

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS



M.D. PEDIATRIC CENTER

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ANTICIPATORY  
PARENTING  
GUIDE

FOR: Nutrition, Physical Activity, and  
Screen Time.

## Food guide plate

### Definition

By following the U.S. Department of Agriculture's food guide, called MyPlate, you can make healthier food choices. The new guide encourages you to eat more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy. Using the guide, you can learn what type of food you should eat and how much you should eat. You also learn why and how much you should exercise.

### Alternative Names

MyPlate

### Information

MyPlate

There are 5 major food groups that make up a healthy diet:

- Grains
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Dairy
- Protein foods

You should eat foods from each group every day. How much food you should eat from each group depends on your age, gender, and how active you are.

MyPlate makes specific recommendations for each type of food group.

#### Grains: Make at Least Half of Your Grains Whole Grains

- Whole grains contain the entire grain. Processed grains have had the bran and germ removed.
- Foods with whole grains have more fiber than food made with processed grains.
- Examples of whole grains are whole-wheat flour, oatmeal, and cornmeal.
- Examples of processed grains are white flour, white bread, and white rice.

Most children and adults should eat about 5 to 8 servings of grains a day (also called "ounce equivalents"). Children age 8 and younger need about 3 to 5 servings. At least half those servings should be whole grain. An example of one serving of grains includes:

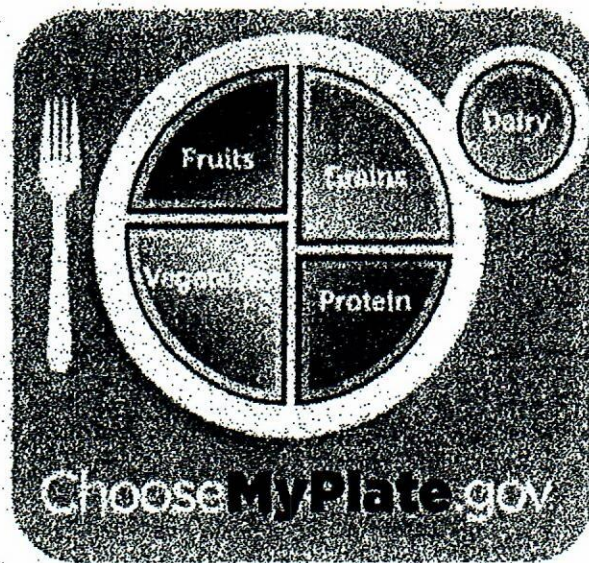
- 1 slice of bread
- 1 cup of cereal
- 1/2 cup rice
- 5 whole-wheat crackers
- 1/3 cup cooked pasta

Eating whole grains can help improve your health:

- Reduces the risk of heart disease.
- Helps you lose extra weight
- Helps you have regular bowel movements

Ways to eat more whole grains:

- Eat brown rice instead of white rice.





- Use whole-grain pasta instead of regular pasta.
- Replace part of white flour with wheat flour in recipes.
- Replace white bread with whole-wheat bread.

#### **Vegetables: Make Half Your Plate Fruits and Vegetables**

- Vegetables can be raw, fresh, cooked, canned, frozen, canned, dried, or dehydrated.
- Beans and peas can be counted either as a vegetable or a lean protein.

Most children and adults should eat between 2 and 3 cups of vegetables a day. Children age 8 need about 1 to 1 1/2 cups. Examples of a cup include:

- Large ear of corn
- Three 5-inch broccoli spears
- 2 cups of raw, leafy greens
- 2 medium carrots
- 1 cup 100% vegetable juice (carrot tomato)

Eating vegetables can help improve your health.

- Lowers your risk of heart disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes
- Helps protect you against some cancers
- Helps lower blood pressure
- Reduces the risk of kidney stones
- Helps reduce bone loss

Ways to eat more vegetables:

- Keep plenty of frozen vegetables handy in your freezer.
- Buy pre-washed salad and pre-chopped veggies to cut down on prep time.
- Add veggies to soups and stews.
- Add vegetables to spaghetti sauces.
- Try veggie stir-fries.

