

Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

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Manitou Springs School District # 14

Paula Faucette - Food Service

FAST TAKES



Workout-ready

Having all her workout gear in one place can make it easier for your teen to exercise. Encourage her to pack a bag with everything she needs, such as sneakers, socks, a water bottle, a headband, and her community center ID. Then, she could keep the bag by the door so it's ready when she is!

Blotting pizza



Here's a quick way to cut fat and calories from pizza. Just blot the top with a napkin or paper towel to soak up the grease.

With this simple trick, your child will skim 20–50 calories from each slice.

Tip: Encourage him to cut even more calories by opting for thin crust rather than thick.

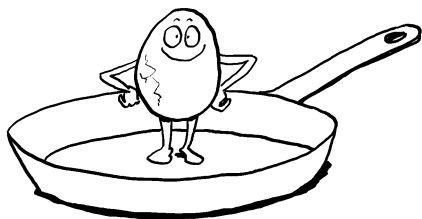
Did You Know?

Sugar-free gum can help protect your children's teeth. As they chew, the extra saliva washes away bacteria that could lead to cavities. *Bonus:* Chewing gum is also a good way to avoid extra snacking. After a meal, suggest that they chew sugarless gum instead of reaching for cookies or chips.

Just for fun

Q: What did the egg say to the frying pan?

A: "You crack me up!"



Nutrition Q&A

The start of a new year is a great time to talk about healthy eating habits with your child. If you're wondering how to begin the conversation, consider these common questions from tweens and teens.

"Will skipping meals help me eat less?"

Missing meals actually tends to make you eat more during the rest of the day. When you skip a meal, the next time you eat you'll be hungrier, which can lead to overeating and choosing unhealthy foods. Even on the busiest days, carve out time for a healthy breakfast, lunch, and dinner, whether you eat at home or on the go.

"Should I eat fewer carbs?"

It's the type of carbohydrates (or carbs) that you need to think about, not nixing them altogether. Processed carbs like white bread or white rice have the nutrients stripped out of them. But whole grains or carbs like fruits, vegetables, and beans should be part of any healthy diet. *Tip:* When eating out, ask



for brown rice or whole-wheat bread or pasta—more and more restaurants are offering these options now.

"Should I take vitamins?"

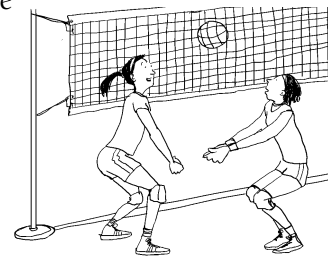
Teens may think taking vitamins will ensure they get the nutrients they need. But really the best source is a well-balanced diet that includes whole grains, low-fat dairy, fruits, vegetables, and lean proteins. *Idea:* Eat fruits and vegetables in every color each week. The different colors signify different nutrients, so if you eat them all, you'll be getting a good variety of vitamins and minerals. ●

Team sports: A win-win

Team sports are not only a route to fitness, they're also a path to good character. Here are two reasons.

1. Practices and games teach patience. Your child will have to wait her turn during drills or to get into the game. Then, she'll need to wait for teammates to pass the ball or for the right opportunity to score.

2. Playing on a team can help your youngster focus on others beside herself. To succeed, she has to listen to her coach and cooperate with teammates. Plus, she'll have to make decisions for the good of the team, such as skipping an outing with friends because her team is counting on her to be at practice. ●



Handling diabetes

Skyrocketing obesity rates have brought a rise in young people at risk for—or already diagnosed with—Type 2 diabetes. The good news, though, is that there are ways to lower your child’s chances of developing this disease or to control it if she has it. This guidance can help.



Take control. If your teen is pre-diabetic (where blood sugar level is higher than normal) or has Type 2 diabetes, discuss ways to keep blood sugar within a normal range. A dietitian can provide a nutritious eating plan, and

Cut the risk. Staying at a healthy body weight and exercising regularly are the best protections against Type 2 diabetes. Check with your youngster’s doctor about her weight, and get advice for a safe weight-loss plan if needed. Also, try to make sure your teen is physically active at least an hour a day.

exercising regularly will help, too. *Note:* If pills or insulin shots are prescribed, work out the best ways to make sure she takes them as needed.

Get support. Talking with other teens who have Type 2 diabetes can provide important support. To find a support group, your teen might ask her school nurse, check with a local hospital or clinic, or search diabetes.org. ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

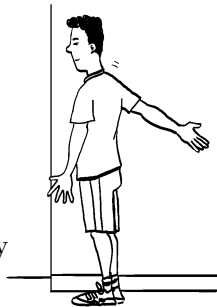


Post-exercise stretches

Suggest that your teen stretch after exercise to keep his muscles from getting sore. Here are two stretches to try.

1. Wall stretch.

Stand facing a wall. Raise your right arm out to your side, and place it on the wall, fingers pointed away from you. Turn your body to the opposite direction of your outstretched arm until you feel a gentle pull. Hold 30 seconds. Repeat with the other arm.

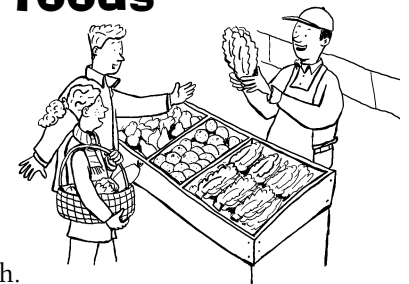


2. Butterfly stretch. Start in a seated position and bring your feet together, soles touching, while your knees are bent to the sides. Place your hands on your feet and gently try to bring your chest toward your feet (be careful to bend at your waist, not your back). Hold for 15–30 seconds. ♥

PARENT TO PARENT

Using “new” foods

My daughter Mollie mentioned she wanted to try some healthy foods that she had been hearing about from friends and on food blogs. I’m all for eating new foods, but I wasn’t sure where to start with chia seeds, farro, quinoa, kale, and other ones she listed.



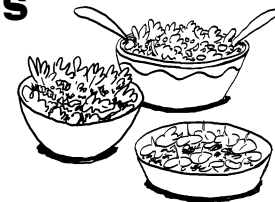
I suggested we pick one to sample each month. That way, we would have time to look up recipes and try the food in different ways. Plus, I didn’t want to buy a whole cart full of food we might not eat! First, we tried chia seeds, mixing them into yogurt and oatmeal. Next, we experimented with kale, putting it in smoothies, roasting it, and using it in salads in place of lettuce.

Mollie really liked the foods we made with chia seeds, and though she wasn’t a big fan of raw kale, she loved kale chips. We’re both excited to try other new-to-us foods. Next up is almond milk! ♥

In the Kitchen

Winter salads

Move salads from side dish to entree with these hearty recipes that are perfect in the wintertime.



Buffalo chicken

Stir together 3 cups cooked, shredded chicken with 1 cup fat-free blue cheese dressing and ½ tsp. hot sauce. Add 1 cup chopped celery and ½ cup crumbled reduced-fat blue cheese. Serve over lettuce.

beans (drained from 16-oz. can), shredded low-fat mozzarella cheese, bell pepper strips, and turkey pepperoni slices.

Italian mix

Whisk together ½ cup vinegar, 2 tsp. lemon juice, 1 tsp. dried Italian herbs, and 1 tbsp. olive oil. Drizzle over romaine lettuce. Top with cannellini

Asian beef

Combine ¼ cup low-sodium teriyaki with 1½ pounds lean beef (cut into strips). Marinate 15 minutes. Heat 1 tbsp. oil in a skillet, and saute beef until cooked through. Toss beef with a 6-oz. bag spinach and ½ cup grated carrots. ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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

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