



Kinship Link

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Eating Right for a Healthy Weight

Pro Kinship for Kids

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for Kids

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Reaching and maintaining a healthier weight contributes to your overall health and well being. Losing even a few pounds or preventing further weight gain has health benefits. Are you ready to make changes in your lifestyle and move toward a healthier weight?

Here are some tips to get you started.

- **Start with a plan for lifelong health.** Focus on the big picture - achieving overall good health - not just short-term weight loss.
- **Set healthy, realistic goals.** You are more likely to succeed in reaching realistic goals when you make changes step-by-step. Start with one or two specific, small changes at a time. Track your progress by keeping a food and activity log.
- **Get a personalized eating plan.** A plan that will give you the amounts of each food you need daily.
- **Eat at least three meals a day and plan your meals ahead of time.** Whether you're eating at home, packing a lunch, or eating out, an overall eating plan for the day will help keep you on track.
- **Balance your plate with a variety of foods.** Half your plate should be filled with fruits and vegetables, about one fourth with lean meat, poultry, or fish, and one fourth with grains. To round out your meal, add fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, or cheese.
- **Start your meal with low calorie foods like fruits, vegetables, and salads.** These foods are packed with nutrients your body needs.
- **Focus on your food.** Pick one place to sit down and eat at home. Eating while doing other things may lead to eating more than you think. Also, switching from a large plate to a smaller one may help you feel satisfied with reduced portions.
- **Know when you've had enough to eat.** Quit before you feel full or stuffed. 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, fast eaters - slow down and give your brain a chance to get the word.
- **Get plenty of dietary fiber from fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains.** Fiber can help you feel full longer and lower your risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes.
- **Watch portion sizes to manage your calorie intake.** This is the key to an effective weight management plan. To make sure your portion sizes are "just right" use household measures and refer to the Nutrition Facts Label for serving size information.
- **Snack smart.** Include snacks as part of your daily calorie allowance and limit portions to one serving. Plan for nutritious snacks to prevent between-meal hunger. Keep portable, healthy snacks in your desk, backpack, or car.
- **Find your balance between food and physical activity.** Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness - plus, it helps control body weight, promotes a feeling of well-being, and reduces the risk of chronic diseases. Find ways to be active throughout the day. Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes or more each week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, such as brisk walking. Muscle-strengthening activities at least two days per week are also recommended. If you are currently inactive, check with your doctor concerning increased physical activity.



Smart Snacking Tips for Kids

Snacks can play an important role in meeting kids' nutrient needs. Choosing foods from all the food groups will give them the energy they need between meals. It helps to plan and portion out snacks in advance. Kids will usually only need 2 or 3 snacks daily, and these should be provided at least one hour before meals. It is recommended that snacks (and meals) be eaten in an area without distractions. So avoid snacking while watching TV or when using other electronic devices. Better yet, let the kids help prepare the healthy snacks.

Here are a few easy, tasty, (and healthy) snacks to help get you started. Adults may need to help with some of these ideas.

1. Parfait: Layer vanilla or plain low-fat yogurt with fruit and dried cereal.
2. Toast a whole grain waffle and top with low-fat yogurt and sliced fruit or smooth nut butter.
3. Blend low-fat milk, frozen strawberries, and a banana for thirty seconds for a delicious smoothie.
4. Sandwich cut-outs: Make a sandwich on whole grain bread. Cut out your favorite shape using a big cookie cutter. Eat the fun shape and the edges too!
5. Mini-pizza: Toast a whole wheat English muffin, drizzle with pizza sauce, and sprinkle with low-fat mozzarella cheese.
6. Frozen Treats: Mix equal amounts of fat-free plain or flavored yogurt with 100% fruit juice, then pour into paper cups, and freeze for a tasty treat.
7. Quesadilla: Sprinkle shredded cheese over a corn or whole wheat tortilla; fold in half and microwave for twenty seconds. Top with salsa.
8. Spread hummus on a tortilla. Top with a slice of turkey or ham, low-fat cheese, and lettuce. Then roll it up.

9. Stuff a whole-grain pita pocket with ricotta cheese and Granny Smith apple slices. Add a dash of cinnamon.
10. Microwave a cup of tomato or vegetable soup and enjoy with whole grain crackers.
11. Make a mini-sandwich with tuna or egg salad on a dinner roll.
12. Microwave a small baked potato. Top with reduced-fat cheddar cheese and salsa.
13. Spread celery sticks with smooth nut butter or low-fat cream cheese. Top with raisins. Enjoy your "ants on a log".
14. Dip slices of fruit or whole-grain graham crackers into low-fat vanilla pudding or yogurt.
15. Inside-out sandwich: Spread mustard on a slice of deli turkey. Wrap around a sesame breadstick.
16. Rocky Road: Smear low-fat chocolate pudding on a whole grain graham cracker, then top with a marshmallow.
17. Sprinkle cinnamon on unsweetened applesauce and enjoy with a whole grain graham cracker for a taste similar to apple pie.
18. Make your own fruit roll-up by pureeing fruit and either baking it in the oven or by using a dehydrator.
19. Bake homemade chewy granola bars using whole-grain oats and dried fruit.
20. Whip up mini-muffins using healthy ingredients, like whole grain flours and pureed fruit.

Portion sizes for kids are smaller than adults. A general rule of thumb for preschoolers is a tablespoon of each food area for their age. Like a 2 year old is 2 tablespoons of meat, 2 tablespoons of vegetable, 2 tablespoons of fruit, 2 tablespoons of grain, etc.

However, certain foods due to their sizes pose a choking risk, especially for young children.

See below for a list of foods that may cause choking:

- ◇ Hot dogs and sausage links
- ◇ Meat chunks, unless finely chopped and combined
- ◇ Nuts, seeds, and peanut butter
- ◇ Raw apple and pear slices
- ◇ Whole grapes
- ◇ Dried fruits
- ◇ Raw vegetables
- ◇ Whole kernels of corn
- ◇ Popcorn and chips
- ◇ Small candies and chewing gum

Have fun eating healthy with your kids as they snack on healthy foods and grow!

