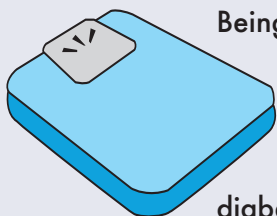


Preventing Weight Problems in Kids: What Can You Do?



Start With Healthy Habits

The percentage of overweight children in the United States has doubled since 1980. Fifteen percent of children between the ages of 6 and 19 are overweight and even toddlers and preschoolers are getting heavier.



Being overweight can have serious health consequences.

Diseases rarely seen in children in the past now affect many kids. Type 2

diabetes, often called adult-onset

diabetes, is on the rise in overweight children. Other common problems of overweight children include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and sleep problems. Asthma, a common childhood illness, may worsen as children put on excess pounds. And as overweight kids become overweight adults, health problems will only multiply.



Common Obesity-Linked Problems

- High blood pressure
- Type 2 diabetes
- High cholesterol
- Sleep problems
- Heart disease
- Depression

Why are so many kids overweight? Kids today spend less time being active. They spend more time in front of the TV or computer. Hectic schedules and safety concerns have become barriers to activity. And busy families often have less time to prepare home-cooked meals. Parents rely more on fast food and prepackaged meals.

Helping your child eat right and be active may mean changing the way your family eats and exercises. You can help your child lead a healthy life by teaching good habits now.

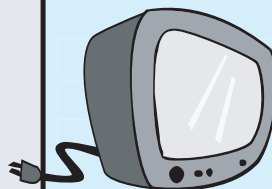


Fitness Tips for Families

Being active doesn't have to mean going to the gym or joining a sports team. Have your child join a noncompetitive league. Or a child who prefers to set his or her own pace can try single-person sports like biking or martial arts. Being involved in nonsports clubs and other activities is also a good way to decrease sitting time.

Here are some other ways to get your child moving:

- **Limit TV time.** When you do, you'll also turn off ads pushing high-fat and sugary foods and limit extra snacking. Kids who spend more time watching TV are more likely to become overweight.



- **Find one or two active things to do with your child each day.** Take a walk to the post office instead of driving. Rake leaves in the yard or go to a local park.
- **Get going on weekends.** Plan family outings every weekend. Some ideas include hikes, bike rides, or trips to the zoo.
- **Reward your child with active prizes.** Visits to a local bowling alley or mini golf course are great treats for kids.
- **Bring along a friend.** Having a friend over for a play date or along on a family trip can make being active even more fun.
- **Be a good role model.** Make time in your busy day to exercise. You'll show your child that fitness is a lifelong goal.





Meet Up for the Family Meal

Get in touch with your kids after a busy day and teach better eating habits by making the family meal a daily event. Kids who eat with the family eat more fruits and veggies. They are also more likely to make better food choices outside the home. During a meal parents can be good role models for their children, so prepare healthy foods that you enjoy.

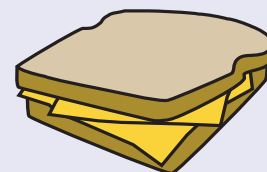
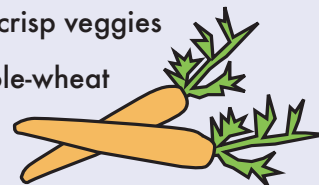
After-school events or work schedules may conflict with an evening meal. Have healthy snacks on hand for pre-dinner munchies. And plan to eat later than usual so everyone can be there. Another option is to make breakfast the main meal. You may not be able to eat every meal together, but aim for a daily family meal most days.



6 Great Backpack Snacks

Keep your child fueled with these easy, healthier snacks:

1. Baby carrots and other crisp veggies
2. Hummus spread on whole-wheat pita wedges
3. Homemade trail mix of whole-grain cereal, nuts, seeds, and dried fruit pieces
4. Part-skim cheese stick with low-sodium tomato sauce for dipping
5. Sweet potato chips
6. Peanut butter or cheese sandwich



Hey Kids! Improve Your Nutrition Position

Looking for ways to make **healthy eating** easier? Here are some things you can do!

• **Eat breakfast every day.** Kids who eat breakfast often do better in school and are less likely to eat too much during the day.



• **Skip the soda and other sugary beverages.** Milk and water are better choices.

• **Pack your own lunch and after-school snacks.** Do it the night before so you don't forget.

• **Count your veggies and fruits.** Eat at least five servings of veggies and fruits each day.



1-800-332-9161

www.healthplus.org

HealthPlus

The Plus makes all the difference.