

Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

April 2010

Deerfield Beach Middle, Health & Wellness Magnet School
Healthy Minds! Healthy Bodies! Happy Students!

FAST TAKES



Lower the sodium

When you use canned beans, rinse them first to wash off extra sodium. Empty the beans into a colander, and run cold water over them for about a minute. You'll remove a quarter of the salt—which is significant since a can of kidney beans might have 450 mg of sodium, or a fifth of the recommended daily limit of 2,300 mg.

Did You Know?

In-line skating can burn about 300 calories in an hour. Now that spring is here, encourage your teens to put on skates and roll into a good workout! Going up hills, making turns, and increasing the pace will add more exercise. Or they might join with friends for a roller hockey game or a visit to a skate park.



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Recipe talk

Cooking is a great way to improve your children's vocabulary. Ask them to look up words they don't know, like *blanch* (to boil vegetables until barely cooked, then plunge them into ice water) or *mince* (to chop until very fine). They'll build vocabulary—as they learn to cook!

Just for fun

CAFETERIA RULES
SHOES ARE REQUIRED
TO EAT IN THE CAFETERIA.
SOCKS CAN EAT
ANYPLACE THEY WANT.

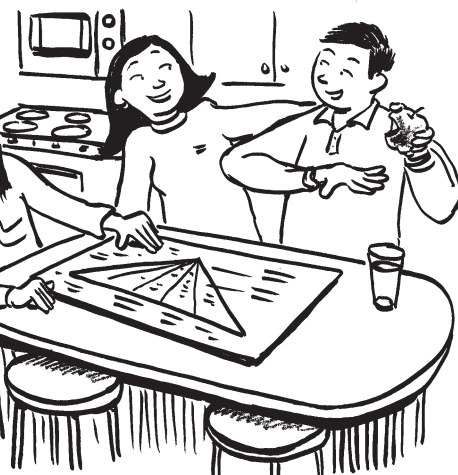


Power of the pyramid

Your child has probably learned about the Great Pyramids of Egypt. But does she know about the food pyramid? It's an easy tool for helping her develop healthy eating habits for a lifetime. Together, you can take these steps up the pyramid.

1. See it. Look at the food pyramid (find it at www.mypyramid.gov, or ask your school nurse or cafeteria manager for a copy). Talk about how many servings a day your teen should have from each food group (grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, and meat and beans). Then, have her estimate how many servings she really does have each day.

2. Learn it. Play a dinnertime game to help your family get familiar with the food groups. On each turn, a player names one food from every category. *Example:* rice (grain), broccoli (vegetable), apple (fruit), yogurt (milk), and hamburger (meat and beans). See how many times you can go around the table.



Hint: Suggest that family members think of things they ate that week and put them into a category.

3. Track it. Encourage everyone to get enough food group servings with this idea. Each person makes seven blank pyramids and labels them with a day of the week. With each snack or meal, they write the foods in the proper place. At the end of the week, tally the servings. How many people "filled their pyramids"? ♥

Facts about fat

Fat-free? Light? Reduced-fat? What's the difference? How much fat does your teen need? Here are some tips:

- Is fat bad for you? No—unless you eat too much of it. Teens should have about 65 grams of fat a day, but no more than 20 grams should be saturated fat (found in meat and dairy products). Encourage your child to have mostly unsaturated fat, which is the kind in fish, peanut butter, and avocados.

- Help your teen choose products that are fat-free (less than 0.5 gram of fat) or low-fat (less than 3 grams). "Light" and "reduced-fat" products still have fat—they just have less than in the original version. For example, regular ranch dressing can have almost 16 grams of fat per serving. A light version may contain less than 7 grams, and the reduced-fat version might contain 4 grams. ♥



Healthy kitchen, healthy kids

Healthy eating begins in the kitchen. Try to keep nutritious foods on hand and serve balanced meals, and your children will get used to a healthier diet. Consider these suggestions:

- Cut up vegetables, fruits, and low-fat cheese, and put single servings into small zipper bags. Your youngsters will be more likely to grab sugar snap peas, melon chunks, or cheddar cubes if they're ready to eat. *Tip:* Rather than buying single-portion foods, save money by purchasing items in bulk and repackaging them into smaller portions at home.



- Replace cookies, doughnuts, and candy with low-fat graham crackers, mini-bagels, and rice cakes. Use peanut butter, sunflower seed butter, or whipped cream cheese as spreads. For an alternative to ice cream, you might keep fat-free fudge pops and frozen fruit bars in the freezer.

- Together, find new recipes by reading cookbooks or scanning cooking Web sites together. For instance, you might add dried cranberries and almonds to steamed green beans. Or make an interesting salad by drizzling balsamic vinegar over sliced tomatoes and fresh mozzarella cheese and grinding a little black pepper on top. ♡

ACTIVITY CORNER

Jump for joy



Children jump rope for fun. Adults jump rope for exercise. Your teen or tween can do both! Here's how.

Jump with friends. Have them put on music and jump in rhythm to the beat. Or suggest that they take turns calling out directions: "Jump double time." "Jump backward."

Learn new tricks. Your child might enjoy doing tuck jumps or side slides. Have her find ideas in library books like *The Jump Rope Book* (Elizabeth Loreda) or online (try <http://jumpropevideos.com>).

Create a routine.

First, your teenager could alternate the foot she lands on (like jogging in place). Next, she could land with feet together and then feet apart (like jumping jacks). Finally, she can land with legs crossed.



Note: Make sure the jump rope is the right length. When your child stands on the middle with both feet, the handles should reach her armpits. ♡

In the Kitchen

Chicken dinners

Looking for new ways to serve chicken? Try these healthier versions of Chinese chicken and buffalo wings.

Sweet and sour

Cut 1 lb. skinless, boneless chicken breasts into bite-sized pieces, and sauté in 1 tbsp. olive oil. Add 1 cup low-salt chicken broth and 16 oz. frozen mixed vegetables. Simmer until cooked through. In a bowl, mix 2 tbsp. each of low-sodium soy sauce, vinegar, and honey. Add to the pan, and stir until thick.



Baked "wings"

In a large zipper bag, mix 2 tbsp. ketchup, 2 tbsp. honey, 1 tbsp. hot sauce, and 1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce. Add 2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken strips, seal the bag, and shake. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes (or up to 24 hours). Place the chicken in a baking dish and bake at 350° for 20–25 minutes, or until cooked through. Serve with celery sticks and low-fat blue cheese dressing. ♡

PARENT TO PARENT

Walk and talk

I wanted to spend more time talking with my son Andrew, but he always resisted. He was interested in staying fit, though, so I came up with the idea of mother-son walks.

We started walking for about an hour on Sunday mornings. We took turns choosing the route—sometimes we just walked around the neighborhood, and other times we went to a nearby state park or walked through town.

At first, it was hard to keep the conversation flowing, so I came up with ideas like discussing our three favorite movies or what five things we would take to a deserted island.

But after a few weeks, our conversations became more natural, and we talked about school, work, friends, and the future. Now we both look forward to our workouts—and our talks. ♡



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for their children.

Resources for Educators, a division of Aspen Publishers, Inc.
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www.rfeonline.com

Teen Food & Fitness™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.
ISSN 1935-8865