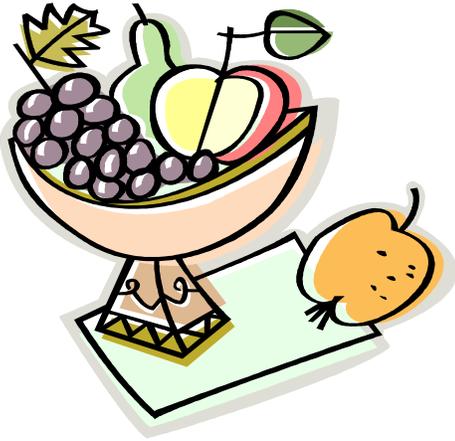


# Raising a Healthy Family



## WHAT FOODS SHOULD MY FAMILY EAT?

Your child is growing, and it is up to you to provide the nutrition needed to stay healthy and strong. Your kids burn a lot of energy as they grow, learn and play. Stock your home with healthy whole grains, low fat and fat free milk and yogurt, lean meat, fish and beans, good fats (such as olive and canola oils, nuts and seeds) and plenty of whole fruits and vegetables. To get more details on servings, go to [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)

## BUT MY CHILD WON'T EAT HEALTHY FOODS!

If your child refuses the healthy foods you offer, try some of these strategies:

- Offer your child several healthy foods, and let THEM choose what to eat from what you offer.
- Encourage your child to try new foods and praise them when they do, even if they don't like it.
- Have your child come up with meal ideas and help you prepare them.
- Make a "brown bag" lunch for your child to bring to school – include a sandwich on whole grain bread, a whole fruit, raw vegetables, a healthy snack (see Healthy Snack Ideas) and water or low fat milk.

## AT-HOME EATING HABITS: ARE THEY HEALTHY?

Most school-aged children thrive best when they have a regular eating schedule. Start EVERYDAY with breakfast! Serve meals at about the same time each day, and have a designated snack time, too. Your child needs an afternoon boost to finish homework or fuel them for extra play! And remember, YOUR eating habits will influence your child's habits. Telling kids what to eat is one thing, showing them is better!

### **Here are some healthy at-home eating tips:**

- Eat as a family at the dinner table: Make sure you have one meal as an entire family every day, and eat around the table. Eating at the table allows for better conversation!
- Designate family dinner nights: If your family is always "on the go" schedule family dinner nights as often as you can.
- Cook quickly, eat slowly: Learn how to make quick healthy meals so there is more time for sitting around the table together. Don't cook too much food; that way you don't have to say "no" when your child asks for seconds.
- Serve vegetables and/or fruits at EVERY meal: Let them fill at least half of your dinner plate!
- No distractions!: Turn off the TV and put the phone answering machine on. Make your family time the most important time of the day.
- Keep mealtimes relaxing and positive: Let everyone share about their day and get a little attention from you, but make sure the meal is not rushed.



## FIT KIDS ARE HEALTHY KIDS



Every child should get 60 minutes of playtime/exercise every day. Games like baseball, kickball, tag, hide-and-seek, soccer, jumping rope, and being a part of an after-school sports program are all ways your child

can get the exercise they need. Limit TV watching, video games and computer time to an hour or two each day, emphasizing the importance of physical activity. And again, your children will learn by example, so get on your sneakers and play with them!

## HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD IS AT A HEALTHY WEIGHT?

Did you know that every child gains weight *before* a growth spurt? So if you notice your school-aged child has an increased appetite and is gaining a few pounds, don't be overly alarmed, and don't place your child on a 'diet'. Your physician or health care provider

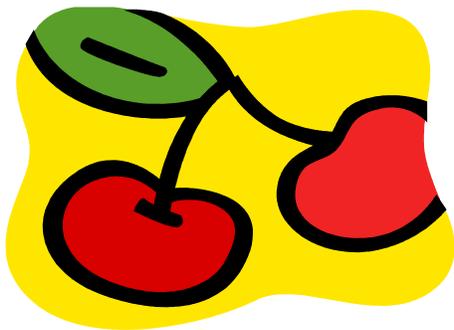
can help you know if your child is gaining weight too quickly. Ask for a referral to a Registered Dietitian who works with children and families. This may be just the step your family needs to get healthy and fit!

## HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS FOR KIDS

Snacks can be a wonderful way to provide your child with the extra calories they need while growing, learning and playing. Often kids will choose snacks full of sugar and fat, which may be empty calories. Try and encourage snacks that include two food groups. For example, baby carrots dipped in hummus.

The snacks with a star (\*) contain 100-120 calories.

- ✓ 1 apple, sliced with 1T of peanut butter for dipping
- ✓ \*1 large celery stalk cut into sticks with 2T ranch dressing for dipping
- ✓ 10 small whole grain crackers with a single serving of your favorite cheese
- ✓ \*3/4 cup low fat yogurt with a few blueberries
- ✓ \*10 small whole wheat pretzels dipped in spicy mustard
- ✓ \*1 rice cake topped with 1T peanut butter and a few raisins
- ✓ \* 1 cup sliced melon dipped in low fat plain or vanilla yogurt
- ✓ \*15 frozen grapes



### Websites to visit for more information:

#### **Kids' Food Pyramid:**

[www.mypyramid.gov/kids](http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids)

#### **Healthy Eating Ideas for Parents and Kids:**

[www.mealmakeovermoms.com](http://www.mealmakeovermoms.com)

#### **Health Information for Kids and Teens:**

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)