#### **Fruits: Make Half Your Plate Fruits and Vegetables**

- Fruits can be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried.

Most adults need 1 1/2 -2 cups of fruit a day. Children age 8 and younger need about 1 to 1 1/2 cups. Examples of a cup include:

- 1/2 large apple
- 8 large strawberries
- 1/2 cup dried apricots
- 1 cup 100% fruit juice (orange, apple, grapefruit)

Eating fruit can help improve your health:

- Lowers your risk of heart disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes
- Helps protect you against some cancers
- Helps lower blood pressure
- Reduces the risk of kidney stones
- Helps reduce bone loss

Ways to eat more fruit:

- Put out a fruit bowl and keep it full of fruit.
- Stock up on dried, frozen, or canned fruit, so you always have it available. Choose no-sugar-added canned fruit.
- Buy pre-cut fruit in packages to cut down on prep time.
- Try meat dishes with fruit, such as pork with apricots, lamb with figs, or chicken with mango.
- Grill peaches, apples, or other firm fruit on the grill for a healthy, tasty dessert.

#### **Protein Foods: Choose Lean Proteins**

- Protein foods include meat, poultry, seafood, beans and peas, eggs, processed soy products, nuts, and seeds. Beans and peas are also part of the vegetable group.
- Choose meats that are low in saturated fat and cholesterol.

- Most adults need 5 to 6 1/2 servings of protein a day (also called "ounce equivalents") Children age 8 and younger need about 2 to 4 servings.
- An example of a day's serving of protein for adults includes 1 small chicken breast, 1 egg, and 1 tablespoon of peanut butter.
- Include 8 ounces of cooked seafood a week

Eating lean protein can help improve your health.

- Keeps your cholesterol levels healthy.
- Seafood high in omega-3 fats, such as salmon, sardines, or trout, can help prevent heart disease.
- Peanuts and other nuts such as almonds, walnuts, and pistachios, when eaten as part of a healthy diet, can help lower the risk of heart disease.

Ways to include more lean protein in your diet:

- Choose lean cuts of beef, which include sirloin, tenderloin, round, chuck, and shoulder or arm roasts and steaks.
- Choose lean pork, which include tenderloin, loin, ham, and Canadian bacon.
- Choose lean lamb, which includes tenderloin, chops, and leg.
- Buy skinless chicken or turkey, or take the skin off.
- Grill, roast, poach, or broil meats, poultry, and seafood instead of frying.
- Trim all visible fat and drain off any fat when cooking.
- Substitute peas, beans, or soy in place of meat at least once a week. Try bean chili, pea or bean soup, stir-fried tofu, rice and beans, or veggie burgers.

**Oils: Eat Small Amounts of Heart-Healthy Oils**

- Oils are not a food group. However, they provide important nutrients and should be part of a healthy diet.
- Fats such as butter and shortening are solid at room temperature. They contain high levels of saturated fats or trans fats. Eating a lot of these fats can increase your risk of heart disease.
- Oils are liquid at room temperature. They contain monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. These types of fats are generally good for your heart.
- Children and adults should get about 5 to 7 teaspoons of oil a day. Children age 8 and younger need about 3 to 4 teaspoons a day.
- Choose oils such as olive, canola, sunflower, safflower, soybean, and corn oils.
- Some foods are also high in healthy oils. They include avocados, some fish, olives, and nuts.

**Weight Management and Physical Activity**

MyPlate also provides information about how to lose excess weight.

- You can use the online SuperTracker to learn what you currently eat and drink. By writing down what you eat and drink every day, you can see where you can make better choices.
- You can use the Daily Food Plan to learn what to eat and drink. You just enter your height, weight, and age to get a personalized eating plan.
- Use the SuperTracker to track your daily activity and food you eat, plus your weight.

