

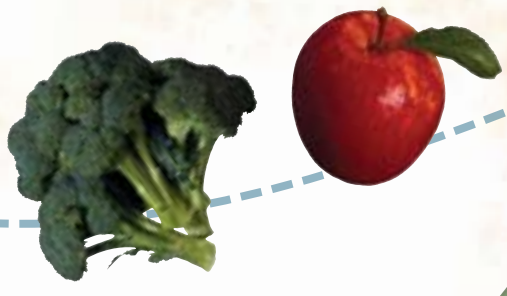


# 8 TO **Live** BY

**HEALTHY HABITS** for Kids, Teens, and Families



**START**

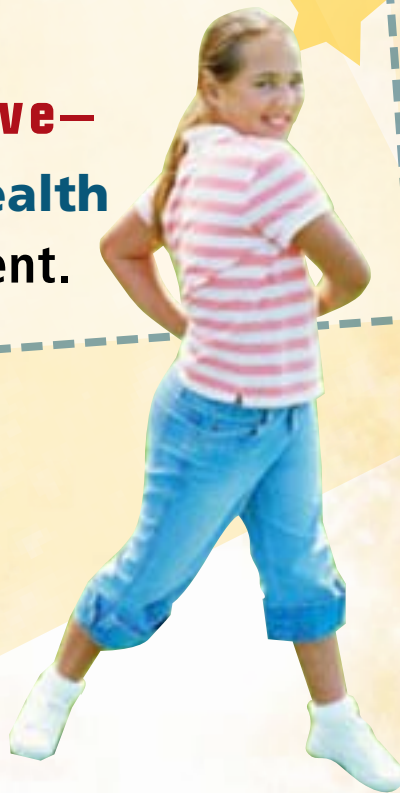


**It's** not a **diet**; it's not a **boot camp**.

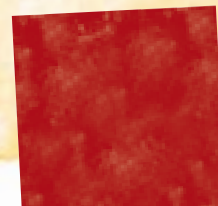
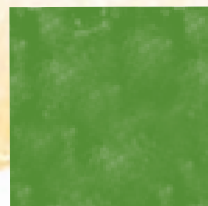
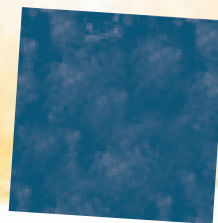
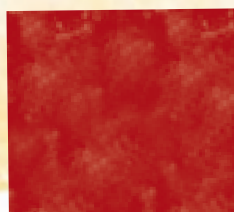
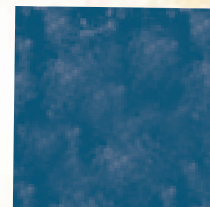
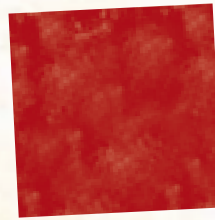
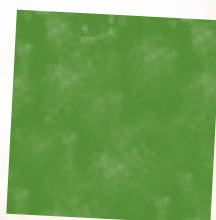
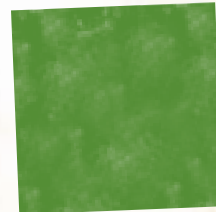
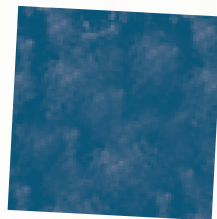
It's not **about** the perfect body.

It's **not** a quick fix, a six-week program,  
a band-aid, **a fad**.

It's about **how you live**—  
**life-long habits for health**  
and weight management.



**Five**



# WHAT'S INSIDE...

# 8 TO **LiVe** BY

There are lots of things you can do to reach—and keep—a healthy weight.

The 8 habits described in this booklet are a great place to start. Studies show that these have the biggest impact on your weight, your health, and your outlook.

## FOOD



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## ACTIVITY

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[ 1 ]  
ALWAYS  
EAT BREAKFAST  
AND MAKE IT  
HEALTHY

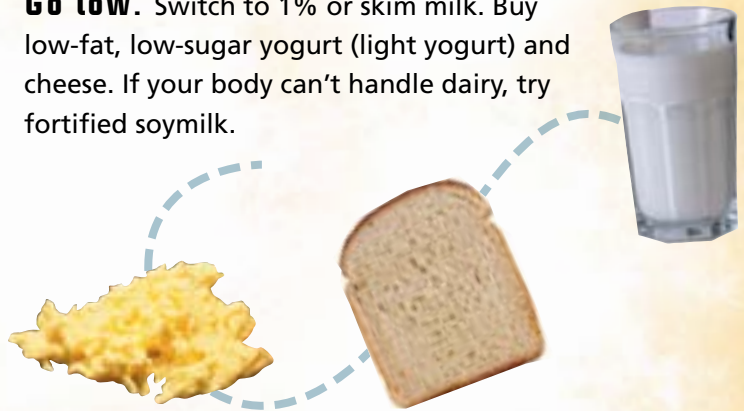


## IDEAS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

**Try for 3 out of 5.** Aim for a breakfast that includes 3 of the 5 main food groups. Try eggs + whole grain toast + milk. Or how about peanut butter + apple + cereal? Orange juice + lunchmeat + cheese?

