

Nutrition Nuggets

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

November 2017



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BEST BITES

Count the ingredients

A long list of ingredients on a cereal box or a jar of pasta sauce often means the food is highly processed. At the grocery store, let your youngster compare several brands of an item on your list (say, cereal bars). She can count the ingredients in each—and put the one with the fewest ingredients in your cart.



Explore the great outdoors

Cooler temperatures offer the perfect opportunity to discover outdoor community “gems” with your child. Help him find local plants and animals while you walk along a trail or through a park or botanical garden. For extra fun and exercise, bring along helmets and explore on bikes, skateboards, or scooters (where permitted).

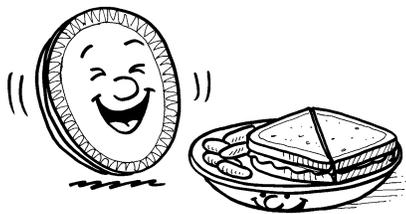
DID YOU KNOW?

November 6 is National Nachos Day. Make this popular appetizer healthier by using whole-grain tortilla chips and swapping plain Greek yogurt for sour cream. Melt real cheese on top (rather than store-bought queso). Then, add vegetables like chopped tomatoes, corn, shredded lettuce, and diced red onion.

Just for fun

Q: What did one plate say to another?

A: Lunch is on me.



Just add water (or milk)!

Does your child ask for juice boxes, soda, or sports drinks when he’s thirsty? Loaded with sugar and calories, these choices offer little nutrition. The best way to quench his thirst is to drink water or milk. Try the following tips to encourage healthier beverage choices.



Make it motivating

Let your youngster choose a special cup at the dollar store to use only when he drinks milk or water. Or have him decorate a reusable water bottle. Using permanent markers, he can jazz up a plain bottle with his name, colorful pictures, and creative designs.

Add flavor

Enhance the flavor of water and milk with these healthy twists. Fill an ice cube tray with water, invite your child to add a flavor mix-in (a mint leaf, a pineapple chunk, a raspberry) to each compartment, and freeze. Then, he could choose a cube to flavor his water. When

he drinks milk, he might try stirring in a sprinkle of cinnamon or a few drops of vanilla extract.

Go for fizz

Your youngster may enjoy the fizzy effect of plain seltzer or sparkling water. With zero calories, sugar, or artificial colors or flavors, this bubbly water is fun to drink—without all the unhealthy stuff that’s in soda. And seltzer is now sold in a variety of interesting natural flavors like mandarin orange, cucumber, and pomegranate. ●

Get your groove on

Keeping fit can be as simple as dancing! Put on music, and enjoy these ideas with your youngster.

● **Shadow dancing.** In a darkened room, have your child face a blank wall while someone else shines a flashlight on her from behind. She could create cool moves to make her shadow “dance.”

● **Chain reaction.** Build a dance sequence together. The first person does a simple movement like swinging her arms overhead. The next dancer copies that move, then adds one of her own. Take turns, each time repeating the sequence from the beginning and adding a new move at the end. ●



Science in the kitchen

Boost your youngster's enthusiasm for healthy eating with these hands-on experiments that weave in science fun.

"Egg-cellent" snack

Experiment: Let your child fill two glasses with water and add 1 tbsp. salt to one. Place a fresh egg in each. What happens? The egg in salt water will float. Why? (The egg is denser than plain water, but less dense than salt water.) *Note:* If the egg doesn't float, have her add 1 tsp. salt at a time until it does.

Eat: Hard-boiled eggs are a protein-rich snack. Place eggs in a saucepan, and cover with water. Put on a lid, boil 1 minute,



and remove from heat. Let sit covered for 12 minutes. Drain, rinse under cold water, and peel.

Popping perfection

Experiment: Have your youngster observe unpopped popcorn kernels. (They're small, brown, and hard.) Then, she should place $\frac{1}{4}$ cup kernels in a paper lunch bag and fold the top over a few times.

Microwave 2–3 minutes, pour into a bowl, and let her observe again: The kernels are big, white, and fluffy! What happened? (Kernels contain water that turns into steam when heated. Steam expands, making the kernels explode.)

Eat: Popcorn is a healthy whole grain. Instead of salt, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese, garlic powder, or paprika. ♥

Q&A

DIY convenience foods

Q: Our grocery store stocks precut vegetables and other time-saving items, but they're too expensive for my budget! Any suggestions?

A: With a little planning, you can make your own convenience foods at home.

On week-ends, ask your child to help you prep vegetables for the week. For



example, wash and dry lettuce, and place in a covered container with a dry paper towel to absorb moisture. You can also wash, chop, and store firm veggies like carrots, broccoli, and cauliflower.

Cook chicken pieces or portions of meat, and seal in zipper bags to use within 2–3 days. You can even make pasta or rice in advance. Toss with olive oil so it doesn't get sticky, and put in an airtight container.

Your refrigerator will resemble the prepared-foods case at the grocery store—but you won't spend any extra money. ♥



ACTIVITY CORNER

Fitness: It's in the cards!

Put a clever twist on physical activity by helping your youngsters make their own deck of family fitness cards. Here's how.

Together, come up with at least a dozen active ideas that can be done in less than five minutes. Be as creative or silly as you like! Write each one on the front of a separate index card. For example:

- Hop on one foot for one minute while holding the other foot with one hand and pinching your nose. Switch feet and hop for one more minute.
- Lie on your stomach, and pretend to swim like a frog for three minutes.
- Hold hands with a partner. Skip back and forth across the room five times.



On the back of each card, your children can illustrate the activity. Put the cards into a box, and pull one out whenever it's time for a burst of activity! ♥

IN THE KITCHEN

Healthier holiday classics

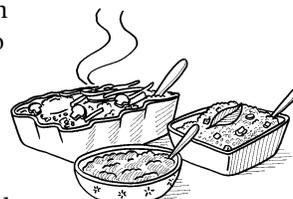
No need to forgo favorite Thanksgiving dishes. Consider these better-for-you versions.

● **Green bean casserole.** For the topping, toss 1 chopped onion and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sliced fresh mushrooms with 2 tbsp. whole-wheat breadcrumbs. Spread mixture on a greased baking sheet, and bake 10–15 minutes at 400° or until browned. Microwave 12 oz. fresh or frozen green beans, transfer to a dish, and add topping.

● **Cranberry-orange sauce.** In a medium saucepan, combine 10 oz. fresh cranberries, 1 cup water, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup honey, 2 tbsp. grated

orange rind, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup orange juice, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. cinnamon, and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. allspice. Boil, reduce heat, and simmer 20 minutes until mixture thickens.

● **Sage-couscous stuffing.** Cook 1 cup whole-wheat pearl couscous according to package directions. Then, heat 2 tbsp. olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup each diced onion, celery, and carrots. Saute until soft. Stir in couscous, 1 tbsp. fresh sage, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. each salt and pepper. ♥



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BEST BITES

Mason jar omelet

Here's a fun breakfast to make with your youngster. Crack 2 eggs into a Mason jar. Add chopped veggies like bell pepper and tomatoes, plus 1 tsp. shredded cheese. Screw the lid on tightly, and let him shake it well. Remove the lid. Microwave 2–3 minutes until eggs are set. Cool, and enjoy. *Note:* You can also make this in a mug. Whisk the mixture instead of shaking.