You also learn how to make better choices, such as:

- Eating the right amount of calories to keep you at a healthy weight
- Eating less and avoiding big portions
- Eating fewer foods with empty calories. These are foods high in sugar or fat.
- Eating a balance of healthy foods from all 5 food groups
- Making better choices when eating out at restaurants
- Cooking at home more often, where you can control what goes into the foods you eat
- Exercising 150 minutes a week
- Decreasing your screen time in front of the TV or computer
- Getting tips for increasing your activity level

## References

Dietary guidelines for Americans, 2010. United States Department of Agriculture. Accessed October 2, 2013.



# Screen time and children

## Description

"Screen time" is a term used for activities done in front of a screen, such as watching TV, working on a computer, or playing video games. Screen time is sedentary activity, meaning you are being physically inactive while sitting down. Very little energy is used during screen time.

Most American children spend about 3 hours a day watching TV. Added together, all types of screen time can total 5 to 7 hours a day.

Too much screen time can:

- Make it hard for your child to sleep at night
- Raise your child's risk of attention problems, anxiety, and depression
- Raise your child's risk of gaining too much weight (obesity)

Screen time increases your child's risk of obesity because:

- Sitting and watching a screen is time that is not spent being physically active.
- TV commercials and other screen ads can lead to unhealthy food choices. Most of the time, the foods in ads that are aimed at kids are high in sugar, salt, or fats.
- Children eat more when they are watching TV, especially if they see ads for food.

Computers can help kids with their schoolwork. But surfing the internet, spending too much time on Facebook, or watching YouTube videos is considered unhealthy screen time.

Children under age 2 should have no screen time

Limit screen time to 1 to 2 hours a day for children over age 2.

Despite what ads may say, videos that are aimed at very young children do not improve their development.

Cutting down to 2 hours a day can be hard for some children because TV may be such a large part of their daily routines. But you can help your children by telling them how sedentary activities affect their overall health. Talk to them about things they can do to be healthier.

To decrease screen time:

- Remove the TV or computer from your child's bedroom.
- Do not allow TV watching during meals or homework.
- Do not let your child eat while watching TV or using the computer.
- Do not leave the TV on for background noise. Turn on the radio instead, or have no background noise.
- Decide which programs to watch ahead of time. Turn off the TV when those programs are over.
- Suggest other activities, such as family board games, puzzles, or going for a walk.
- Keep a record of how much time is spent in front of a screen. Try to spend the same amount of time being active.
- Be a good role model as a parent. Decrease your own screen time to 2 hours a day.
- If it is hard not having the TV on, try using a sleep function so it turns off automatically.
- Challenge your family to go 1 week without watching TV or doing other screen-time activities. Find things to do with your time that get you moving and burning energy.

## TV and Video Times

Under 2yrs.: 0 hours

2-9 yrs: 1 hour

10-17 yrs: 2 hours

## Exercise and children

### Alternative Names

Children and exercise

### Information

Children should have many chances to run, bike, and play sports during the day. Experts recommend that children get 60 minutes of moderate exercise every day.

Moderate activity means you breathe harder and your heart beats faster than normal. Some examples are:

- Walking fast
- Playing chase or tag
- Swimming
- Playing organized sports (such as soccer, basketball, and football)

Younger children have a shorter attention span than older children. They may be active for only 10 - 15 minutes at a time. The goal is still a total of 60 minutes of activity every day.

### WHY EXERCISE?

Children who exercise:

- Feel better about themselves
- Are more physically fit
- Have more energy

Other benefits of exercise are:

- A lower risk of heart disease and diabetes
- Healthy bone and muscle growth
- Staying at a healthy weight

### GETTING STARTED

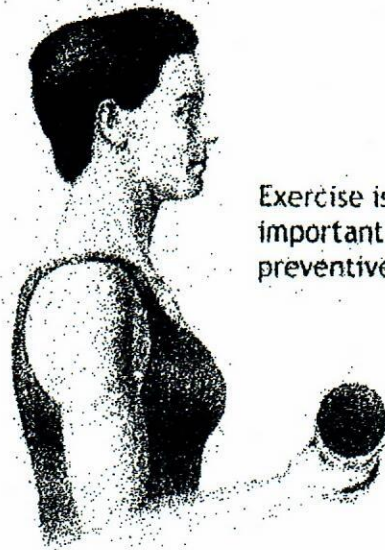
Not all children are the same. Some kids are very athletic and love getting outside and being active. Others would rather stay inside and play video games or watch TV.