**Think whole grain.** Choose whole grain bread for your toast in the morning. A bowl of warm oatmeal is another good whole grain option.

**Go low.** Switch to 1% or skim milk. Buy low-fat, low-sugar yogurt (light yogurt) and cheese. If your body can't handle dairy, try fortified soy milk.



### Well, yeah, BUT...

***"I don't have time."***

Plan for breakfast. Pour your cereal in a bowl the night before—and put a glass of milk or juice in the fridge. Or take your meal with you.

***"I'm not hungry."***

Breakfast doesn't have to be a huge meal. Just get some healthy food in your body to start your day.

***"Skipping breakfast keeps me from gaining too much weight."***

No it doesn't. In fact, studies show the opposite: skipping breakfast puts you at risk for being overweight. Breakfast skippers nearly always eat more food—and worse food—later in the day.

### WHY?

Many studies over the past 20 years have shown that eating a healthy breakfast can:

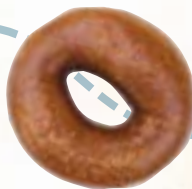
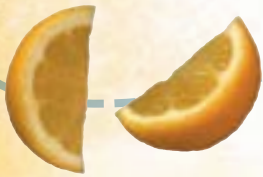
- Improve memory and concentration
- Boost your creativity and problem-solving
- Lift your mood
- Raise test scores and work performance
- Build overall health
- Help you reach and keep a healthy weight

**Select sensible cereal.** If you like cold cereals, stick to brands that have little or no added sugar, have at least 3 grams of fiber per serving, and have a whole grain *first* on the list of ingredients. Sensible cereals include Cheerios, Grape Nuts, All Bran, Wheat Chex, Kashi GoLean and Shredded Wheat.

**Top it off.** Top your cereal with berries, bananas, peaches, or other fruits.

**Mix it up.** Stir some fruit and granola into light yogurt.

**Pack it with you.** If you're in a hurry to get to school or work, take breakfast with you. Fresh fruit, light yogurt, a whole grain bagel, a hard-boiled egg, a piece of leftover pizza—these all fit in a backpack, purse, or cargo-pant pocket.



***“I’m a breakfast believer.”***

“My parents were always going, ‘It’s the most important meal of the day!’ But I could never get up for it. Literally. I’d sleep late, then rush out the door.

Then my mom started putting breakfast things out on the table: yogurt, bagel, fruit. I grab it and eat it on the way. And you know what? I’m not nodding off during second period anymore. I’m not hitting the snack machines before lunch. I sort of hate to admit it, but I feel better.”



**[ 2 ]**  
**EAT MORE  
 FRUITS AND  
 VEGETABLES**

**IDEAS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN**

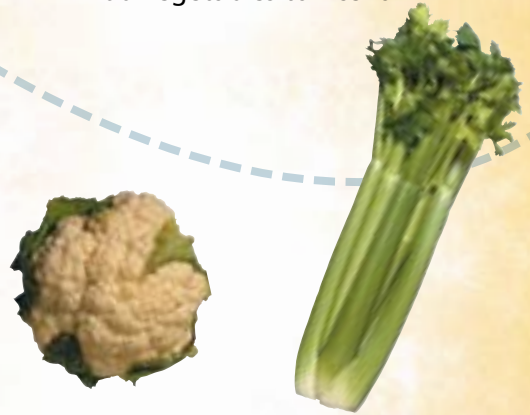
**Grab a bag.** Buy bags of mini carrots, broccoli, and sugar snap peas for easy, portable snacks.

**Rate your plate.** Fill half of your plate with vegetables at every lunch and dinner. Eat this half first!

**Finish up with fruit.** If you want something sweet for dessert, make it fruit. Whole, fresh fruit is best.

**Go for 2.** Include two vegetables in every dinner.

**Never starch alone.** Add vegetables to rice or pasta dishes.



**How much?**

You've probably heard it before: experts recommend 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables every day. This means that you should aim for:

**1 to 2 cups of fruit every day**



**1 ½ to 3 cups of vegetables every day**



**WHY?**

Fruits and vegetables are full of nutrients that help you learn and grow, prevent disease, and keep up your energy and mood.