Burpees for kids

Show your child how to do burpees, a great cardio exercise with a silly name.



Stand up straight, then squat down and place your hands palms-down in front of your feet. Kick back and do a push-up. Jump your feet back toward your hands and leap up. How many burpees can she do?

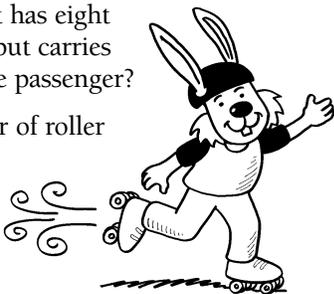
DID YOU KNOW?

Quinoa (pronounced “keen-wah”) is prepared like a grain, but it's actually a seed from the same plant family as spinach and beets. It packs a whopping 8 grams of protein and 5 grams of fiber in each 1 cup serving! Consider tossing cooked quinoa into your youngster's favorite soup, casserole, or salad for a healthy (and tasty) twist.

Just for fun

Q: What has eight wheels but carries only one passenger?

A: A pair of roller skates.



Encourage active time

Want to get your child away from video games, television, or computers? Try these tips for helping her spend less time in front of screens and more time being active.



Involve everyone

At breakfast, have family members talk about how they'll get exercise that day. You might mention a lunchtime walk you've planned with coworkers, and your youngster could explain a game she's going to play at recess. *Tip:* Let your child see you being active. When you put away your laptop and announce you're going for a run, you're setting a great example.

Set ground rules

Come up with rules that encourage physical activity and limit electronics. For example, you might require your youngster to do at least 60 minutes of physical activity before playing video games—and limit video game time to 30 minutes a day. Your child could write the rules on signs to post around the house, perhaps on the

Screen-free alternatives

Let your youngster plan activities that don't involve sitting in front of a screen. She might:

- create a workout routine that you can record for your family to follow along with later.
- map out new routes through your neighborhood for family bike rides.
- organize a neighborhood kickball or softball game.

front door or by the TV. Encourage her to use clever wording (“Turn me off. I need a break!”) and illustrations (a drawing of a tired TV). 🍎

A puzzle full of nutrition

Help your youngster “puzzle” out what a balanced meal looks like with this food-group activity.

First, talk about what makes up a healthy meal.

Tip: Show him the MyPlate guide at choosemyplate.gov/myplate. He'll see that his plate should include about a quarter each of vegetables, fruits, grains, and protein. On a paper plate or a circle cut from construction paper, he could use crayons to draw a balanced meal. Maybe he'll include chicken, brown rice, green beans, and oranges.

Have your child cut the plate into puzzle pieces, and see if you can put his puzzle back together. Then, create more healthy food puzzles for each other to assemble. 🍎



Healthier fast food

When your family's busy schedule leaves you eating on the fly, use these strategies to keep everyone's nutrition on track.

Know the facts

Teach your youngster to spot healthier menu items. Words and phrases to look for include *grilled*, *thin-crust*, *baked*, and *roasted*. On the other hand, he'll want to stay away from anything labeled *fried*, *loaded*, *stuffed*, or *bacon-wrapped*.

Split it

Your child asks for french fries, but you want him to eat carrot sticks. The solution? Order both! Get a small order of



fries for the whole family so everyone gets just a few—and several orders of carrots so everyone fills up on the good stuff. Or share an oversized sandwich. Ask for it with a whole-grain bun (or wrapped in lettuce), mustard instead of mayo, and extra veggies.

Bring your own

Grab a piece of fruit, string cheese, and a bottle of water for each person before leaving the house. You'll save money, *and* everyone will be guaranteed healthy side items and drinks to pair with your drive-thru order. ♥



PARENT TO PARENT Foods can't touch? No problem!

My daughter doesn't like it when the food on her plate touches—even if she loves each food.

After talking with other parents, I learned that my daughter isn't the only one like this. Now I'm trying strategies that have worked for them.



First, I let her spoon her foods into separate tiny bowls. She enjoyed arranging the bowls on her dinner plate, and she ate all the healthy foods—separately. Another time, she put colorful cupcake liners into a muffin tin and filled each one with a different food. Then, just yesterday, we used a carrot stick and a green bean to keep her food apart. When she finished everything else, she even ate the dividers!

With these simple changes, my daughter now eats without a fuss, making mealtimes happier for everyone. ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER A fitness carnival

Homemade carnival-style games can be a fun and inexpensive way to be active with your child. Here are two ideas to get him started.

● **Ring toss.** Make rings by cutting the centers from sturdy paper plates. Line up a few pumpkins with good-sized stems. Step back a few feet, and take turns trying to toss a ring onto each pumpkin. *Idea:* For a glowing good time, get glow-in-the-dark necklaces at a dollar store to use as rings, and play after the sun goes down.

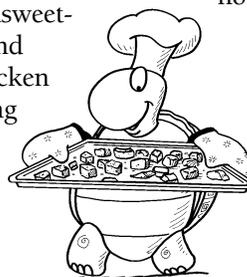


● **Cup pyramid.** Help your youngster build a pyramid with 10 plastic cups (four on the bottom row, then three, then two, and finally one cup on the top). On each turn, throw a Wiffle ball toward the pyramid twice, scoring 1 point for each cup knocked down. Restack. The winner is the first player to reach 50 points. ♥

IN THE KITCHEN A harvest feast

Take advantage of fall's harvest with these good-for-you recipes.

● **Pumpkin apple soup.** In a large pot, heat 2 tbsp. olive oil over medium heat. Sauté 1 cup diced onion and 2 cups diced apples for 3–5 minutes. Add 3 cans (15 oz. each) unsweetened pumpkin puree and 5 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth. Bring to a boil, then simmer 10 minutes. Leave chunky, or puree in a blender (a few cups at a time).



● **Pear grilled cheese.** Thinly slice 1 pear. On a piece of whole-wheat bread, layer 1 tbsp. shredded cheddar cheese, pear slices, and another 1 tbsp. cheese. Top with a second piece of bread, and brown in a heated skillet (coated with nonstick spray), 2–3 minutes per side.

● **Baked butternut squash.** Peel and cube 1 large squash, or buy it already cubed. Toss in a bowl with 1 tbsp. olive oil, spread on a baking sheet, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake 30–40 minutes at 400°, turning once, until golden brown. ♥

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Right-Size Your Portions

Q: What in the world does a hamburger have to do with a yo-yo?

A: When a hamburger is a healthy portion size, it's about the same size as a yo-yo!

Today's oversized portions often lead to overeating. Keep that from happening in your family with these simple tips for recognizing and enjoying healthy serving sizes. Then, share the illustrated guide on the back with your youngster for a fun reminder of what healthy portions look like.

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Recognize a serving

Play the "How big is a serving?" game. Set out measuring cups and spoons, and choose an item from your refrigerator or pantry (say, a tub of cream cheese or a box of crackers). Each person measures or counts out what he thinks is one serving. Together, check the label. Whoever came closest picks another food to play again. Over time, your child will learn to "eyeball" the appropriate amount.



