

Are you concerned about your overweight teen?



Here are some tips on how to help.

Helping Teens Be More Active

Teenagers 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's how to get your teen moving:

- ▶ **Limit T.V. and recreational computer time**
- ▶ **Make family activities active—a group swim, bike ride, or hike. If the activity is competing with your teen's social life, invite them to bring their friends along**
- ▶ **Act as a role model—be an example for your teen by being physically active**
- ▶ **Assign everyday chores like making the beds, washing the car, gardening, or vacuuming**
- ▶ **Help them join a gym, a sports team, or sign up for a regular activity that interests them**
- ▶ **Teach them about the positive benefits of exercise, and how it can improve their physical fitness and other aspects of their lives including body image, self-esteem and mood**

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 Teen's Diet

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Guide Pyramid recommends that teenage girls take in 4 servings of vegetables and 3 servings of fruit daily and that teenage boys take in 5 servings of vegetables and 4 servings of fruit per day. However, this may not always be easy for teens to do, so here are some tips on how to turn it around:

For Fruits & Vegetables, try:

Show them how easy it is. Serving sizes for fruits and vegetables are pretty small—a half cup. It's not hard to squeeze those into a regular diet, once you think about it. Suggest that your teen add onions and tomatoes to a burrito or sandwich, a sliced banana on top of cereal, a half cup of blueberries on top of frozen yogurt, or a sprinkling of vegetables on top of pizza or in spaghetti sauce.

Be realistic. Stressing that a diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables will lead to a longer life might not matter to teens. Instead, tell them about the immediate benefits—more energy, better skin, and the tools for a more healthy weight with less emphasis on dieting.

Be strategic. Before dinner, when everyone is hungry, is a good time to put out an “appetizer” bowl of carrots, celery, or cherry tomatoes. Pair it with a low-fat dip made with yogurt or fat-free sour cream.

Hide 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.

Repackage. Slip fruit into pancakes, muffins, smoothies, and puddings.



Encouraging Teens to Eat Healthy

During the teen years, kids are starting to make many of their own food choices and are often on the go. You can help by inviting them to go grocery shopping, choosing healthy snacks, and keeping a supply of healthy snacks and grab-and-go foods at home.

- ▼ water or diet soda (instead of full-sugar sodas)
- ▼ precooked chicken breasts
- ▼ vegetable juice
- ▼ graham crackers
- ▼ cut-up fruit sprinkled with SLENDA® No Calorie Sweetener
- ▼ dried fruit
- ▼ a stash of precut vegetables paired with a favorite low-fat dip
- ▼ trail mix
- ▼ frozen grapes and banana slices
- ▼ granola bars
- ▼ canned and frozen vegetables
- ▼ fig bars
- ▼ pretzels or bread sticks
- ▼ whole wheat bread, tortillas, and bagels
- ▼ low-fat pudding
- ▼ low-fat cheese
- ▼ low-sugar cereal or oatmeal
- ▼ frozen waffles with low-sugar syrup
- ▼ baked chips
- ▼ sports or high-fiber breakfast bar
- ▼ low-fat microwave popcorn
- ▼ low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt
- ▼ tuna packed in water
- ▼ flavored rice crackers or other low-fat crackers
- ▼ frozen juice bars
- ▼ hard boiled eggs
- ▼ bean dip or salsa
- ▼ prewashed salad greens

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 teen.