



healthy habits *for* healthy kids

A Nutrition and Activity Guide for Parents



At HealthLink®, Inc., promoting healthy habits to families and increasing access to health care are two major priorities. Maintaining wellness and preventing chronic disease begins at home, and ensuring health coverage for all family members is fundamental to both.

Healthy Habits for Healthy Kids is a collaborative effort with the Dole Nutrition Institute (DNI) to address the growing concerns about childhood obesity among America's youth. This children-friendly publication has been developed to educate families on the long-term importance of living active, healthy lifestyles.

By encouraging millions of children to make lasting health behavior changes, together we are saving lives, inspiring healthy lifestyles and motivating our youth to help others.

Dennis Matheis,
President
HealthLink®, Inc.

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Introduction

At the Dole Nutrition Institute (DNI), we aim to “feed the world with knowledge” through nutrition research and education. Because lifelong healthy habits begin early, we offer an array of resources to help parents and educators teach children the importance of proper diet and regular physical activity. With today’s obesity epidemic, that mission is more important than ever.

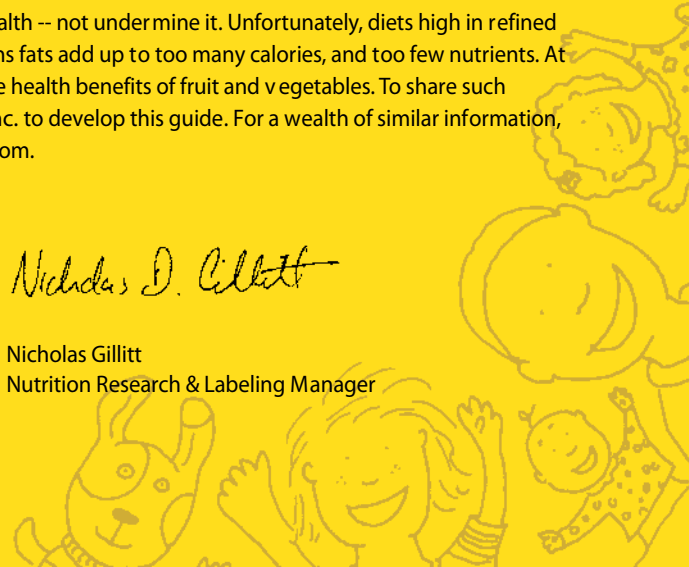
The food that children eat should support their health -- not undermine it. Unfortunately, diets high in refined sugar, processed carbohydrates, saturated and trans fats add up to too many calories, and too few nutrients. At the same time, science is continuing to confirm the health benefits of fruit and vegetables. To share such knowledge, we’ve teamed up with HealthLink®, Inc. to develop this guide. For a wealth of similar information, please visit dolenutrition.com and dolesuperkids.com.



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Tips for busy parents, found throughout this booklet, are provided by California Health and Longevity Institute in Westlake Village, California. The Director of Nutrition, Paulette Lambert, R.D., CDE, has been a nutritionist and ADA educator for over ten years, working with thousands of parents over the past 30 years to help them transform their families’ relationships with food. Lead Exercise Physiologist, Mike Brazeal, MA, is certified as a Health and Fitness Instructor through the American College of Sports Medicine.



Diet Matters More Than You Think

The average American child is eating far too much of what they don't need -- and far too little of what they do need. Over half of elementary school-age children eat no fruit. At the same time, the average child is consuming about 165 more calories than needed on a daily basis. But the problem isn't just excess calories. Nutrient deficiencies may also play a role. When children eat junk food, they starve their body of needed nutrients. Even a child at normal weight may be getting inadequate nutrition.

Our current "fast food" culture adds to the problem. Studies published recently in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* show that kids face many challenges trying to maintain a healthy weight and get adequate nutrition. Nearly one-third of U.S. children aged 4 to 19 eat fast food, packing on about six extra pounds per child per year.

Little-Known Obesity Factors

While the main contributors to childhood obesity -- junk food, TV watching, inactivity -- are well known, research has identified other factors that are more obscure. For example, did you know:

- ▶ Children with overweight parents have the highest odds of becoming overweight themselves
- ▶ Sensitive children are more likely to become obese than those who are less thin-skinned
- ▶ Low parental concern about a child's weight increases obesity risk
- ▶ Children who take their bottle to bed by age 3 have double the risk of becoming obese
- ▶ Breast-feeding may protect against childhood obesity risk

Our Children at Risk

One out of three children born in this decade will contract Type 2 diabetes during their lifetime. 25% of children ages 5-10 have high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or other early warning signs of heart disease. The primary factor is excess weight -- the most common health problem facing U.S. children. At age four, a child has a 20% chance of remaining obese as an adult. By adolescence that likelihood rises to 80%. Life expectancy for those who are obese by the time they reach their 20th birthday is two decades less than for those of normal weight.