Downsize plates

Did you know that dinner plates are actually 3"-4" larger than they were a generation ago? Try instantly reducing portions by bringing plates back down to size. For instance, serve dinner on salad plates. Or use cups instead of bowls.

Cook—and serve—smart

Cut back on how much food everyone eats before the meal even begins. You might bake macaroni and cheese in individual ramekins, one per person. Or plate food before bringing it to the table. Your youngster will get used to enjoying reasonably sized meals.

Portion out leftovers

Store leftovers in sectioned plates or containers. Your child can place individual servings of entrees and side dishes in separate sections. When she's ready to heat up a meal, her portions will be just right.

Single-size your snacks

Eating from a bag or box makes it hard for your youngster to know how many servings he consumes. Instead, help him count or measure single servings into snack-size bags. *Examples:* 20 mini pretzels, 1 cup popcorn.



Dining out

Restaurants often serve extra-large portions. Try these strategies to help your family trim them to a healthy size.

Go small

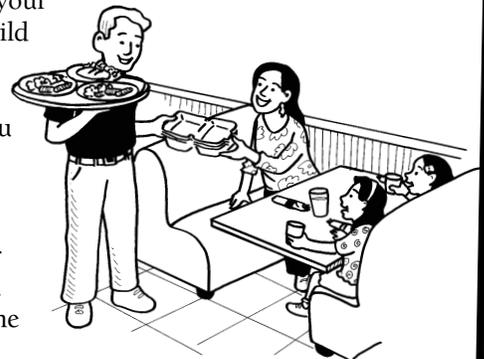
At fast-food or fast-casual places, encourage your youngster to avoid "super-size" items. In a sit-down restaurant, suggest that she order an appetizer or two side dishes for her meal.

Share food

Rather than ordering a full-sized meal for each person, get one meal for every two people. Then, add side salads or extra servings of healthy vegetables.

Bring home a doggie bag

Doggie bags aren't just for dogs! Ask the server to bring a to-go box with your meal. Let your child help you scoop half the food in the box before you even put a fork in it. You'll not only avoid overeating, you'll have dinner tonight and lunch tomorrow—for the price of one meal.



continued



Here's a fun way to serve up healthy portion sizes: Have your youngster use familiar items to visualize how big her servings should be. Post this chart as a handy reference for comparisons between some favorite foods and everyday objects.

Fruits

1 cup grapes: a baseball



1 cup strawberries: a doorknob



1 cup diced watermelon: a lightbulb



Vegetables

1 cup raw, leafy greens like lettuce or spinach: rolled-up ankle socks



1 cup baby carrots: a tennis ball



1 cup peas: a child's closed fist



Grains

1 cup dry cereal: a medium pinecone



1 bagel or hamburger bun: a hockey puck



$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked pasta or rice: 2 ice-cream scoops



Protein

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked beans: a computer mouse



3-oz. serving of meat, chicken, or turkey: a yo-yo



2 tbsp. peanut butter or other nut butter: a golf ball



Dairy

1 oz. cheese: 4 dice



1 tsp. butter: a Scrabble tile



1 cup yogurt: a cupcake wrapper



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Nutrition Nuggets™

Best Recipes

2017 Edition



Need inspiration in the kitchen? Choose a recipe, and enjoy making and eating it with the whole family!

Squash pancakes

- 1 medium zucchini
- 1 medium yellow squash
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 egg, beaten
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole-wheat flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking powder
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded carrot
- Nonstick spray

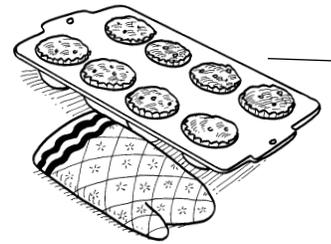
Grate zucchini and yellow squash. Sprinkle on salt, and set in a colander for 20 minutes (to remove moisture). Rinse well. Combine with egg, flour, baking powder, onion, and carrot. Put large spoonfuls into a hot skillet (coated with nonstick spray), and saute the pancakes until brown on both sides. Serves 4.



Mini meat loaves

- 1 lb. lean ground turkey
- 1 egg, beaten
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup quick-cooking oats, uncooked
- 1 tbsp. ketchup
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. ground pepper

With clean hands or a spoon, combine all ingredients in a bowl. Divide the mixture into 8 muffin cups, and bake at 375° for 30 minutes. Serves 4.



Egg dog



- Nonstick spray
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped red onion
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped asparagus
- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp. fat-free milk
- 1 whole-wheat hot dog bun
- 1 tbsp. tomato salsa

Coat skillet with cooking spray, and saute diced vegetables until tender. Whisk eggs with milk, and add to the pan. Stir quickly until the eggs are set. Place in a bun, and drizzle on salsa. Serves 1.

Bell pepper "pizzas"



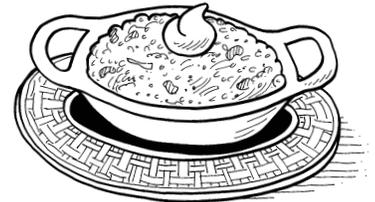
- 4 bell peppers (any color)
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup marinara sauce
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 tsp. dried basil

Slice each bell pepper into 4 quarters, removing the tops, bottoms, and seeds. Lightly brush the inside of each piece with olive oil. Spoon on marinara sauce, and sprinkle with mozzarella and basil. Bake at 350° for 15 minutes. Serves 4.

Quinoa taco bowl

- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 2 tbsp. low-sodium taco seasoning
- 1 15-oz. can kidney beans, drained
- 4 cups cooked quinoa
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup low-fat sour cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup salsa

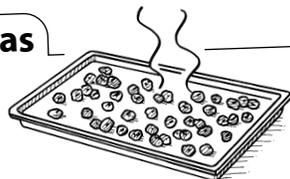
Brown the meat in a skillet. Add taco seasoning and beans, and cook until liquid evaporates. In 4 bowls, add quinoa and then the meat and bean mix. Top with cheese, sour cream, and salsa. Serves 4. *Variation:* Leave out the beef and add avocado for a vegetarian version.



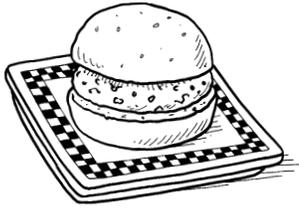
Chili-roasted chickpeas

- 2 15-oz. cans chickpeas (drained, rinsed)
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. chili powder

Use a paper towel or clean cloth to dry the chickpeas. In a bowl, combine the chickpeas with olive oil, salt, and chili powder. Spread on a baking sheet, and cook at 400° for 20–30 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes. Makes 4 servings.



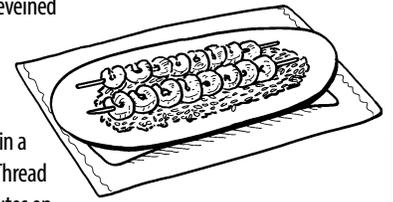
Salmon burgers



- 2 cans salmon (6 oz. each), drained
- 1 egg, beaten
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole-wheat breadcrumbs
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup diced celery
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup diced onion
- Ground pepper
- Whole-grain buns

Mix salmon with egg, breadcrumbs, celery, onion, and ground pepper. Form into 4 burgers, and put on a nonstick baking sheet. Bake at 375° for 10 minutes per side. Serve on whole-grain buns. Makes 4 servings. *Variation:* Make with canned tuna.