Fruits and vegetables are important for a healthy body weight, too. Studies show that generous amounts of these foods can help you:

- Prevent overweight and obesity
- Lose excess weight
- Maintain a healthy weight throughout your life



**Get smooth.** Make frozen fruit smoothies with whole fruit, ice cubes, and skim milk or low fat yogurt.

**Watch your sides.** At restaurants, choose fruit, beans, vegetables, or a side salad instead of French fries.

**Keep it in sight.** Keep fruits and vegetables on hand at eye level in the refrigerator, cupboard, and counter. Store the chips and cookies out of sight. Better yet, buy them only for special occasions.



### *“We had a meal makeover.”*

“We knew the kids should be eating more vegetables, but they really resisted. One day my four-year-old said, ‘How come you and Mom don’t have to eat vegetables?’ I looked down at my plate—meat, rice, no green stuff at all. I realized that if we wanted them to eat more balanced meals, we had to set a better example.

It’s more of a family effort now, and it’s going a lot better. Have you heard it’s normal to offer some foods ten times before your toddler accepts them? From personal experience, I know it’s true. The vegetable thing happens slowly, but it does happen. Broccoli, salad, carrots—it’s an everyday thing for all of us now.”



## **LABEL LOGIC:** The rule of 3

For all the packaged food you buy and eat, try to follow the Rule of 3:

- Less than 3 grams of **sugar** per serving\*
- Less than 3 grams of **fat** per serving
- More than 3 grams of **fiber** per serving

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (239g)	
Servings per container about 2	
Amount per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 100	Calories from Fat 15
% Daily Value *	
<b>Total Fat</b> 1.5g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
<b>Cholesterol</b> 15mg	5%
<b>Sodium</b> 850mg	35%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 15g	5%
Dietary Fiber 3g	4%
Sugars 1g	
<b>Protein</b> 7g	

\*Milk, yogurt, and whole fruit (which have natural sugar) are exceptions to the Rule of 3 for sugar. Some healthy breakfast cereals have a bit more sugar, too. Still, stick to no more than 11 grams of sugar per serving.

[ 3 ]  
LIMIT—OR  
ELIMINATE—  
SWEETENED  
DRINKS

## IDEAS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

**Go with H<sub>2</sub>O.** Carry water with you—and drink it all day long.

**Get milk.** Aim for 2 to 3 cups of skim or 1% milk every day. Your whole body—especially your bones and teeth—will thank you.

**Rethink mealtime drinks.** Drink water or milk (skim or 1%) at meals and snack times.

**Make it special.** Save soda, lemonade, sports drinks, Kool-Aid, and punch for special occasions—no more than once a week. If you're used to drinking regular soda, switch to diet soda.

**Watch the juice.** Drink 100% fruit juice—but limit yourself to one small (4 to 6 ounces) glass or juice box a day. Better yet, eat a piece of fruit instead. You'll get more nutrients, and feel more satisfied.

**Exercise caution.** Go easy on the sports drinks. Most of the time, water is best for exercise.



### WHY?

Studies link an increase in Americans' intake of sweetened drinks—especially soda and sports drinks—with an **unhealthy increase in our body weight**. Sweet drinks are also linked to:

- Weak bones
- Tooth decay
- Increased desire for sugar (and in some cases, caffeine)

## ***“One change made a difference.”***

“I used to buy a coke every day from the machine at school. Then last spring, I decided to switch to water for a while.

I didn’t do anything else; I wasn’t on a diet. But I still managed to lose the little roll—you know, that extra flesh above the waistband?—just by kicking my soda habit.

Makes sense, if you do the math. A can of soda a day adds up to about 56,000 calories a year... that’s 16 pounds of body weight. Sixteen pounds. And it was just one small, easy change.”



## **Soda stats: not so sweet**

Some experts call soda “liquid candy”—and call our soda-guzzling habits “America’s other drinking problem.”

- Every day for a typical 2-year-old, carbonated soda pop provides more added sugar than cookies, candies, and ice cream combined.
- 56% of 8-year-olds down soda every day.
- A third of teenage boys drink at least 3 cans of soda pop per day.
- 60% of all public and private middle schools and high schools sell soda pop to students.
- Children increase their chance of becoming obese by 60% for each glass or can of sugared beverage they drink every day.

[4]  
**LIMIT  
SCREEN TIME**  
(TV, VIDEO GAMES,  
INTERNET)

**WHY?**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends limiting screen time to the following:

- No more than 1 to 2 hours a day for children 3 and older
- No screen time at all for children 2 years of age and younger

AAP experts note that while there are some potential benefits from watching some TV shows, research links TV to a wide range of negative health effects in children and teens.

**IDEAS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN**

**Move it out.** Take the TV, computer, and game consoles (Playstation, Xbox, Gameboy, etc.) out of all bedrooms.

**Balance TV time and activity time.** Make it a family rule that minutes of TV-watching must equal minutes of physical activity. Want to watch that sitcom? First, go for a 30-minute walk. Looking forward to that weekly drama? Play outside for an hour, then kick back on that couch.

