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Pro Kinship for Kids

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Eating Right for a Healthy Weight

Reaching or maintaining a healthy weight can contribute to your overall health and wellbeing. Losing even a few pounds, if you are carrying extra weight, 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 of 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.

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, one fourth with protein foods like lean meat, poultry, fish, or beans, and one fourth with grains. To round out your meal, add fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, or cheese.

Start your meal with lower 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 you to eat more than you're hungry for. Switching from a large plate to a smaller one may also help you become more mindful of portion sizes.

Know when you've had enough to eat. Quit before you feel full or stuffed. It takes 20 minutes for your brain to get the message that your body is getting food.

When your brain get 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. Dietary fiber can help you feel full longer and may 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.

Snack smart. Snacks can fit into a healthy eating plan, if they're planned right. To prevent hunger between meals, choose, nutritious foods from the MyPlate food groups. 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

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- plus, it may also reduce the risk of chronic disease, promote a feeling of wellbeing, and help manage body weight.

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 for adults. Children should get at least 60 minutes of

activity each day.

Is it right for you?

Make sure your weight management plan is right for you.

Does it include:

- * Foods from all five food groups?
- * The right number of servings from each group?
- * Food you will enjoy eating for the rest of your life?
- * Foods you easily have access

to?

- * Some of your favorite foods?
- * Foods that fit your budget and lifestyle?
- * Regular physical activity or exercise?

You're more likely to have success and stick with your weight management plan with every question you answer "yes" to above.



Smart Tips for Personalizing Your Plate

Foods that we grow up eating are often influenced by our family's history and culture. Many cuisines offer dishes which include a variety of foods from all of the food groups. Fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy come in all sizes, shapes, and colors. The combination of foods and amounts will depend on you.

Personalize Your Plate by including foods that you prefer from each food group. These foods can come as was stated from your family's history and background. These are often considered comfort foods for us as they put in happy, and calm places. Including a variety of foods can help you get all the nutrients that are needed for good health.

These tips can help you get started on your personalized plate:

- ◇ Fill half your plate with fruits and veggies. Get creative with produce by trying an assortment of colors and textures.
- ◇ Experiment with different grains. Try substituting whole grains for refined grains in recipes.
- ◇ Choose lean protein foods. Vary your choices to include seafood, beans, peas and lentils, as well as eggs, lean cuts of meat and poultry

that are prepared in a healthful way, such as baked or grilled instead of fried.

- ◇ Complete your meal with dairy. Include low-fat or fat-free options like milk, yogurt, cheese, or calcium-fortified soymilk.

A healthful eating style can be as unique as you!

Meal Planning Tips

Eating healthy doesn't have to be complicated or boring. Think about the foods you like from each food group - mixed dishes count, too! Here are just a few examples of how different foods can be eaten as a meal to personalize your plate. If a food you enjoy is not listed here, consider which food group it meets when planning your meals.

Breakfast:

- ◆ Oatmeal with fat-free or low-fat milk or soymilk, chopped unsalted nuts, and fruit
- ◆ Beans and brown rice, salsa, cooked plantain, and a poached egg
- ◆ Scrambled egg with diced potato, bell pepper, and onion, served with a fresh orange

Lunch or Dinner:

- ◆ Turkey and cheese sandwich on whole wheat bread with a cup of vegetable soup
- ◆ Ravioli with sauteed tomatoes and mushrooms and fresh salad with pear and cheese
- ◆ Grilled chicken with steamed broccoli, baked potato, and shredded cheese
- ◆ Fish tacos with avocado and salsa, sauteed chard, and pineapple
- ◆ Stir-fried bok choy, pork, and brown rice with kumquat, and soymilk

Snacks:

- ◆ Low-fat plain yogurt and fresh fruit
- ◆ Cashews, almonds, or other nuts with dried fruit

Consider your nutrient needs when planning your meals and snacks!!!