If your child is not athletic, find ways to motivate your child to be more active.

These ideas may help non-athletic children become active:

- Let them know it will give them more energy, make their body stronger, and make them feel good about themselves.
- Encourage them to be active, so they know they can do it.
- Be their role model. If you are not active yourself, start getting more active.
  - Make walking a part of your family's daily routine. All you need are good walking shoes and rain jackets for wet days. Don't let rain stop you.
  - Go for walks together after dinner, before turning on the TV or playing computer games.
- Take your family to community centers or parks where there are playgrounds, ball fields, basketball courts, and walking paths. It's easier to be active when the people around you are active.

### FIND A GOOD MATCH



Exercise is an  
important part of  
preventive health care

\*ADAM



It is important to find an activity that excites your child. Some children like to do individual activities, such as swimming, running, skiing, or biking. Others prefer group sports, like soccer, football, or basketball.

Choose an exercise that works well for your child's age. For example, a 6-year-old may play outside with other kids, and a 16-year-old may run at a track.

Organized sports and daily activities are good ways for your child to get exercise. Daily activities can use as much, or more energy than some organized sports.

Some great daily activities are:

- Walking or biking to school
- Taking the stairs instead of the elevator
- Riding a bike with family or friends
- Taking the dog for a walk
- Playing outside (such as shooting a basketball or kicking or throwing a ball around)
- Playing in the water (at a local pool, in a water sprinkler, or splashing in puddles)
- Dancing to music
- Skating (ice skating, skateboarding, or roller skating)
- Doing household chores (sweeping, mopping, and vacuuming floors, loading the dishwasher)
- Taking a family walk or hike
- Playing computer games that make you move your whole body, instead of ones that make you move only your fingers
- Raking leaves (and then jumping in the piles before bagging them up)
- Mowing the lawn
- Weeding

## References

Felgeman S. Middle childhood. In: Kliegman RM, Behrman RE, Jenson HB, Stanton BF, eds. *Nelson Textbook of Pediatrics*. 18th ed. Philadelphia, Pa: Saunders Elsevier; 2007:chap 11.

US Department of Health and Human Services. Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans: Recommendation statement. 2008. Accessed March 20, 2011.

# Physical activity

## Definition

Physical activity -- which includes an active lifestyle and routine exercise -- plus eating well, is the best way to stay healthy.

## Alternative Names

Fitness recommendations; Exercise

## Information

An effective exercise program needs to be fun and keep you motivated. It helps to have a goal.

Your goal might be to:

- Manage a health condition
- Reduce stress
- Improve your stamina
- Buy clothes in a smaller size

Your exercise program can also be a good way for you to socialize. Taking exercise classes or exercising with a friend are both good ways to be social.

You may have a hard time starting an exercise routine, but once you do start, you will begin to notice other benefits:

- Better control of your weight and appetite
- Improved fitness, making it easier to do everyday activities
- Improved sleep
- More confidence in yourself
- Lower risk for heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure

## GETTING STARTED

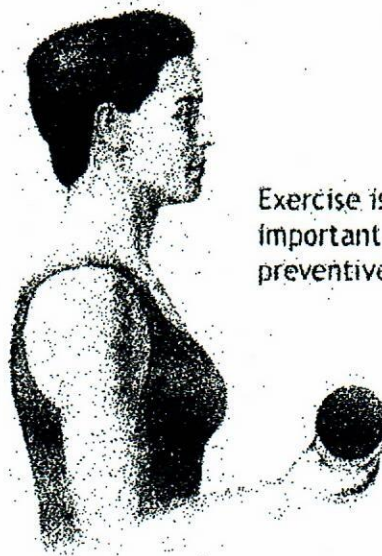
You do not need to join a gym to exercise. If you have not exercised or been active in a long time, start slowly to prevent injuries. Taking a brisk 10-minute walk twice a week is a good start.

