

QuadMed Wellness News

A healthy family is a happy family

Tips for healthy eating as a family

Children often do as they see. Displaying healthy eating habits as a parent is important to set a good example.

For **infants**, offer vegetable puree rather than fruit so that their taste buds do not become too accustomed to sweet first.

Offer healthy choices at each meal, and **start exposing early**.

Choose your battles- if your child likes several fruits and vegetables, do not get hung up on a couple that they dislike. They are allowed to dislike foods, just like you do!

Add **new foods** and encourage children to try a bite.

Re-introduce foods that children do not like and encourage them to retry periodically.

Encourage, never force.

Most importantly... **involve** your family in meal planning and cooking. If they participate and feel that they were part of the meal preparation process, they may be more likely to eat the foods being served.

Benefits of an active family

Physical activity is important for all ages. It is recommended that children should have at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity each day. Studies show that kids who are supported by family and friends to become more active are more likely to participate in activities and exercise. Active children have fewer sick days because of the positive benefit that exercise has on the immune system. In adults, physical activity can help lower blood pressure and improve cholesterol values. Families that stay active together are healthier and happier!



Creative ways to stay active

- Take a walk after dinner with the whole family.
- Limit daily screen time for children (this includes TV, iPad, computers, phones).
- Encourage family members to take the stairs instead of elevators.
- Create a house rule such as "no sitting during TV commercials". March around, do squats or jumping jacks.
- Bring out the competitive side of family members and play soccer, basketball, football or volleyball outside.
- Give children toys that encourage physical activity such as balls, kites, jump ropes, etc.
- If your child has a game system, look for games that are activity based (Wii Fit, Xbox Kinect, etc.).
- Get a group of parents/children who can walk or ride bikes to school together.
- Volunteer to help with an afterschool physical activity program or sports team.
- Sleep! Children (and adults) can't be active without adequate sleep. Children ages five and under need about 11 hours of sleep, children ages five to ten need 10 hours and children over the age of 10 need at least nine hours of sleep a day.

Healthy family meals

Appetizers Offer healthy choices, such as fruits and vegetables at the beginning of the meal when the child is hungriest. Put out a salad or raw veggie platter on the table as you are preparing dinner. Keep ready-to-eat vegetables like cherry tomatoes, cucumber slices, baby carrots and celery sticks as well as low fat dips or salsa at a child's reaching level in the refrigerator.

Hide-n-Seek Add grated vegetables, such as carrots and squash to home-baked muffins and sweet breads. Puree beets, spinach and cauliflower to add moisture to baked goods with little noticeable flavor. Add pureed black beans to brownies, grated zucchini to spaghetti sauce. The opportunities are endless!

Make health food fun Offer an edible spoon such as a stalk of celery for scooping up chili or stew. Use cut up pieces of vegetables to make a "smiley face" on mashed potatoes. Make sandwiches on whole grain bread and use large cookie cutters to cut the sandwich into fun shapes.

Make your own baby food

Equipment needed:

Microwave and/or stove top and oven, blender, food processor and storage containers (preferably BPA free).

Food selection

Introduce foods in order recommended by your pediatrician. Select foods in their fresh form whenever possible. If fresh is not possible, then use frozen. Try to avoid canned foods. Tip: plan ahead, you may eventually like to introduce most foods that you eat as a family, so as you prepare family meals, save a little on the side or prepare a little extra and take a couple minutes to puree and store it while you are preparing the family meal.

Avoid:

Honey, raw/unpasteurized dairy products, out-dated foods, home-canned foods and food from any package that is damaged, unlabeled, leaking or opened.

Preparation:

Wash your hand thoroughly before beginning, between handling different foods, after touching your face, mouth, eyes, nose, after sneezing/coughing/blowing your nose and after eating.

Wash fresh fruits and vegetables well. Use separate cooking and preparation surfaces and utensils for each different type of food. When cooking meats, heat to required temperature: fish 145°F, red meat 160°F, white meat 165°F

Storage:

Distribute prepared baby food into smaller containers. Avoid holding foods out of the "safe temperature zone" for longer than two hours (between 40°-140°F).

Store in:

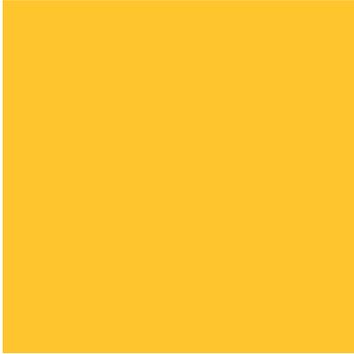
- Refrigerator at 40°F or cooler. (24 hours for meats and eggs and 48 hours for fruits and vegetables)
- Freezer at 0°F for one month
- Deep freezer below 0°F for up to six months

Serving:

- Thaw frozen foods in a cooled environment (refrigerator)
- Use thawed foods within 48 hours
- Re-heat to 165°F
- Allow to cool to lukewarm before feeding



Tobacco Cessation



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