

Are you concerned about your overweight child?



Here are some tips on how to help.

Helping Kids Be More Active

Children need about 60 minutes of physical activity a day, but many exercise as little as two times a week—or less—according to scientific studies. Here are a few ways to get your kids moving:

- ▶ *Limit T.V. and recreational computer time*
- ▶ *Plan family activities that involve walking—a trip to the zoo, a hike, a visit to the local park, or a museum expedition*
- ▶ *Assign everyday active chores like making beds, washing the car, gardening, or vacuuming*
- ▶ *Encourage participation in school-sponsored sports and outdoor play*
- ▶ *Teach them about the positive benefits of exercise, and how it can improve their physical fitness and other aspects of their lives such as self-esteem and mood*
- ▶ *Act as a role model—be an example for your kid*

Remember: Even short 5- or 10-minute activity sessions throughout the day add up and are just as good as 60 minutes at a time.

Getting More Fruit and Vegetables into Your Child's Diet

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends that children take in 2 servings of fruits and 3 servings of vegetables a day. For picky eaters, the key is patience and a little creativity.

For Vegetables, try:

Getting them when they're hungry. Place an “appetizer” bowl of carrots, celery, or cherry tomatoes out before dinner. Added incentive: A low-fat dip made with yogurt or fat-free sour cream. Young children, especially, love to dip.

Preparing them different ways. Steam vegetables, sauté them, bake them. Your child may find that a vegetable that seems unappealing prepared one way is delicious in another. Note: Many children like to eat raw vegetables instead of cooked ones.

Hiding them. Finely chop carrots, celery, broccoli, onion, or zucchini, soften by sautéing in a tablespoon of oil, and add them to pizza, spaghetti sauce, macaroni and cheese, meatloaf, burgers, burritos, soups, stews, or casseroles.

Mixing new vegetables with sure things. Add a sprinkling of the new vegetable to a combination your child already likes and eats.

For Fruit, try:

Making it special. Make a fruit salad for dessert, top it with a spoonful of low-fat yogurt (regular or frozen) or sprinkle SLENDA® No Calorie Sweetener on it. Another option: Wedges of fruit served with a low-fat yogurt or cream cheese dip.

Making it fun. Cut fruit into shapes and allow children to make faces and pictures with them on their plates. Make boats out of melons and allow kids to top them with smaller fruits, like strawberries and grapes.

Repackaging it. Slip fruit into pancakes, muffins, smoothies, puddings, and Jell-O.

Letting them pick. Children have little freedom when it comes to what they eat. Letting them select the fruit they want to try at any given meal or snack-time gives them an investment in the adventure.

Fruit and vegetable serving sizes: From the time an infant begins to eat solid food, until the age of six, 1 tablespoon per each year of life. After age six, servings are the same as for adults—a half cup.



A Healthy Lunchbox

Trimming empty calories from lunches is a snap. Try introducing these healthy foods into your child's lunchtime routine:

- water, a can of vegetable juice, or 1% milk
- whole wheat bread, bagels, pita pockets, or tortilla wraps
- individual servings of fresh fruit, unsweetened applesauce, or canned fruit in a light syrup or its own juice
- low-fat yogurt, calcium-fortified orange juice, or low-fat cheese
- baked chips, pretzels, Cheerios, breadsticks, popcorn, rice crackers, or other low-fat crackers
- low-fat or fat-free turkey breast, bologna, chicken breast, ham, or roast beef
- graham crackers, dried fruit, trail mix, granola bars, fig bars
- hummus, mustard or bean dip
- a high-fiber breakfast bar

Healthy Snacking

Children, with their small stomachs and high energy needs, actually should have about 2 snacks a day, in addition to 3 meals, in order to meet the nutritional requirements—6 servings of grains, 2 of fruit, 3 of vegetables, 2 of dairy, 2 of meat—laid out in the USDA's Food Guide Pyramid. **The key to making snacking healthy: Skip the cookies and chips, and pick foods from the Pyramid instead. Here are some guaranteed nutritious options:**

- yogurt with fruit
- melon balls
- low-fat pudding
- low-fat granola bars
- crackers spread thinly with peanut butter or bean dip
- popcorn
- flavored rice or popcorn cakes
- frozen juice bars
- crackers with cheese (low-fat for children over 5)
- fortified cereal with milk
- celery or apple slices with peanut butter
- string cheese
- graham crackers
- apple slices with cheese
- pretzels
- dried fruit

Sizing Up Portions for the Entire Family

There's no two ways about it: Most Americans are overeating. One culprit: Oversized portions. From fast food chains to restaurants to grocery stores, many foods are now available in portions 2 to 5 times the original size. **It's so common to see food in large portions, in fact, that we've forgotten what a real serving size looks like.** **Solution: a little awareness, and some down-sizing.**

What Counts as a Serving?

Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta		
1 slice of bread	1 ounce of ready-to eat cereal	1/2 cup of cooked cereal, rice, or pasta
Vegetable		
1 cup of raw leafy vegetables	1/2 cup of other vegetables, cooked or chopped raw	3/4 cup of vegetable juice
Fruit		
1 medium apple, banana, orange	1/2 cup of chopped, cooked, or canned fruit	3/4 cup of fruit juice
Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese (choose non-fat or low-fat)		
1 cup of milk or yogurt	1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese	2 ounces of processed cheese
Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, and Nuts		
2-3 ounces of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish	1/2 cup of cooked dry beans or 1 egg counts as 1 ounce of lean meat. 2 tablespoons of peanut butter or 1/3 cup of nuts count as 1 ounce of meat.	

What sensible servings look like*



1 ounce cheese = Pair of dice

2 - 3 ounces meat = Deck of cards



3 ounces fish = Checkbook



2 tablespoons peanut butter = Ping pong ball

1 teaspoon butter or margarine = Postage stamp



*Images are not actual size.

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Talk to your healthcare provider about the number of servings per day that is right for your child.