In the past three decades, the prevalence of being overweight has nearly tripled among children and teens. Fortunately, the sooner your child returns to a healthy weight, the better his or her chances of maintaining that weight into adulthood.

Obesity Tube

On average, 10-15 year old boys spend 3.5 hours a day watching TV or playing video games, while girls spend 2.5. Children who watch more than 3 hours of TV a day are 50% more likely to be obese as adults.





Nurture with Nutrition

Prevention is possible. This central truth often gets lost amid the alarming headlines about poor nutrition and childhood obesity. But the good news is that we have the power to protect children from the many ailments associated with poor nutrition. How? By educating ourselves, our families, and our communities -- and by setting an example with our own food choices and exercise habits. Research shows that healthy living can be learned -- and that early childhood is prime time for absorbing these lessons.

Stop the Power Struggles!

It is the parent's role to provide a variety of healthy foods at meal time. Children may balk at new healthy foods and demand junk food, but parental persistence and setting limits will pay off over time.

- ▶ If your child chooses not to eat at mealtime, offer the same food later or make them wait until the next meal or snack
- ▶ For those children who seek comfort in feeling stuffed, let them eat their fill of vegetables and fruit, limiting only higher calorie foods
- ▶ Provide many choices of healthy foods at a meal so if your child has nonfat milk, fruit and bread only they still have had a "healthy meal" that includes protein, vitamins, antioxidants and energy
- ▶ Don't panic about your child not eating enough and start to offer high calorie non-nutritious foods just so they eat something
- ▶ Lead by example; eat fruit and vegetables frequently and avoid junk food!
- ▶ Read nutrition labels to your children; as they begin to understand why sugar and fat isn't good for them, their tastes may change

DID YOU KNOW?

It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to get the message that your body is getting food. When your brain gets this message, you stop feeling hungry. So encourage fast eaters to slow down to give their brains a chance to catch up.





Family Meals Put Health on Menu

The last three decades have witnessed a 33% decline in family dining. Today, less than half of children regularly have dinner with their families. Could this be connected to the increase in childhood obesity during that time frame?

Family meals have 50% more fruit and vegetables and are three times more likely to include low-fat options than those consumed alone. Children who regularly eat meals with their families tend to have healthier eating habits with more fruits and vegetables and fewer fried foods, soft drinks and saturated fats. Their diets are also higher in calcium, iron, fiber and vitamins. Plus, the more often a teen eats dinner with family, the less likely he or she is to have eating disorders, be obese, smoke, drink or use illegal drugs.

How to Encourage Healthy Eating

Take heart: healthy living is easier than you think. Just by making a commitment to change the way your family eats, you will begin to make changes that will improve your family's health.

Don't get thrown off by initial resistance. When children have had a high level of "unhealthy" food, they will find new food challenging. Make changes one step at a time. Generally within a few days children adjust to change if parents are consistent and firm with the message. Here are some simple steps you can begin to put into practice today:

- ▶ **Be a good role model**
The most important way to improve your child's diet is to set a good example.
- ▶ **Involve your children in planning meals, shopping for food and cooking**
This gives your children a sense of ownership about the foods they eat and they will be more open to trying new varieties of foods.
- ▶ **Honor meal times, especially at dinner, with your full attention**
Relaxed meal times allow for better digestion and decreased stress; make the dinner table a No Toy-No TV-No Cell Phone Zone!
- ▶ **Make fruits and vegetables convenient by placing them in spots where kids will see them first**
Countertops, front-of-fridge, lower shelves should be prime real estate for healthy snacks.

What to Do about Your Picky Eaters

Not all picky eaters are underweight. Picky eaters tend to eat only what they want and those choices are often high in fat and calories. When you have a picky eater, here are a few tips to help you reduce your own anxiety and encourage variety in your child's diet.

- ▶ If your children don't eat much, make sure what they do eat is healthy
- ▶ Think about what your child ate for the week, not just for the day.
- ▶ If your child eats little dinner and complains of hunger at bedtime, offer only a piece of fruit to encourage better mealtime eating
- ▶ Get creative with presentation. Give young children cut fruits and vegetables, and then let them create funny faces or animals

My Pyramid for Kids

Eat Right, Exercise, Have Fun.



