

Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

October 2007

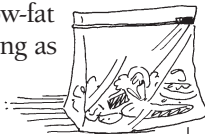
FAST TAKES



Healthy nuggets

Get away from fried

chicken nuggets with this quick entrée. Dip 2-inch chunks of boneless, skinless chicken breast in egg or egg substitute. Then, in a closed zipper bag, toss with crushed cornflakes. Place coated nuggets on a cookie sheet, and bake at 400° for 10 to 15 minutes. Serve with low-fat Caesar or ranch dressing as a tasty dipper.



Pickup games

Encourage your child to arrange casual games in the neighborhood, rather than only playing organized sports. For example, roller hockey is fun this time of year. If you don't live near other kids, perhaps your teen could meet friends at a nearby field or the school.

Tip: For preteens, be sure an adult can supervise.



Did You Know?

BMI (body mass index) is a simple indicator of your youngster's body fat. It's based on weight, height, age, and gender and shows whether your teen is at a healthy weight. Ask your pediatrician for your child's BMI at his next checkup, or calculate it yourself at <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/dnpabmi/Calculator.aspx>.

Just for fun

Q: What's the worst thing about being an octopus?

A: Washing your hands before meals!



Bone appétit!

What do kids need more of as they get older? Calcium. In fact, preteens and teens need twice as much calcium as they did when they were little.

That's because calcium helps build strong bones, and about half of bone mass is added during the teen years. Help your middle and high schoolers get the calcium they need (1,300 mg a day) with these ideas.

Start with milk. One cup of fat-free milk provides 300 mg of calcium. Remember, your child can choose milk flavored the way she likes it (chocolate, strawberry), lactose-free milk if she's lactose-intolerant, or rice milk if she's allergic.

Add more dairy. A 6- to 8-ounce container of low-fat fruit yogurt has a whopping 350 to 400 mg of calcium. Other good dairy sources include low-fat cheese (½ cup of cheddar has 204 mg) and low-fat frozen yogurt (206 mg in a cup). Stir in cheese as you scramble eggs, or add a slice of provolone to turkey sandwiches.

Mix in veggies. Dark green, leafy vegetables are winners, too. Microwave



broccoli for dinner, stir-fry bok choy with chicken or beef, or sauté kale and collard greens in a little olive oil. Layer spinach in lasagna, or tuck it into wraps.

Toss in extras. Use beans often. You can heat up a can of baked beans, serve chili with pinto beans, top salads with chickpeas, or put canned white beans into soup. Other calcium-rich foods include almonds, tortillas, salmon, oranges, sweet potatoes, and papaya.

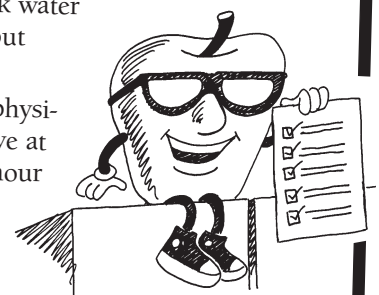
Choose fortified products. Instead of regular orange juice, buy OJ with calcium. Also, look for oatmeal, cold cereals, breads, and tofu that have added calcium. There's no difference in taste, and these items are easy to find at your grocery store. ♥

An apple a day...

Sometimes kids just need a reminder! Hang this checklist on your refrigerator to encourage healthy habits:

- I eat breakfast every morning.
- I have 5–9 servings of fruits and vegetables each day.
- I have 3–5 servings of meat and beans a day.
- I have 3 servings of dairy products a day.

- I have 6 servings of grains a day, and I try to have mostly whole grains.
- I drink water throughout the day.
- I am physically active at least an hour a day. ♥



School meals

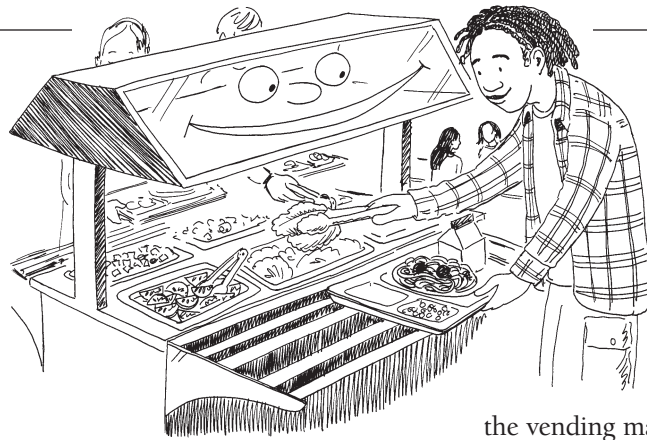
Salad bars. Food courts. International foods. School cafeterias have changed with the times.