Teriyaki shrimp kebabs



- 1 lb. uncooked shrimp, peeled and deveined
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup low-sodium teriyaki sauce
- 1 crushed garlic clove
- Brown rice or large lettuce leaves

Marinate shrimp for 10–15 minutes in a mixture of teriyaki sauce and garlic. Thread the shrimp onto skewers. Grill 2 minutes on each side until just cooked through. Serve with rice, or put the shrimp onto lettuce leaves and fold into wraps. Serves 4.

Watermelon salad



- 6 cups baby spinach
- 2 cups seedless watermelon chunks
- 1 cup diced feta cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup low-fat balsamic vinaigrette

In a large bowl, combine spinach (or another leafy green), watermelon, and feta. Toss lightly with dressing. Serves 4.

Chicken-apple slaw



- 1 rotisserie chicken
- 1 cup broccoli slaw
- 1 apple, diced
- 1 celery stalk, thinly sliced
- 1 8-oz. can water chestnut slices, drained
- 1 head lettuce, shredded
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup low-fat ranch dressing

Shred the meat from the chicken and toss with broccoli slaw, apple, celery, water chestnuts, lettuce, and dressing. Serves 8.

Overnight oat yogurt parfait



- 6 oz. nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup old-fashioned oats, uncooked
- 1 cup frozen or fresh fruit, such as mango or berries

Mix the yogurt and oats together in a bowl. In a jar, layer the yogurt-oat mixture and fruit. Cover the jar with a lid and refrigerate overnight. Serves 1.

Brussels sprout–sweet potato hash



- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 8 sliced brussels sprouts, with the ends cut off
- 1 large, diced sweet potato, unpeeled
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. pepper

Heat olive oil in a pan, add brussels sprouts and potatoes, and season with salt and pepper. Saute 10–15 minutes over medium heat until cooked through. Serve as a side dish. *Idea:* Put fresh greens into a bowl. Top with the hash and a fried egg. Serves 2.

DIY trail mix

Skip the premade trail mix at the store, and help your youngster come up with her own combinations instead. For example, she might toss together cereal, sunflower seeds, and dried apricots. Or she could combine pretzels, banana chips, dried cherries, and cashews. Get started by shopping together for items like these:

- whole-grain cereals
- raisins and other dried fruits like apricots, cranberries, and cherries
- different kinds of unsalted nuts (peanuts, cashews, almonds)
- popcorn
- mini unsalted pretzels or pretzel sticks
- rice cakes, granola bars, cereal bars, or pita chips (broken into pieces)
- banana chips
- unsalted sunflower and pumpkin seeds
- mini marshmallows



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Active Kids = Healthier Kids

When your youngster gets plenty of physical activity, she not only will be healthier, she'll also be more likely to stay focused and behave well in school. Encourage your child to get at least an hour of exercise a day with these fun games and activities.

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Zigzag hopscotch

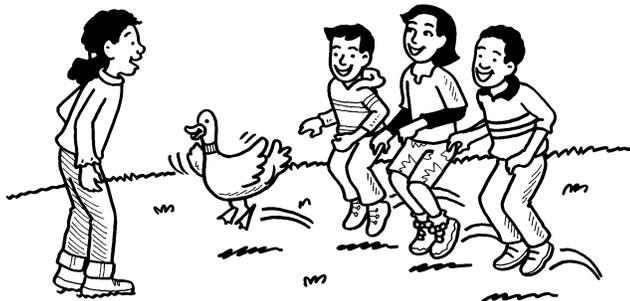
Have your youngster use sidewalk chalk to draw a staircase-shaped hopscotch board on a sidewalk, driveway, or blacktop. To play, she should hop on one foot from start to finish, landing on one square at a time. If she makes it without putting her other foot down, she writes her initials in any square. On your turn, you must hop over the square she initialed. If you get to the end, you initial any empty square. Keep taking turns, hopping only on empty squares or ones with your own initials, until every square is claimed or no one can hop across. The player with the most initials wins.

Kick and block

Form a garden hose into a large circle, and place a soccer ball in the center. Two players stand in the circle. One person is the “kicker,” and the other is the “blocker.” The kicker attempts to kick the ball out of the circle—kicking in the direction of the blocker. The blocker uses his feet to try to keep the ball in. When the ball goes out of the circle, swap roles, and play again.

Fish or fowl

You can play this game on sidewalks or grass. One player is the caller. If the caller names a fish (bass, perch, tuna), the other players jump backward. If she names a bird (robin, woodpecker, seagull), players jump forward. The caller keeps naming fish or fowl, trying to trick the jumpers. If you jump in the wrong direction, you're out. The last person in the game becomes the new caller. Play until everyone has had a turn being the caller.



Slow-motion race

When you take a walk, try this race where the slowpoke wins. Challenge your family to walk in s-l-o-w m-o-t-i-o-n from one end of a block to the other. Your children will build balance and muscle control as they try to make each step last as long as possible. There's only one rule to follow: Everyone must keep moving—no stopping allowed. The last person to reach the end wins.



Penny hunt

Ask your youngster to count out 15 pennies. Then, have her cover her eyes while you hide them around the house. Set a timer for two minutes, and let her race to find the pennies before the buzzer rings. Next game, she can hide the pennies, and you hunt. Help each other find the pennies by saying “You're hot” when someone gets close to a hiding place and “You're cold” if she's moving away from one. *Idea:* Move the game outdoors, and hide pennies in bushes, under rocks, or in sidewalk cracks.



Beanbag tag

The object of this game is to tag the other person’s feet with a beanbag. Choose an open space with a wood or tile floor, such as a hall or basement. Have your child stand at one end of the room while you stand at the other. Now, take turns sliding the beanbag across the floor at the other person’s feet. Try to dodge the beanbag by jumping over it. Score a point each time you tag your opponent with the beanbag. The first one to score 10 points wins. *Variation:* To make the game more challenging, slide the beanbags toward each other’s feet at the same time.

This way or that

There are lots of ways to cross a playground. Let your youngster start this game by saying, “Come across the playground like this...” and then crossing in a funny way (spinning like a top, walking on her heels). All the other players must cross in the same way. Then, the next leader says, “No, no, no. Come across like this...” and leads players across the playground a different way, perhaps walking sideways. How many ways can everyone think of?



Fitness island

Turn a sidewalk or driveway into an island. With sidewalk chalk, your child can draw a landscape full of fitness challenges. He might create a stream, a bridge, and stepping-stones, for instance. Then, he can pretend to wade through the stream, walk heel-to-toe on the narrow bridge, and jump from stepping-stone to stepping-stone across a make-believe swamp. When he finishes, it’s your turn to take the island challenge.

Rainbow walk

Walk laps up and down a shopping strip or around a mall until you’ve spotted one item for every color of the rainbow. For example, you may find red shoes, an orange safety cone, a yellow sundress, green shampoo, blue jeans, indigo earrings, and a violet rug. Or take a rainbow walk in the neighborhood, and see who can find a red flag on a mailbox, an orange flower, and so on.

Five-minute ideas

Here are everyday ideas for short bursts of activity.