The USDA Dietary Guidelines reflect the government's science-based recommendations for what to eat in order to reduce the risk for major chronic diseases. This Pyramid helps to illustrate these recommendations for children ages 6-11. The campaign's key points include:

- ▶ Exercise & play
- ▶ Eat more dark green veggies and colorful fruit (fresh, frozen, dried or packaged)
- ▶ Make half your grains whole
- ▶ Go lean with protein, and include more fish, beans, peas, nuts and seeds

A healthy, balanced meal should include:

Lean protein:	Whole-grain carbohydrate:	Fruit:	Vegetables:	Healthy fats & oils:
chicken, fish, nonfat milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, peanut butter, beans, chicken, nuts	whole grain bread, oatmeal, high fiber cereal, popcorn, brown rice, graham crackers	apple, banana, grapes, melon, orange, kiwi, strawberries, blueberries, mango, pineapple, raisins	cucumber, bell pepper, tomato, spinach, broccoli, green beans, carrots, sweet potato, kale, cabbage, zucchini	olive oil, canola oil, no trans fat margarine, avocado

Below are recommended servings for children in different age groups: Portion sizes should be adjusted for age and body size.

<u>Ages 2-5</u>	<u>Ages 5-8</u>	<u>Ages 9-13</u> <i>(larger serving size for boys)</i>	<u>Ages 14-18</u> <i>(larger serving size for boys)</i>
Milk/dairy: 2 cups per day Lean meat/beans: 2 oz. per day Fruit: 2 per day Vegetables: 2.5 per day Bread/grains: 3 servings per day	Milk/dairy: 2 cups per day Lean meat/beans: 3-4 oz. per day Fruit: 3 per day Vegetables: 3 per day Bread/grains: 4-5 servings per day	Milk/dairy: 3 cups per day Lean meat/beans: 5 oz. per day Fruit: 3-4 per day Vegetables: 3 per day Bread/grains: 5-6 servings per day	Milk/dairy: 3-4 cups per day Lean meat/beans: 6-9 oz. per day Fruit: 3-4 per day Vegetables: 3-4 per day Bread/grains: 6-8 servings per day

Note: "1/2 fruit = 1 serving; 1/2 cup cooked or 1 cup raw vegetables = 1 serving; 1 oz bread/grains = 1 serving"

Children should avoid or limit saturated fats found in animal products, hydrogenated fats found in many snack foods, and trans fats found in commercially fried foods. Add healthy fats only as needed for extra calories.



Is Your Child's Weight Healthy?

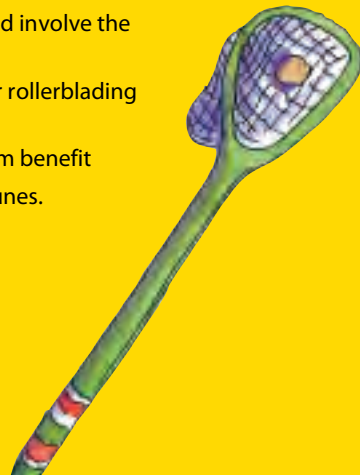
A recent study revealed that only 1/3 of mothers were able to accurately identify their children as overweight. While it's tempting to dismiss youthful pounds as harmless "baby fat," research shows that early overweight is a strong indicator of later health problems. What's more, low parental concern over a child's weight greatly increases the risk of childhood obesity. The best way to identify whether your child is at a healthy weight is to establish his or her Body Mass Index (BMI). The ideal BMI is different for each child, depending on his or her gender, age, and height. Your pediatrician can give you your child's specific BMI numbers. But, typically, school age children should gain 3-6 pounds per inch of height in order to maintain healthy growth.



Help Your Kids Get Moving

Rather than TV or video games, support physically-engaging family activities. What you do with your children today can have a profound effect on their adult lives.

- ▶ Model active behavior; a research study showed that in families where both parents were active, 95 percent of the children were active
- ▶ Emphasize the fun, and avoid making negative comments about performance
- ▶ Plan family outings around fitness activities; hiking on the local trails or mountains always makes great fun; beach or lake outings can be packed with lots of physical activity
- ▶ Local parks provide a great outdoor experience to play soccer, shoot some hoops, or throw around the frisbee, baseball, or football; younger kids are natural climbers and jungle gyms and playground equipment make for excellent exercise for strength and agility benefits
- ▶ Walk your kids to school once or twice a week or at the very least once or twice a month
- ▶ Encourage alternate modes of local transportation like self-propelled scooters, bikes, skates and skateboards
- ▶ Buy toys that are fitness related; hula hoops, pogo sticks, jump ropes, trampolines, etc.
- ▶ Give gifts to your children that create opportunities for physical activity and involve the whole family, like bicycles, balls, rackets, etc.
- ▶ Have outdoor fun matched with the season; try ice skating in the winter or rollerblading during the warm summer months
- ▶ Encourage around 30 minutes of activity a day for your children's maximum benefit
- ▶ Dancing can be a fit activity too; boogie as a family to your kids' favorite tunes.