**Set limits.** TV can be habit-forming. To keep from overdoing it, make a few house rules. Say, "Don't watch TV on weekdays," or "No more than an hour each night—after homework." Set whatever limits work for you. The important thing is to have some limits, and stick to them.

**Use a timer.** One way to help limit your screen time is to use a timer. When the timer goes off, your screen time is up—no exceptions!

**Don't eat in front of the TV.** Take the set out of the kitchen, and don't allow food in the TV room.



**Don't surf. Schedule.** Decide in advance what programs you want to watch during the week. Turn the TV on **ONLY** when the show is on, and turn it off when the show is over.

**Make the most of TV time.** Use a treadmill or stationary bike while you watch TV. Do calisthenics during the commercial breaks. Watch TV standing up—while you do arm circles, knee bends, and leg lifts.

**Be conscious.** Do you automatically turn the TV on when you come in the house? Does it stay on all the time, even if no one is watching it? Try to break these habits. Watch TV on purpose, not just because it's there.

## Tips for TV-free tots

### Alternatives to TV for the very young

Tempted to use the TV as a babysitter while you get a few things done around the house? Here are some better ideas:

**Let them "help" you cook, clean, and do laundry.** Have your little ones stir, pour, and mix food. Give them a sponge or baby wipe—and let them go to town. Or, let them help fold, match socks, or put away clothes.

**Corral them.** Use baby gates to keep little ones in a safe area while you cook or shower. Or, use an exersaucer or playpen.

**Play a music or story CD.** Kids will often entertain themselves if they've got a pleasant voice to listen to.

**Keep it fresh.** Put some toys up for a week or two, and then swap them out every so often.

**For more ideas, visit [tvturnoff.org](http://tvturnoff.org)**

### Indoor, at-home activity options

- Dance
- Yoga
- Duck-duck goose
- Indoor obstacle course
- Hopskotch (make spaces with masking tape)
- Interactive electronic games like Wii and Dance Dance Revolution (DDR)
- Balloon volleyball
- Calisthenics
- Hide-and-seek
- Hokey-pokey
- Stair climbing
- Juggling

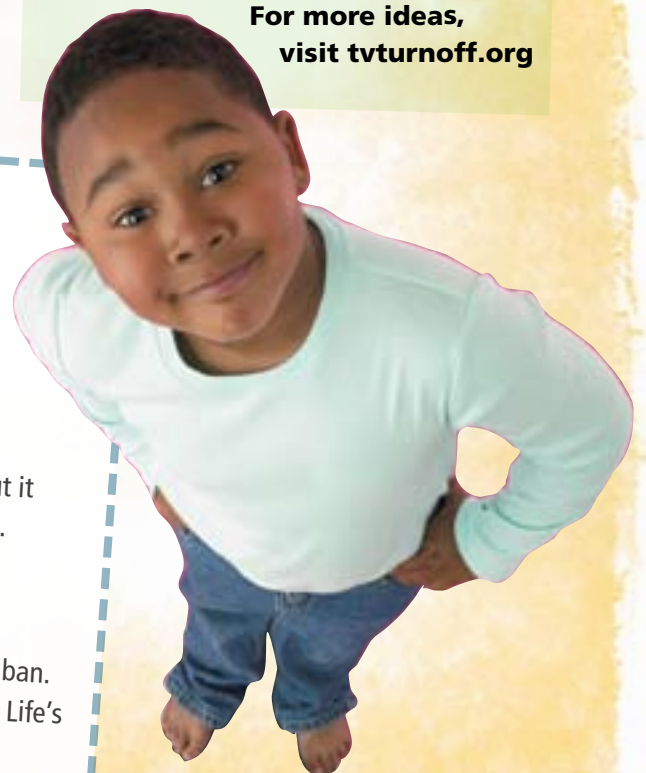
### *"I turned off—and tuned in."*

"The parents got this idea: no TV or video games for a month. Thirty days, screen-free.

We were bummed. Bored. And sort of desperate—like we were going through withdrawal.

But about two weeks in, I wasn't thinking that much about it anymore. I found other stuff to do. More drawing cartoons. More skateboarding. I built a ramp with my dad. I got into this series of books I'd been hearing about.

The month's almost over, but we're going to extend our TV ban. Without it, the days seem more interesting...more colorful. Life's too short to spend it staring at a screen."



# STEP UP TO



## EVERY DAY, AIM FOR:

- Less than 2 hours of screen time (TV, video games, Internet)
- 60 minutes or more of physical activity!

**START**

## BUILD A HEALTHY FOUNDATION



## STRETCH & STRENGTHEN

### Get aerobic

Try to make 20-30 minutes of your daily activity vigorous and aerobic. Get your heart beating faster, and work up a sweat.