Inside

- Put on music, and lip-sync while doing your best dance moves.
- Play with a pet.
- Do a “routine” like five forward rolls, five push-ups, and five backward rolls.
- Stand in a line, and have each person put his hands on the shoulders of the person in front of him. See how fast you can snake your way through the house without breaking the chain.



Outside

- Practice basketball free throws.
- Play a game of catch.
- Take turns throwing a Frisbee and measuring the distance you tossed it.
- Pick a starting point and a finish line. Have a race.

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Nutrition Nuggets™

Nutrition Nuggets

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

September 2017

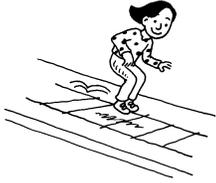
Deborah Harris, RD, MA
Director of Child Nutrition Program



BEST BITES

Chalk up fitness

Boost your youngster's activity by having her draw a sidewalk-chalk fitness course. On a sidewalk or blacktop, she can create "obstacles," such as a ladder to "climb"



or a river to jump over. Then, she could write words like *cartwheel* or *crawl* beside her pictures to guide her and her friends along the course.

Pasta—or squash?

If your child likes playing with his food, he'll enjoy this low-carb and low-calorie pasta alternative. Cut a spaghetti squash in half, put it on a baking sheet (cut sides up), and bake 30 minutes at 400°. Cool slightly. Let your youngster use a fork to scrape the flesh and pull out spaghetti-like strands! Top with your favorite sauce.

DID YOU KNOW?

Calcium plays a key role in strengthening your child's bones and teeth—and it's not just found in dairy products. Dark leafy greens also count toward the 1,000 mg of calcium your child needs each day. And look for the phrase "calcium-fortified" on orange juice, cereals, English muffins, and non-dairy "milk" (almond, soy, coconut).

Just for fun

Q: If I cut an apple into fourths and a pear into eighths, what will I get?

A: Fruit salad!

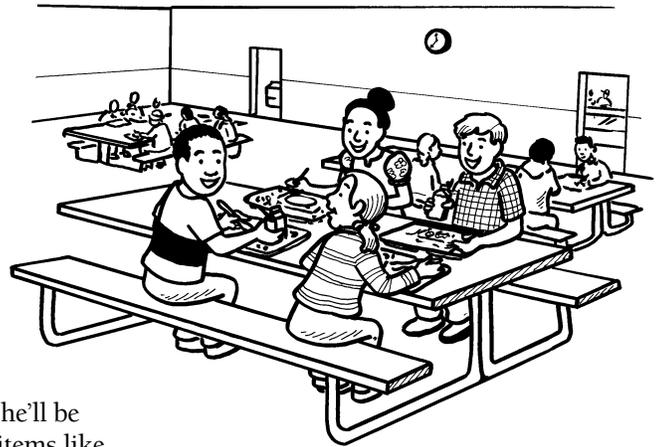


Dine out in the cafeteria

Does your child love to eat out? Do you want him to eat healthy foods during the school day? Encourage him to dine in the cafeteria!

Eat breakfast at school

Suggest that your youngster start a "breakfast club." He could meet friends in the cafeteria for a nutritious meal before school. It's easy and convenient—you won't need to make breakfast, and he'll be able to choose from healthy items like eggs, cereal, fruit, and milk.



Sample new fruits and veggies

What does kiwi taste like? How about radishes? The cafeteria is a great place to try different fruits and vegetables. Read the school menu together each week, and let your child circle foods to "taste test." After school, play a guessing game: He gives clues about items he sampled, and you identify them. *Example:* "White and crunchy," "tastes kind of like an apple" (jicama).

Serve "cafeteria foods"

Try making cafeteria foods at home to help your youngster get used to new flavors. For instance, coat skinless chicken pieces with whole-grain breading for healthier chicken nuggets. He'll be more likely to enjoy the flavor of whole grains if he also eats them outside of school.

Note: Your family might qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. Look for a form in your child's backpack or on the school website. ♥

Stretch those muscles

March like a toy soldier, then tuck in like a turtle! Stretching improves your youngster's flexibility, and you can make it interesting with these playful stretches:

- Together, imagine that you're toy soldiers. Stand tall, and kick one leg high, trying to touch your toes with the opposite hand. Repeat with the other leg and arm, and alternate until you've crossed the room.
- Pretend to be turtles in their shells. Kneel with feet together, and sit back on your heels. Then bend over, touching your forehead to the floor with your arms along your sides. Hold for 15–30 seconds.

Note: To prevent injury, your child should warm up before stretching with five minutes of light aerobic exercise (dancing, walking). ♥



Healthy weeknight buffets at home

Make dinners easier—and more fun—by creating healthy do-it-yourself buffets ahead of time. Follow these steps.

1. Brainstorm. On the weekend, ask your child to help think of ideas for the week like a pizza buffet, a taco bar, or an Asian wrap station.

2. Shop. Have your youngster write or draw a grocery list for each buffet. For pizza, her list might include whole-wheat dough, turkey pepperoni, shredded mozzarella cheese, tomato sauce, and mushrooms.



3. Prep. On Sunday, work together to prep ingredients. Your child could roll out individual pizza crusts to pre-bake. Or you can cook lean ground beef for tacos while she drains and rinses canned black beans.

4. Store. Let your youngster put items for each buffet into individual containers. For Asian wraps, she might place diced grilled chicken, cooked brown rice, mandarin oranges, and peanut dressing into separate bowls.

5. Enjoy. At dinnertime, set out the ingredients for that night's buffet, along with anything else you need (tortillas, lettuce leaves, dressing). Reheat items if necessary. Then, family members can make their way through the line and customize their dinners! ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

Creative catches

Throwing and catching build your youngster's arm strength and improve her hand-eye coordination. Try these games for a catch-y twist.

Play hot potato

Don't be caught holding the ball when the music stops! Players toss a ball back and forth while one person stops the music every few throws. Whoever is holding the ball is the new DJ.

Count it out

Have your child throw a ball high in the air and count how many times she can clap her hands before catching the ball. Or take turns, and see who claps the most times.

Go for variety

Vary the "balls" you throw. Consider small pillows, bean bags, or socks filled with rice. *Idea:* Go outside and play catch with water balloons. ♥



Q&A Get excited about PE

Q: My son doesn't like to participate in PE class because he says he's "not athletic." How can I help him get comfortable so he enjoys PE?

A: PE is a great opportunity for your son to run and play with classmates while he learns and stays active.

You could start by mentioning his hesitation to his PE teacher. She might suggest activities you can do at home or pair him up in class with a student who seems more confident about PE. Then, send the teacher occasional notes to check on his progress.

Also, visit a playground, and encourage your son to teach you skills he is learning or games he plays in class. As he shows you how he can do a chin-up or cross the balance beam, or explains the rules for kickball, he'll build confidence in his athletic ability. ♥



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IN THE KITCHEN Think outside the bottle

Salads can pack a lot of nutrition into one bowl. But store-bought dressing may add unwanted ingredients like preservatives, saturated fat, or MSG. With your youngster, whip up these good-for-you dressings.