Try joining a dance, yoga, or karate class if they appeal to you. You could also join a baseball or bowling team, or even a mall-walking group. The social aspects of these groups can be rewarding and motivating.

The most important thing is to do exercises that you can maintain and enjoy.

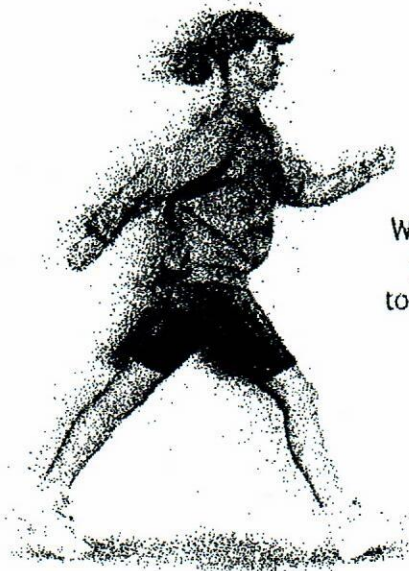
**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Talk with your health care provider before starting an exercise program if:

- You have diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, or another long-term illness
- You are obese
- You have not been very active
- You get chest pains or shortness of breath when you are active



Exercise is an important part of preventive health care

\*ADAM.



Whether you walk or jog, it is important to exercise at 60-85% of your maximum heart rate if your goal is aerobic fitness

\*ADAM.



## **Build physical activity into your regular routine**

Simple lifestyle changes can make a big difference over time.

- At work, try taking the stairs instead of the elevator, walking down the hall to talk with a co-worker instead of sending an e-mail, or adding a 10- to 20-minute walk during lunch.
- When you are running errands, try parking at the far end of the parking lot, or even down the street. Even better, walk to the store.
- At home, do chores such as vacuuming, washing the car, gardening, raking leaves, or shoveling snow.
- If you ride the bus, get off one stop before your usual stop and walk the rest of the way.

## **REDUCE YOUR SCREEN TIME**

Sedentary behaviors are things you do while you are sitting still. Decreasing your sedentary behaviors can help you lose weight. For most people, the best way to decrease sedentary behaviors is to reduce the time they spend watching TV and using a computer and other electronic devices. All of these activities are called "screen time."

Some ways to decrease screen time are:

- Choose one or two TV programs to watch, and turn off the TV when they are over.
- Do not keep the TV on all the time for background noise -- you might end up sitting down and watching it. Turn on the radio instead. You can be up doing things around the house and still listen to the radio.
- Do not eat while you watch TV.
- Take the batteries out of your TV remote control and get up to change the channel.
- Before you turn on the TV, take your dog or a neighbor's dog for a walk. If you are going to miss your favorite show, record it.
- Find activities to replace TV watching. Read a book, play a board game with family or friends, or take an evening cooking class.
- Work out on an exercise or yoga ball while you watch TV. You will burn calories. Or, set up a stationary bike or treadmill in front of your TV and use it while you watch.

If you like playing video games, try games that require you to move your whole body, not just your thumbs.

## **HOW MUCH EXERCISE DO YOU NEED?**

Aim to exercise about 2.5 hours a week. Do moderate-intensity aerobic and muscle strengthening activities. Depending on your schedule, you could exercise for 30 minutes, 5 days a week or 45 to 60 minutes, 3 days a week.

You do not have to do your total daily exercise all at once. If your goal is to exercise for 30 minutes, you can break that up into shorter time periods that add up to 30 minutes.

As you become more fit, you can challenge yourself by increasing the intensity of your exercise by going from light to moderate activity. You can also increase the amount of time you exercise.

## **References**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans: Recommendation statement. 2008. Accessed May 2, 2013.

