



Eating and Exercise

What Works for You?

Healthy Eating

Your body and mind are changing and growing. You need healthy foods and exercise for strength and energy.

What to Eat

Fuel up with breakfast every morning. A piece of fruit or whole-grain toast are good choices when you're on the go.

Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables at every meal. Aim for 5 to 9 servings a day.

Get 3 to 4 servings of calcium-rich foods. Try unsweetened milk, yogurt, or dark leafy greens.

Keep healthy snacks around for after school or between classes. Fruits, nuts, yogurt, and baby carrots are good choices.

Pay attention to portion sizes. One serving of lean meat, fish, or poultry is the size of your palm. A serving of fruit or grains is the size of your fist. Use both hands for a serving of vegetables.

Eat at home more often. Try to eat meals with your family. Households who cook and eat together usually eat healthier meals. Food you make at home tends to be more nutritious.

What to Avoid

Skipping meals or going too long without eating. If you're too hungry, you're more likely to overeat or choose unhealthy foods.

Drinking calories. Sodas are liquid sugar (up to 12 spoonfuls in a can) and can cause weight gain. Sweetened tea or coffee drinks, juice, and sports drinks are loaded with sugar and extra calories. Switch to water or unsweetened beverages instead.

Spending too much time on a screen. We recommend 1 to 2 hours a day only. If you do homework on a computer, try to reduce TV, phone and video game use. Move the TV out of your bedroom and limit smartphone use at night—these can disturb your sleep. You need 8 to 10 hours of sleep to recharge and reach your full potential each day.

Taking diet pills and supplements. They don't work and can be dangerous. "Crash" diets don't have long-term results and tend to cause rebound weight gain.

Drinking alcohol. Besides adding extra calories, drinking too much alcohol is dangerous. Talk to your doctor or other trusted adult if you need help with an alcohol-related problem.



Staying Active

There's lots of reasons to be active—it lifts your mood, gives you energy, and helps you look and feel your best.

Being active throughout the day will help you:

- Feel less stressed
- Boost your mood
- Build confidence
- Have more energy
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Prevent health problems

Try to get 60 minutes of physical activity each day. You don't have to do it all at once. You can break up activities throughout the day.



Move your body every day with activities you enjoy or add to your routine.

- Go for walks or bike rides.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Use a step-counter (pedometer, app, or fitness device).
- Walk or bike to school, if practical.
- Check local YMCAs, schools, and community centers for exercise and sports programs.

