggies:** For morning, afternoon, or evening snacks, choose a fresh orange, canned pineapple, or baby carrots and yellow pepper slices.
- ❖ **Enjoy red fruits and veggies:** Red is a tasty color for produce – any time of day! Try frozen berries, watermelon, or canned tomato sauce on pasta, pizza, or tacos.



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Drink milk with meals and drink water with snacks.

Dairy products can help kids (and adults) maintain a healthy weight, build strong bodies, and lower blood pressure. Water is always refreshing – and calorie-free.

- ❖ **Serve low-fat milk with meals:** The best way to get your kids to drink milk is to drink milk yourself with every meal. Aim for a total of 16 to 24 ounces per day.
- ❖ **Offer water at snack time:** Everybody needs fluid to stay well hydrated, especially in warm weather. Water quenches your thirst – without adding extra calories or sugar.
- ❖ **Steer clear of sugary drinks:** For beautiful teeth and strong bodies, wise parents limit soft drinks, fruit punch, fruit drinks, sweet tea, and other high-sugar drinks.



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Take the TV out of the bedroom and read together.

Pediatricians recommend no TV for children under three years, no more than two hours of total screen time a day for older kids, and no TVs in children's rooms.

- ❖ **Improve your child's fitness level:** Turning off the TV gives kids more time for active play – plus they miss all those commercials for candy, chips, and sugar cereals.
- ❖ **Improve your child's school performance:** Children who have less screen time (TV, computers, and video games) tend to read more and do better in their classes.
- ❖ **Improve your child's sleeping habits:** There are many benefits to taking the TV out of a child's bedroom: calmer bedtime routines, more bedtime stories, and better sleep.

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