• **Tahini.** Whisk together $\frac{1}{3}$ cup plain yogurt, 2 tsp. tahini, 1 tbsp. lime juice, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. oregano, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp.

cumin, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. minced garlic. Pair with butter-head lettuce, chickpeas (canned, rinsed), and sliced cucumber.

• **Pico de gallo.** Combine 2 diced tomatoes, 1 small

diced onion, and 1 minced garlic clove in a bowl. Stir in 2–3 tbsp. lime juice and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped cilantro. Toss with shredded romaine lettuce, diced bell pepper, and avocado chunks.

• **Citrus.** Mix $\frac{1}{3}$ cup orange juice with 2 tsp. balsamic vinegar and 1 tsp. olive oil. Sprinkle over a salad of spinach, dried cranberries, and sliced almonds.

Note: Toss dressings with salad just before serving, or refrigerate for 3–4 days. ♥



Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

April 2017



Deborah Harris, RD, MA

Director of Child Nutrition Program

BEST BITES

Festivals of food

Explore new foods with your child by attending food festivals this spring. Whether they feature peaches or persimmons, crawfish or crepes, strawberries or salmon, these events showcase interesting foods from farmers, vendors, or restaurants. Look for ones with free admission—and enjoy the free samples!

Spring cleaning

With winter in the rearview mirror, April is a good time for active spring cleaning. Together, list indoor and outdoor tasks that will get everyone moving. For instance, your youngster might work with you to wash windows or move winter coats into storage. Outdoors, he could sweep porches or clear sticks from the yard.



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your youngster might work with you to wash windows or move winter coats into storage. Outdoors, he could sweep porches or clear sticks from the yard.

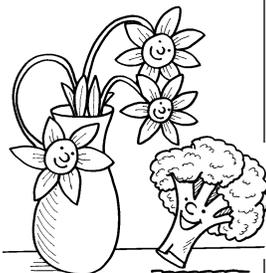
DID YOU KNOW?

Three types of fitness are important for children (and adults): endurance, strength, and flexibility. Encourage your child to develop all three with a variety of activities. Aerobic sports like soccer or swimming will help improve endurance. Sit-ups and push-ups can build strength. And dancing, gymnastics, and yoga all promote flexibility.

Just for fun

Q: What kind of flower doesn't go in a vase?

A: Cauliflower!



Solutions for picky eating

Help your youngster choose to be less choosy about food! Consider these strategies to add variety to his diet.

Pass dishes around

Rather than putting bowls in the middle of the dinner table, pass each one from person to person. When a dish is passed to your child, the aroma may tempt him to try it. Or he might be more likely to serve himself a little just because it's in his hands. If not, at least he'll see others take the food. And over time, his curiosity may get the better of him.

Use a "food chain"

Slowly offer your youngster a series of foods that build on ones he already enjoys. Say he loves boxed macaroni and cheese. Start by replacing the powdered cheese with the real thing ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated cheddar). The next time, add pureed butternut squash or broccoli



to the mac 'n' cheese. Finally, serve just the pureed squash or broccoli.

Try, try again

Your child won't touch steamed green beans? Offer raw green beans with a yogurt-dill dip. Eggplant a no-go? Make it into "fries." (Cut a 1-pound eggplant into strips $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch wide, and toss with $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt. Dip the pieces into 1 whisked egg white, then in breadcrumbs, and roast at 425° for 15 minutes.) In other words, try different ways of preparing foods, and eventually you'll hit on ones your youngster enjoys. ♥

Track family fitness—in color

Let your child encourage your family to get fit—15 minutes at a time. Here's how.

1. Have her choose colored beads to represent different physical activities. She can draw a key, such as "Blue beads = walking the dog" and "Red beads = shooting hoops." Then, each family member could decorate her own "fitness jar."

2. Each person should aim for at least four 15-minute bursts of physical activity a day. For every one, she puts a matching bead in her container. The goal is to exercise at least an hour a day, or 7 hours a week.

3. Ask your youngster to count the beads weekly. Empty your jars, and start exercising again! ♥



Grow a garden

Get your youngster excited about the joys of gardening—and the fun of eating what she grows—with these suggestions.

Research. Build enthusiasm, and learn the basics, with a visit to the library. Read children's books like *Roots, Shoots, Buckets & Boots* (Sharon Lovejoy) to find out about everything from seed selection to themed gardens. Your librarian can recommend titles.



Plan. Together, figure out where you could put a garden. You might have room in your yard, opt for pots on a porch, or sign up for a plot in a community garden. Then, visit a nursery to choose seeds or plants. The clerks will help you and your youngster pick vegetables to suit your space and sunlight.

Tend. Your child will get a nice workout by planting and caring for her garden. After she digs and plants, she'll need to weed and water regularly to help her plants thrive. And, in turn, you can tell her that eating her home-grown veggies will help her grow and thrive, too! 🍓



PARENT TO PARENT Cutting out soda

I recently read an article on childhood obesity that got me worried about how much soda my son Max was drinking. I talked to the school nurse, and she gave me good ideas for cutting back.

First, she suggested that I show Max what's actually in soda. I put a 12-ounce can on the table.



Then, I had him measure out 10 tsp. of sugar and said, "That's how much sugar is in that can of soda." I asked if he would want to eat all that sugar at once—and boy, did he make a face! So I mentioned he could picture that pile when he wanted soda.

The nurse also said we could simply make soda less available. If we don't buy it, then he won't drink it at home. And when we eat out, I give him a choice of water or milk. I know it will take time, but Max is beginning to get used to the change. 🍓

IN THE KITCHEN

Just add raisins

April 30th is National Raisin Day. To honor this wrinkly, good-for-you fruit, enjoy recipes like these all month long.

Carrot salad

Shred 5 peeled carrots and $\frac{1}{2}$ head red cabbage. Then, make a dressing by whisking together 2 tbsp. lemon juice and 3 tbsp. olive oil. Toss the carrots and cabbage with the dressing and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup raisins.

Baked chicken

In a large ovenproof skillet, brown 2 chicken quarters in 1 tbsp. canola oil. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup golden raisins, 1 chopped tomato, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. dried thyme, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups low-sodium chicken broth. Bake uncovered at 375° for 45 minutes until the chicken is cooked through.

Stuffed apples

Core 4 apples, leaving about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the bottom intact. Mix together $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rolled oats, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup raisins, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped walnuts (optional), 1 tbsp. honey, and 2 tbsp. melted butter. Divide filling into each hollowed-out apple. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes until the apples are soft. 🍓



ACTIVITY CORNER

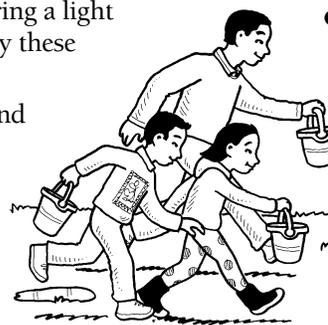
Active play on a rainy day

A little rain doesn't have to stop your child from playing outside. During a light rainfall or after a storm, try these activities:

- Waddle like ducks around the grass. Or hop like frogs from "lily pad" to "lily pad" (dry spot to dry spot).
- Enjoy the mud. Stomp in it, or make mud pies.

- Follow the rain running down a hill or a sloping sidewalk. Where does it go?