Encourage your teen or tween to buy school lunch—and to go for the healthiest choices possible. Here are dos and don'ts to pass along:

Do go over the menu the night before to discuss options. (Lunch menus are usually posted on a school's Web site or sent home monthly.)

Do take the regular entrée. It will come with protein and vegetables.

Do choose fat-free milk.



Do add whole-grain bread or rolls to your meal.

Do visit the salad bar.

Do consider fruit, low-fat frozen yogurt, or fruit pops for dessert.

Do ask the cafeteria staff questions. ("Are the french fries baked or fried?" "Is the pizza low-fat?")

Don't take chips or high-calorie desserts from the à la carte line.

Don't buy soda, juice drinks, or candy from

the vending machines.

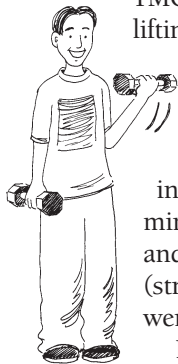
Don't waste food. Take what you think you will eat, and go back for more if you're still hungry.

Don't rush through your meal. Take time to enjoy your food and talk with friends while you eat. ●

Q & A Weight lifting

Q: My 16-year-old son wants to start lifting weights. Is this a good idea?

A: Strength training is a key part of an exercise program, but it's important that it be done safely. Have your son talk to his PE teacher or coach to get guidance. Or see if your community center or YMCA offers a teen weight-lifting class.



Make sure that your teen learns the right technique and proper form.

Also, workouts should include warm-ups (5–10 minutes of jogging in place and stretching) and cooldowns (stretching the muscles that were worked out).

If done right, strength training can really benefit your son. It will help him get stronger, protect his muscles from injury, and improve his performance in sports.

Note: Weight training shouldn't hurt. If your son feels pain, he should stop and see a doctor before resuming. ●

ACTIVITY CORNER

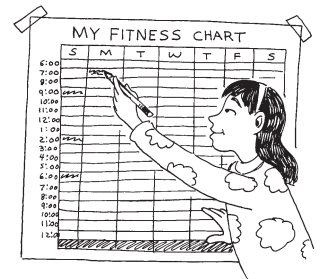
Track your progress

"OK. I did 10 minutes of sit-ups this morning, shot hoops for 20 minutes after school, and walked with Dad for 30 minutes after dinner. That's an hour of exercise for today!"

Encourage your teen to keep track of her physical activity, and she'll see that the minutes add up. Have her start by setting a goal (say, 60 minutes a day) and then recording her activities as she goes.

Suggest that your child hang a chart in her room, with the days across the top and the hours down the left side. Then, she can write in the activity and time spent (running, 30 minutes; cheerleading practice, 60 minutes).

Even better, get the whole family involved. You could post a family exercise log in the kitchen. Or create a chart on your computer, and have everyone enter their information daily. ●



In the Kitchen

Smoothies and shakes

All you need for a healthy meal-in-a-glass is a blender and a few ingredients. Mix any of these combinations until smooth.

Strawberry Classic: 1 cup orange juice, 1 cup fat-free strawberry yogurt, 10 fresh or frozen strawberries, 3 ice cubes.

Chocolate Monkey: 1 banana, 1 cup fat-free vanilla yogurt, a few squeezes of fat-free chocolate syrup.

Pumpkin Pie: ½ cup canned pumpkin (chilled), 1 cup fat-free milk, ½ cup

fat-free vanilla yogurt, 2 tsp. sugar, ¼ tsp. cinnamon, pinch of nutmeg, 4 ice cubes.

Cup of Java: 1 cup fat-free milk, 1 cup fat-free coffee yogurt, ¼ tsp. cinnamon.

Peach-Blueberry Twist: 1 cup fat-free flavored yogurt, 1 peach (pitted and cut into chunks), 1 cup blueberries, 3 ice cubes.

Creamsicle: 1 cup low-fat frozen vanilla yogurt, 1 small can of frozen orange juice concentrate, 1 cup fat-free milk. ●



OUR PURPOSE

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

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