



Helping Your Teen Stay Healthy

Nutrition and exercise habits your teen can start now, and take into adulthood

Start Early and Stay Engaged

Nearly one-third of all teens and children in the U.S. are considered obese, mostly because of poor dietary habits and inactive lifestyles. But there are things you can do now to help your teen eat healthier and stay active to avoid problems later in life like heart and liver disease, high blood pressure and diabetes.

Help Your Teen Eat and Drink Healthy

- As you help your teen “eat by the numbers,” keep an eye on food labels. Specifically look for whole wheat, brown rice or whole oats as the first ingredient.
- Serve dark green vegetables (like spinach, broccoli and kale) and orange vegetables (like carrots, sweet potatoes and pumpkin). And choose lean cuts of meat and poultry - baked, broiled or grilled rather than fried.
- Help your teen avoid sugary and sweetened drinks such as fruit juice, soda and sports drinks. Water and low-fat milk are the best choices to stay hydrated and healthy.
- Encourage your teen to eat breakfast every day. This can be as simple as whole grain toast with peanut butter, fruit and low-fat milk. Other healthy options include instant oatmeal, yogurt parfaits, pita egg sandwiches, English muffins and rice bowls.

Food Group	Grains	Vegetables	Fruits	Dairy	Protein
Daily Amounts	6 - 10 oz	2½ - 4 cups	1½ - 2½ cups	3 cups	5 - 7 oz
Portion Size	1 oz grains counts as: 1 slice bread ½ cup hot cereal, rice or pasta	1 cup counts as: 1 cup raw, cooked or canned veggies 2 cups leafy salad greens	1 cup counts as: 1 cup fresh, frozen, cooked or canned ½ cup dried fruit	1 cup counts as: 1 cup milk or yogurt 1½ oz cheese	1 oz protein counts as: 1 oz meat/poultry/fish ¼ cup beans 1 tbsp peanut butter

These recommendations vary based on your child's age, height, weight and level of physical activity. For more information visit ChooseMyPlate.gov.



Help Your Teen Stay Active.

Exercise is a vital part of a healthy lifestyle for adults and teens. Help your teen pick up good exercise habits early on that will carry into adulthood.

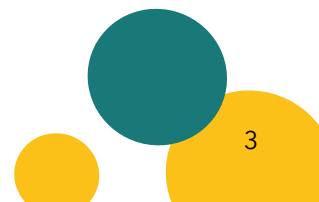
Teens should do 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily. This should include a mix of aerobic activity, muscle strengthening and bone strengthening. It's important to provide young people opportunities and encourage them to participate in physical activities that are age-appropriate, enjoyable and offer variety.

- Aerobic activities help exercise large muscles for a sustained amount of time and increase cardiorespiratory fitness. These include walking, running, jumping rope, swimming, dancing and cycling.

- Muscle-strengthening activities increase the amount of work muscles usually perform. These can include structured activities like weight lifting, but can also include routine activities like chores and yard work.
- Bone-strengthening activities increase the amount of force on bones to help them grow. These include impact activities like running, basketball and tennis. Bone-strengthening activities can also be aerobic and muscle strengthening.

Here's an example of how 60 minutes of activity could fit in your teen's day:

20 minutes	10 minutes	20 minutes	10 minutes
Mowing the lawn	Walking or biking to a friend's house	Playing basketball	Walking or biking home





What You Can Do as a Parent

To help your teen learn to be healthy, set the right example and be a role model.

Eat breakfast, demonstrate good sleep habits and don't talk negatively about your own body.

Don't use tobacco products.

Be active as a family. Walk your dog together, go on hikes or bike rides.

Get your teen involved. Let them help cook, meal plan and grocery shop.

You can also find more information about helping your teen stay healthy at [HHS.gov](https://www.hhs.gov) and [KidsHealth.org](https://www.kidshealth.org).