Ideas to Help Kids Eat the Right Foods

Fruits/Vegetables:

- ▶ Offer your child a fruit and a vegetable with every meal
- ▶ Entice children to eat more vegetables by adding a teaspoon of no trans fat margarine, a tablespoon of parmesan cheese, marinara sauce, or light dressing
- ▶ Chop vegetables finely when adding to pasta, marinara sauce, meatloaf or other dishes
- ▶ Add shelled soy beans to pasta, salad or soup for added protein
- ▶ Puree fresh fruit and yogurt, and freeze for popsicles
- ▶ Freeze grapes, bananas or melon balls
- ▶ Mix fruit into fat-free pudding
- ▶ Add extra vegetables like chopped baby carrots to canned soups
- ▶ For a drink, offer 100% fruit juice; just 3/4 cup or 6 fluid ounces counts as one serving

Meats/Protein:

- ▶ To reduce saturated fat, try veggie burgers, soy-based nuggets, hummus and bean soups
- ▶ Pack healthy nuts, like almonds or peanuts into lunches
- ▶ Introduce more fish to their diet and try using teriyaki sauce on grilled shrimp and salmon
- ▶ Make a natural peanut butter or almond butter sandwich for lunches; add sliced banana or all-fruit jam

Dairy:

- ▶ Try freezing individual boxes of nonfat chocolate milk or soymilk and placing in lunch bag for school
- ▶ Aim for 3 servings of dairy per day for adequate calcium, vitamin D and protein
- ▶ One string cheese or 6 oz. yogurt is equivalent to one dairy serving
- ▶ Try adding one heaping teaspoon of cocoa mix to hot milk for a quick treat
- ▶ Look for nonfat yogurts with at least 25% calcium on the label
- ▶ Choose nonfat frozen yogurt for all children to decrease saturated fat
- ▶ Make your child's hot cereal with soymilk or regular nonfat milk for added calcium

Grains:

- ▶ Add a handful of high-fiber cereal to your child's favorite lower fiber cereal
- ▶ Look for breakfast cereals with less than 10 grams of sugar per serving
- ▶ Try mixing higher and lower sugar cereals as a compromise with your child

Healthy Fats:

- ▶ For children who need extra calories, add nuts, avocado, or cook with a teaspoon of olive oil or canola oil



RECIPES for Busy Families

Fruit Smoothies

Excellent source of antioxidants and calcium too. A great breakfast or afternoon snack, filling and satisfies a sweet tooth!

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of frozen fruit such as berries, peaches, or tropical mix
- 1 banana
- 6-8 oz. of nonfat organic yogurt
- 1/4 cup of orange juice, nonfat milk, or soy milk

Directions:

1. Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor. Blend at high speed until smooth and creamy.

Serves: 2

Equivalent to: 3 fruit servings and 1 oz. of dairy protein

Nutrition Information PER SERVING:

About 200 calories, depending on fruit used. 1 g fat, with over 90% Vitamin C needed for children 4-8.

Rainbow Fruit Kabobs

This colorful and nutritious snack is fun to make but even more fun to eat. Experiment with other colorful fruits to create your own rainbow on a stick! Makes 12 kabobs

Ingredients

- Strawberries,
- Cantaloupe
- Pineapple Chunks with juice
- Honeydew Melon
- Grapes
- Bananas
- 12 wooden skewers (8" to 10" long)

Directions:

1. Cut each banana into 6 chunks. Dip chunks in reserved pineapple juice.
2. Thread 1 strawberry, 1 cantaloupe chunk, 1 grape, 1 pineapple chunk, 1 honeydew melon chunk and 1 banana chunk on each skewer. Add more fruit until skewer is full. Set on a plate and start threading next skewer. Repeat until all skewers are filled with a rainbow of colorful fruit.
3. Lay skewers on platter; pour reserved pineapple juice over top to keep fruit from browning. Chill until ready to serve.

Nutrition Information PER SERVING:

About 40 calories and 0 g fat, with over 90% Vitamin C needed for children 4-8.