- Line up buckets, one for each person, during a downpour. When the rain stops, have a race. The first one to carry a bucket to the finish line wins—but there's a catch! If you spill any water, you have to go back to the start line. 🍓



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March 2017

Deborah Harris, RD, MA
Director of Child Nutrition Program



BEST BITES

I'm full

Help your child avoid overeating by taking time to talk about the color, texture, or taste of his food. If you say, "I love the color of carrots," he may respond, "I like how crunchy they are." By stopping to think, he'll slow down his eating pace, giving him time to feel full.

Building strength

Let your youngster create her own weights using two empty quart-sized milk jugs. Help her fill them a quarter-full with sand or dry rice and screw on the cap. Suggest that she hold one in each hand as she squats, lunges, or does bicep curls. As she gets stronger, she could add sand or rice to make her weights heavier.



DID YOU KNOW?

Most children consume too much sodium. Lower your child's salt intake by offering a variety of spices and fresh herbs instead. Let him smell the basil, oregano, or ginger and sprinkle it in while you're cooking. *Idea:* Read spice jar labels together for ideas of where to use the spices. He'll learn about different flavors—and forget about the salt shaker!

Just for fun

Q: How do you fix a torn pizza?

A: With tomato paste.



Go for whole grains

Get your youngster used to eating whole grains while she's young, and you'll help her build a healthy habit for a lifetime. Try these strategies.

Give details

Begin by explaining why whole grains are good for her. You can tell her that these grains are still "wearing their coats"—they contain the entire grain kernel with all its fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Processed grains like white bread have the outer layer removed, so they've "lost their jackets"—where the important nutrients are.

Make it gradual

Help your youngster adjust to whole grains by working them in gradually. For instance, make both white and brown rice, and mix them together. Or prepare regular and whole-grain pasta, and toss them in a bowl with sauce. As she becomes accustomed to the taste, build up to three-quarters whole grains and then eventually to all whole grains.



Use daily

Try adding whole grains to foods your child regularly eats. You can stir oats into lean ground beef when you're fixing hamburgers. Or put barley or bulgur wheat in soups and casseroles. When shopping, go for the whole-grain varieties of bagels and tortillas.

Note: Many chronic conditions that develop later in life might be avoided by eating more whole grains. The fiber and other natural compounds may reduce the risk of diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers. ♥

Get your winter wiggles out

Winter's chill might still be lingering, but your youngster can burn off pent-up energy—and get physical activity—with these indoor ideas.

● **"Drive" around the house.** Let your child use a kitchen pot lid as a pretend steering wheel. He could pick up speed by marching down the hallway or slow down as he maneuvers around furniture.

● **Follow the path.** Have your youngster make a color trail with different-colored socks (or pieces of construction paper). Then, take turns saying a color, and everyone has to walk down the path, stepping only on that color. *Variation:* Step on any color except the one called out. ♥

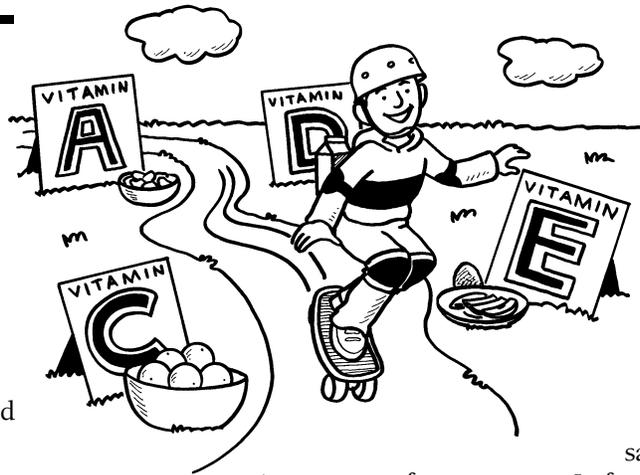


O&A Healthy after-school snacks

Q: I'm concerned that my son snacks too much after school. How should I handle this?

A: Most children are hungry when they get home from school—it's a long time since lunch and a few hours until dinner. So think of your son's snack as a bridge between meals.

The important thing is to make sure the snacks he eats are healthy ones. This is a good time to get in nutrients he may be short on,



like vitamins A (dried apricots), C (oranges), D (fortified milk), and E (avocado), plus minerals like calcium (bok choy) and magnesium (garbanzo beans).

The best options are often smaller portions of foods you would normally eat at mealtime, such as turkey sausage tucked into a mini pita or a cup of tomato soup. In fact, try to avoid foods typically sold as snacks, like cookies, cakes, crackers, chips, and fruit drinks. They're loaded with sugar and empty calories that will give him only a short burst of energy—and won't satisfy his hunger for the long term. ●

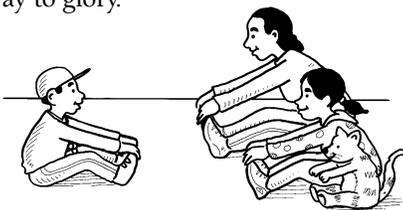
ACTIVITY CORNER

Stage a performance

Encourage your youngster to put on a live show that highlights fitness. No props required! Suggest these three themes.

1. Imagine the action. Your little actor may decide to be an action hero who saves the planet from aliens. What leaps and bounds will he use to rescue small children and animals?

2. Set up for sports. Maybe your child will reenact a scene from his favorite sports movie. He might act out a character hitting the ball and running around the bases or be a track star hurdling his way to glory.



3. "If I were a teacher..." Ask your youngster to pretend he's the PE teacher at school. He could demonstrate games or exercises he will teach the kids—and then lead you in a "class." ●

IN THE KITCHEN

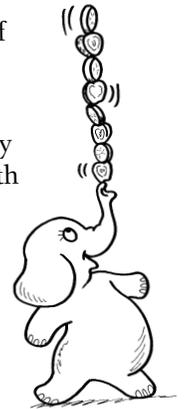
Inspired by Dr. Seuss...

March 2 is Dr. Seuss's birthday. Celebrate his gift of rhyme with some cooking time!

Cat-in-the-Hat fruit snacks. Your child can make the cat's hat by alternating strawberry halves and banana slices on a plate. To enjoy her snack, she could dip the fruit into Greek yogurt sweetened with a little honey.

Green Eggs and Ham. Heat 1 tsp. olive oil in a skillet. Add 5 oz. (about 3 cups) fresh spinach leaves, and cook until wilted, about 1 minute. Pour in 2 whisked eggs, and stir until they're set. The spinach turns them green! Serve with lean ham slices.

Who hash. In honor of the tiny Whoville-ians in *Horton Hears a Who*, dice potatoes, carrots, and radishes. In a skillet, heat 2 tbsp. olive oil, and saute 4 cups of the vegetables until tender. Add 2 cups shredded leftover pot roast or chicken. Heat through. ●



Savvy food shopping

Serving healthier food to your family and saving money can go hand in hand. Here's how:

- To cut down on impulse purchases, make a shopping list, and stick to it. Also, don't shop when you or your children are hungry. *Tip:* Enjoy a healthy meal or snack together before heading to the store.
- Consider less-expensive sources of protein. Eggs, beans, and tofu usually cost less than meat or fish.