- **Outdoors:** bike, walk, run, hike, climb, skate, sled, cross-country ski, or jump rope.
- **Indoors:** rowing machine, stationary bike, treadmill, elliptical trainer, active arcade or video games (dance, boxing).

### Turn off the TV

Aim for less than 2 hours a day.

- Remove TV, computers, and game consoles from all bedrooms.
- Be firm about limits.
- Don't eat in front of the TV.
- Don't surf: schedule time in advance to watch your favorite shows.
- Exercise while you watch (treadmill, bike, commercial-calisthenics).

### Transport yourself

Try to spend less time in the car. Get some fresh air. Rely on your own 2 feet.

- Walk or ride your bike to school. Make it a daily routine.
- Walk or ride your bike to friends' houses, to the store, to movies, to lessons, to church, or to work.
- Ditch the stroller. Let toddlers walk along with you when possible.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator —always—up and down.

### Stretch every day

Be gentle, patient. Work stretching into your daily activities—or at least stretch 2 to 3 times a week.

- Stretch before you exercise or sports.
- Stretch before an exercise or sports.
- Learn yoga or Pilates.
- Try martial arts or Tai Chi.
- Dance or stretch to music. Try "head, shoulders, knees, and toes."

## your body every day

ent, and persistent. into everyday at least take time to es a week:

u get out of bed. d after aerobic s. ates. gymnastics. o music (for toddlers, ers, knees and toes”).

## Build strength

Add strength training 2 to 3 times a week.

- Use your own body weight—do push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, and knee bends.
- Sign up for personal training or work with a coach to learn good technique.
- Use light weights and do lots of repetitions.



## Ease into it

If you have joint pain with walking or sports activities—or you’re just starting from scratch—consider these low-impact activities first:

- Swimming or water play
- Stationary cycling
- Elliptical trainers

Need help? Find a personal trainer.

## Play a sport or join a club

You don’t need to be a sports star. Pick up a game with friends and family.

- Check out options at your local parks and recreation center or at a health club or school.
- Try: basketball, tennis, soccer, football or flag football, hockey, lacrosse, baseball or softball, Ultimate Frisbee, swimming, dancing, cheerleading, volleyball, wrestling, track.

**REV IT UP**

## Play, play, play

Do more good old-fashioned, active play. No rules, no structure. Just have fun!

- Play tag, hopscotch, red-rover, or kickball.
- Throw a ball.
- Chase the dog.
- Look for bugs or play with dolls.
- Build things—towers of blocks, snowmen, or fortresses.
- Spend time at a playground, skate park, or rec center.
- Jump rope.

## Make it a family affair

Don’t go it alone. Get the whole family involved. Make family activities part of your weekly routine.

- Do regular, active chores: vacuuming, raking leaves, mowing the lawn, sweeping the floor, washing windows.
- Take walks together after dinner.
- Play Ping-Pong, Frisbee, badminton, or croquet.
- Find active indoor games like Twister or balloon volleyball.
- Go bowling or mini golfing.

# [ 5 ] INCREASE YOUR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## Prescription for playtime

Experts at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) say that kids need more playtime.

Spontaneous, free play—whether it's chasing the dog, playing with blocks, or just romping on the floor—is important. Besides boosting kids' physical activity, unstructured play:

- Lowers stress
- Builds creativity
- Nurtures individual interests and talents
- Develops problem-solving skills
- Most important of all, unstructured playtime **adds joy** to life.



## IDEAS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

**Go for 60, every day.** You need at least 60 minutes of activity every day. This includes playtime, exercise, and just moving around!

**Transport yourself.** Bike or walk to the library, to work, to school. Start a “walking school bus” in your neighborhood. Take the stairs—always—both up and down. And when you do drive somewhere, pair it with a walk. Choose parking spots at the far end of the lot. Return shopping carts at the stand farthest away from your car.

**Play, play, play.** Allow for lots of unstructured time for active play. Break out the balls, jump ropes, and hula-hoops. Stroll the dolls or take the dog for a walk. Head for the backyard, park, or rec center. Have fun!

## WHY?

Everyone needs regular physical activity—regardless of their shape, size, health, or age. Here's what's in it for you:

- Better energy
- Stronger muscles
- Less stress
- Easier weight management
- Less chance of heart disease, osteoporosis (weak bones), diabetes, and other illnesses

## What's sleep got to do with it?

**Sleep 8 to 12 hours each night.** Studies show that most kids, teens, and adults don't sleep enough. As a result, they often don't learn as well, eat as healthy, or exercise as much as they should. How much sleep do you need? Adults need about 8 hours, teens and older children about 10 hours, and preschoolers about 12 hours (including naps) every day.

**Set bedtimes.** This will help make sure you get the sleep you need—and make it easier to be active during the day.

**Expect better sleep as you become more physically active.** You won't necessarily sleep longer, but you'll probably go to sleep faster, sleep more deeply, and wake up more refreshed.

**Make it a family affair.** Adopt active habits that everyone can do. Walk each night after dinner—or play tag or Ping-Pong. Vacuum and sweep together. Do yoga or aerobics together every morning. Get a family pass, and hit the swimming pool or recreation center a few times a week.

**Rev it up—get aerobic!** For 20 to 30 minutes every day, do something—anything!—that gets your heart pumping: biking, running, playing basketball, fast walking, skating, etc. To stay motivated, sign up for a fun run, a charity bike ride, or the school track team.

**Stretch your body.** Stretch a little every day, and set aside time for a stretching activity 2 or 3 times a week. Yoga, Pilates, martial arts, dance, and gymnastics all help with flexibility. So do the old favorites like toe touches, lunges, and side bends. Just remember to start off slowly with each stretch and back off if you feel pain. Relax. Smile.

**Build strength.** Do strength exercises twice a week. Calisthenics like pushups, pull-ups, sit-ups, and knee bends are best and easiest for most people. If you want to lift weights, keep them light. Teens and kids shouldn't use heavy weights unless a coach or other trained professional can help them lift safely.



## Well, yeah, BUT...

### ***"It's boring."***

It doesn't have to be. Get a portable radio or music player. Bring a friend along. Switch activities, routes, locations, or times for exercise. Get creative—and keep moving.

### ***"I'm too tired..."***

Once you get into a routine, you'll find that exercise actually gives you more energy.

### ***"I'm too fat to exercise."***

No one's too fat (or clumsy, or old, or funny-looking) to be active. Our bodies were made to move! Being active may help you lose weight or get more coordinated—but most importantly, it'll help you be healthier and feel better about the body you have.

### ***"I can't stay motivated."***

Nothing motivates like success. Set small, realistic goals for yourself—say 10-minute walks every day this week, 15-minute walks the next, and so on until you reach your long-term goal. Track your progress on a tracker like the one shown on pages 21-22. Celebrate each milestone as you go!

### ***"We did it together."***

"Me, my brother, my mom and dad—we were all talking about wanting to be more fit, have fewer backaches, blah blah. Someone finally said, 'Let's do something together.'

We started doing these goofy exercise videos three times a week after dinner. We looked ridiculous, but it was actually really fun, and a great workout.

Since then, it's just grown. We ride bikes, hike, go to the rec center as a family. My friends and I are more active, too—we all signed up for karate; we're getting into swing dancing. It's like this: I hated the treadmill, but I like doing things with people. And I love being in shape."

## [6] EAT MEALS TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

### WHY?

Studies have shown that children who eat regular meals with their parents are more likely to:

- Get enough nutrients in their daily diet
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Do well in school
- Stay away from cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs
- Be happy with their present life and their prospects for the future

Family meals may be hard to arrange, but they're worth it.



## IDEAS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

**Make an appointment for family dinner.** Busy families have to make an effort to eat together. But it *can* be done. Post a family schedule in the kitchen, and circle the time you'll meet for the evening meal each night. If you have to rearrange your day or say no to an event so you can make the meal, do it.

**Stop grazing.** Teens and adults usually need 3 meals and 1 or 2 healthy snacks a day. Younger children may need to eat every 3 or 4 hours throughout the day. Set meal and snack times—and don't allow yourself to graze in between times. Drink water to tide you over. Did you know that thirst is often mistaken for hunger?

**Have everybody help with cooking.** Even young children can help with cooking healthy foods at home—stirring, pouring, and washing foods as needed. Older children and teens can take over cooking duties some nights of the week.



***“Eating together is pretty basic—and pretty cool.”***

“In our family, somebody had sports or clubs in the evening, or else somebody was always working late...we just got out of the habit. But then we became a host family for an exchange student. It made us do more ‘family things,’ like dinner, together.

Eating and talking together at the table—it's a pretty basic thing. But it's a pretty amazing thing, too. We're having some cool conversations. Stuff that's happening at school, stuff in the news. I'm definitely eating better, and we've all cut back on the fast food. But the really cool thing? Just hanging out.”

**Limit fast food.** Make it a family rule to eat fast food less than two times a month. You'll save money, feel better—and probably find that a simple homemade meal is just as fast.

**Sit down and slow down.** Meal times should be restful, not rushed. Enjoy your food—and enjoy the company (without the TV on!). Stay at the table for at least 30 minutes.

**Eat only in the dining room or kitchen.** If you're eating in every room of the house, you're probably eating all the time.

**Don't eat in the car.** Plan enough time to go into the restaurant and sit down to eat. If you're traveling, look for a park or rest stop to picnic in.