- Buy in bulk for family staples. For instance, get family packs of chicken, and freeze meal-size portions. Or purchase rice, cereal, and other grains in bulk, and store in airtight containers.
- Avoid packaged cookies, bakery items, processed foods, and frozen treats. They're not only high in fat and low in nutrients, they're also pricey. ●

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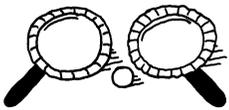
BEST BITES

Easy access

Make healthy snacks the first thing your child sees when she's hungry. Pick a cabinet or pantry shelf that is at her eye level, and stock it with raisins, baked crackers, and whole-wheat pretzels. The same for the fridge: Put string cheese, broccoli pieces, and fruit within easy reach.

Paper plate Ping-Pong

Here's a fun idea for indoor physical activity. Let your youngster make paddles by gluing jumbo craft sticks to the backs of two sturdy paper plates. Use the paddles to lob a Ping-Pong ball back and forth in the air. Or he could just hit a ball against a garage or basement wall for solo practice.



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paper plates. Use the paddles to lob a Ping-Pong ball back and forth in the air. Or he could just hit a ball against a garage or basement wall for solo practice.

DID YOU KNOW?

More restaurants are adding calorie counts to their menus. The numbers can help you make smart choices for your family when you go out. You may opt to skip extras when you see how many more calories they have. And remember that calories are hard to burn off—a 65-pound child has to ride a bike for about 30 minutes to burn 90 calories.

Just for fun

Q: Why did the giant eat a volcano?

A: He wanted a hot lunch!



On tonight's menu...

Streamline weeknight dinner planning, and give your family interesting meals to look forward to, by coming up with daily themes. Let your child help you brainstorm ideas and menus. These thoughts will get you started.

Meatless Monday

What: Go vegetarian once a week.

How: Make whole-grain bowls. Top cooked brown rice, farro, or quinoa with vegetables and a protein like beans, a fried egg, or grilled tofu.

Tortilla Tuesday

What: Tortillas are a versatile base for a healthy meal.

How: Use any combination of meat, cheese, and veggies, and roll up into a burrito. *Example:* Grilled chicken, arugula, feta cheese. Or layer the ingredients instead to make tostadas.

Waffle Wednesday

What: Don't limit your waffle maker to breakfast!

How: Get your youngster grilling panini-like sandwiches using soft whole-grain bread, roasted vegetables, and provolone



cheese. *Tip:* Brush a little olive oil on the outside of each slice so it browns.

Throwback Thursday

What: Spotlight oldies but goodies.

How: Let your child list old family favorites, perhaps meatloaf or baked ziti. Then, look for ways to make them healthier (use lean ground beef or whole-wheat pasta, for example).

Stir-fry Friday

What: This is the night for anything stir-fried.

How: Get out the wok or a deep skillet, and stir-fry vegetables with shrimp, chicken, or pork. To create a noodle dish, add rice noodles to the mixture. ●

Chores reinvented

Chores are an easy way to add physical activity—and responsibility—into your youngster's routine. Try these twists.

Sock dusting. Have your child wear a pair of old white socks on her hands. Then, she can clean surfaces all over the house with her "sock hands."

Undercover chores. Refer to chores using code names. Picking up a messy room could be "Mission Impossible." Signal it's time to change the bed with "Inside Out." And "Dust Bunny Detail" might be code for sweeping the floor or vacuuming.

Dance party. Turn chore time into party time by putting on some tunes. Dance and sing your way to a clean house together. ●



New spins on salad

Want your youngster to eat more vegetables? Go beyond the traditional salad bowl with these clever suggestions.

Chopped salads. Cut salad ingredients into small pieces. Begin with a sturdy lettuce like romaine. Have your child select three or four other ingredients, perhaps cucumbers, bell peppers, and avocado. She could rinse the items and help you chop them. Then, let her toss everything in a large bowl with a bit of her favorite dressing.



Stick salads. No utensils needed when you put salad on a stick! Help your youngster spike her preferred veggies on a toothpick. Encourage her to try new tastes by skewering cherry tomatoes, cucumber chunks, and spinach leaves. Or try chunks of mango, papaya, and pineapple with turkey cubes.

Finger salads. Kids love finger foods, so why not make salad something your child can eat with her fingers? Fill Belgian endive leaves with shredded carrots and roasted beets. Or cook and chill jumbo pasta shells and stuff with chickpeas, marinated artichokes, and diced tomatoes. ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER



Be active— 10 minutes at a time

Inspire your youngster to get fit with 10-minute bursts of activity. Here are ways to put him on the road to getting 60 minutes, or more, of exercise a day:

✓ Do a routine with jumping jacks, toe touches, knee lifts, squats, and lunges. One person can be the leader, and the other follows his moves.



✓ Take “power walks” around the block or up and down the stairs in your apartment building. Pump your arms as you go.

✓ Start a skipping contest. You could skip across the backyard, through a nearby field, or down the sidewalk.

✓ Grab a ball, Frisbee, or beanbag, and play catch outside. Mix things up by catching with both hands, with one hand, or over your head. *Bonus:* Your child will also practice hand-eye coordination. ♥

PARENT TO PARENT

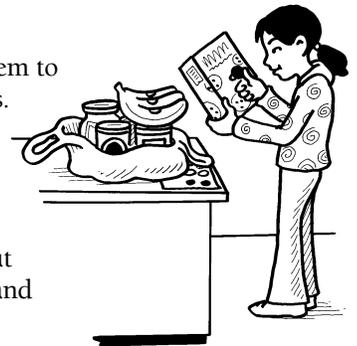
Green means go!

I was frustrated because I couldn't seem to get my children to choose healthy foods.

While sitting at a red light one day, an idea suddenly dawned on me. Why not try a traffic-light approach to the foods in our house?

So I bought red, yellow, and green stickers and went home to discuss the plan. First, we talked about what makes a food healthy—it is high in nutrients and low in sugar, fat, and salt. Then I suggested we put a green sticker on foods to “go on” (fruits, vegetables), yellow on “sometimes” items (apple juice, cold cuts), and red on foods to “stop and think about” (cookies, ice cream).

Now when we get home from shopping, my kids have a job: label each item red, green, or yellow. And I'm happy to say they're going for the green most often! ♥



IN THE KITCHEN

Fishing for tacos

Eating fish will give your youngster essential nutrients to keep his heart and brain healthy. Follow these steps for delicious fish tacos your family is sure to enjoy.

1. Make the fish. In a skillet coated with 1 tbsp. olive oil, saute four 4-oz. tilapia fillets for 3 minutes on each side. Or rub four skinless 4-oz. salmon fillets with olive oil, place on a foil-lined sheet pan, and roast at 400° for 12 minutes.



2. Prepare the vegetables. Heat 1 tbsp. olive oil in a skillet, and saute 1 sliced onion, 1 sliced green bell pepper, and ½ lb. sliced mushrooms until soft.

3. Mix the salsa. Stir together 1 cup chopped pineapple, 2 chopped plum tomatoes, ½ cup chopped red onion, ¼ cup chopped red bell pepper, 1 minced jalapeño pepper, and juice of 1–2 fresh limes.

4. Assemble the tacos. Break the fish into chunks, mix with the vegetables, and divide among eight taco shells. Top with salsa. Yum! ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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