**When things get complex—keep meals simple.** You don't have to spend hours and hours cooking. Make a list of 6 or 7 quick, healthy meals to work from. See below for ideas.



## Easy and quick and healthy meals and snacks

ideas to sink your teeth into...

### meal ideas

- Baked potato with fat-free cottage cheese and vegetables
- Bean burritos, using black beans, vegetarian or fat-free refried beans
- Casserole with chicken, vegetables, and rice
- Chili and cornbread
- Enchiladas with vegetables and chicken
- Omelets with vegetables and low-fat cheese
- Grilled salmon and wild rice
- Macaroni and cheese, without the butter and using skim milk
- Pizza topped with vegetables and mozzarella cheese
- Roasted vegetables (in olive oil) served on brown rice
- Salad tossed with tuna or chicken
- Soups that are broth-based or made with low-fat milk
- Spaghetti with tomato sauce and extra vegetables
- Stir fry with chicken and vegetables over brown rice
- Tuna or chicken salad sandwich on whole wheat
- Pancakes or waffles (whole wheat) with fruit and light yogurt
- Hummus and whole-wheat pitas
- Subs or wraps with vegetables and lean meats

### snack ideas

- Cereal: low-sugar, whole grain
- Cheese: low-fat cheeses and cheese-sticks
- Fat-free cottage cheese and fruit
- Cookies: low-fat oatmeal
- Crackers and chips: low-fat, whole grain, baked
- Fruit: apples and applesauce, bananas, grapes, oranges, fruit cups in juice (not syrup), pears, berries, melons, kiwis, peaches, nectarines, etc.
- Muffins: bran
- Nuts: almonds, walnuts, natural peanut butter (trans fat free)
- Popcorn: air-popped
- Popsicles: sugar-free
- Pretzels
- Smoothies: blend light yogurt with fresh and frozen fruit
- Vegetables: mini-carrots, snap peas, cucumber slices, broccoli and cauliflower florets, celery sticks, etc.
- Yogurt: light

[7]  
BE  
POSITIVE  
ABOUT FOOD

WHY?

**Food is a family affair.**

And experts agree that how your family thinks and talks about food and bodies can have a big impact on your health now and in the future.

Unfortunately, some of the most well-meaning practices—like restricting food or focusing on body weight—can end up being harmful. They can actually promote the behaviors and poor self-image they aim to prevent.

## IDEAS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

**Forget “forbidden foods.”** Being overly restrictive about certain “bad” foods can really backfire. It creates pressure to be perfect and can lead to all kinds of unhealthy behavior. So be moderate. Plan for treats from time to time. If you make good food choices and have reasonable portions most of the time, you’re doing great.

**Don’t use food as a reward, bribe, or punishment.**

This can lead to “comfort eating”—overeating when you’re stressed—and other unhealthy behaviors. Instead, reward or motivate yourself (or your kids) with an activity: a trip to the park, a hike with a friend, a matinee.

**Stay away from fad diets.** Beware of eating plans that promise to help you drop weight, build muscle, or lose (or gain) inches in a “quick and easy” way. Such diets rarely work in the long-term—and they can be unsafe. Instead, build life-long healthy habits for eating and activity.

**Learn about nutrition.** Take a class or read a book on nutrition. Find out how different foods nourish your body. Be food-friendly, not food-phobic!

**Grow it yourself.** Start a garden in your yard or in containers on your porch or windowsill. Growing your own vegetables is a fun way to get some exercise, bone up on biology, and share time with your family. It’s also a great reminder that food is healthy and nurturing, not harmful.



[ 8 ]  
DON'T  
CRITICIZE  
ABOUT WEIGHT

## IDEAS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

**Watch what you say about yourself.** Don't criticize your own body—even as a joke. Don't compare your own weight, size, or shape to someone else's. Being healthy means being positive about yourself. Accept your uniqueness!

**Watch what you say about others.** Don't make negative remarks about other people's bodies, either. Show appreciation for each person's unique personality, coloring, and body shape and size. Ask others in your family to do the same.

**Be realistic.** It's normal and healthy for your body to change over time. So let your doctor help you determine if your weight is right for you and what your goals should be. For example, even if you're too heavy right now, a realistic goal might be weight maintenance, not weight loss. It's normal for kids to gain some weight just before puberty or a growth spurt. You may be able to grow into your weight.

**Focus on health.** Focus on lifelong, healthy habits—not numbers on the scale. Don't ask what others weigh, and don't over-praise a drop in a friend's or family member's clothing size. Try to be the healthiest you can be, for your own sake and as a positive example to others.



*"We realized we needed to support each other."*

"We both wanted to be healthier. We talked about it all the time. It didn't occur to me that how I talked about it could actually be making things more difficult for her. Or that some things I was doing—like hiding treats—were just making her feel weird and anxious.

What was helpful? We made a list for ourselves—things that would work for us. Mostly, it was stuff we could do together, like buy healthier snacks or go walking after dinner. But there were also things we agreed not to do. For example, we stopped weighing ourselves every day. We've tried to stop complaining about how we look.

It's not easy to change. But when you think about your whole life, the habits and attitudes you want to have in the long term, it's easier. You're thinking about your health and your happiness—not just your jean size—and that feels good."

# WATCH YOUR TALK

How you talk about bodies and food can have a big—and often unintended—effect.



**You say:**

Don't you think you'd feel better if you lost a little weight? You'd look great!

**You say:**

Hey—wow! Have you lost weight? You look really, really fantastic!

**They think:**

*Did I look bad before? I've reached my weight goal...but maybe I need to lose a lot more.*

**They think:**

*I was feeling okay, but I guess she doesn't think I'm okay the way I am. And why does "looking good" matter so much?*

**Advice:**

Focus on a person's positive qualities, talents, and accomplishments. Don't suggest that self-esteem is—or should be—based only on how you look.

**Advice:**

Don't over-praise a weight loss—it can promote an unhealthy fear of fat. A simple, understated compliment is fine: "You look nice."

**You say:**

Oh. My. Gosh. Look at my thighs in these pants! I'm disgusting!

**They think:**

*If she thinks she's disgusting... then she must think I'm pretty gross, too.*

**Advice:**

Don't suggest that it's normal—or desirable!—to hate your body. Being dissatisfied with your body won't help you be healthy at all!

**You say:**

Do you really want to order that? It's pretty high in fat... did you notice the low-calorie section of the menu?

**They think:**

*He's watching everything I put in my mouth! I guess I have to start obsessing, too! Or maybe I'll just sneak....*

**Advice:**

Don't hint about—or monitor—other people's food choices. Your "helpful suggestions" are likely to backfire. Forbidden foods can easily become guilty secrets.

**You say:**

Nice tent—I mean, nice dress!

**They think:**

*How humiliating.*








**Advice:**

Don't tease people about their shape or clothes. It's never helpful, always hurtful. And also not funny.

# 8 TO LIVE BY

## Track It!

Week: \_\_\_\_\_

FOOD	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Breakfast <b>Every Day!</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fruits <b>Eat More!</b>	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○
Veggies <b>Eat More!</b>	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○
Sweetened drinks <b>Aim for None!</b>	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more
Low-fat milk <b>Drink Up!</b>	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○
Water <b>Drink Up!</b>	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○

ACTIVITY	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Minutes of TV, video games, and Internet <b>Go Easy!</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes
Minutes of activity <b>Rev it Up!</b> (includes outside play, chores, family activities, walking to school, sports, and more...)	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> # minutes

## SUPPORT

I ate dinner with my family this week on these days:

Sun Mon Tues Wed Thurs Fri Sat

Things my family and friends did that were...

Helpful:

Hurtful:

## CELEBRATE

Things I did well this week:

## MY NEW GOALS

Things I could improve on:

# 8 TO LIVE BY

## Track It!

Week: \_\_\_\_\_

FOOD	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Breakfast <b>Every Day!</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fruits <b>Eat More!</b>	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○
Veggies <b>Eat More!</b>	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○	○○○○
Sweetened drinks <b>Aim for None!</b>	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more	 none 1 2 3 more
Low-fat milk <b>Drink Up!</b>	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○	○○○
Water <b>Drink Up!</b>	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○	○○○○ ○○○○

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	# minutes	# minutes	# minutes	# minutes	# minutes	# minutes	# minutes
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	# minutes	# minutes	# minutes	# minutes	# minutes	# minutes	# minutes

## SUPPORT

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Sun Mon Tues Wed Thurs Fri Sat

Things my family and friends did that were...

Helpful:

Hurtful:

## CELEBRATE

Things I did well this week:

## MY NEW GOALS

Things I could improve on:

## Web resources to help you

**LiVe**



- **IntermountainLiVe.org:** more media, more information, more resources to help you LiVe the 8 habits discussed in this booklet.

- **Intermountainhealthcare.org/weight:**

Intermountain Healthcare's Weight Management Online Center for grownups, kids, and families. Find more materials and resources—including these web links:

- **Healthiergeneration.org:** information, programs, grants, and games for kids, teens, parents, teachers, and companies interested in reversing national trends in childhood obesity.
- **Kidnetic.com:** fitness challenges, games, quizzes, and other fun stuff to help you move, eat, and learn better.
- **Kidshealth.org:** straight talk, cool games, and practical advice on health and wellness.
- **MyPyramid.gov:** interactive site with tips, games, tools, and plans for healthier living—includes a section just for kids!
- **Tvturnoff.org:** facts, plans, and materials to help you limit screen time.



