



# health & help

>> are everywhere

**AT HOME, AT SCHOOL OR IN YOUR COMMUNITY,**  
healthy choices are all around you. In here  
are tips you can use wherever you are—from  
your doctor's office to the local recreational  
center to the grocery store and more.

# 1 *Start with a strong, active family.*

**TV Time-Out:** Time spent watching TV, playing video games or surfing the Internet is time your kids could be using to stay physically active.

**Trip Tips:** Take a family vacation that includes hiking, paddling, swimming or biking.

**Lesson Up:** Check your neighborhood park for free tennis or golf lessons, and sign up as a family.

**Mental Activity:** Visit museums, zoos and other places with plenty of walking and learning.

**Tackle Chores:** Do housework or yard work together.

# 2 *Get help from your child's healthcare provider.*

**Side Effects:** Children who are overweight are more likely to suffer from all kinds of health problems—including Type II Diabetes, sleep disorders and high blood pressure.

**What is BMI?:** Body Mass Index is a number that predicts risk of disease by comparing a child's weight to his or her height. While it is not a direct measurement of body fat, a healthy BMI is a good indicator that a child is on the right track.

**How Can I Learn My Child's BMI?:** Be sure to have your healthcare provider check your child's BMI regularly—to make sure it's accurate, and to see any changes.

**What Kind of Activity is Good for My Child?:** Your child's healthcare provider should know what types of physical activity are best for kids of different ages and fitness levels.

**What's Next?:** If your child is overweight or obese, the healthcare provider might want to do more tests to know if your child has a higher risk of health problems.

**It's Not All About Weight:** Telling a child to lose pounds can hurt his or her confidence. Instead, explain to your child how important it is to eat right and be physically active.

**Healthy Helpers:** Many doctors, nurses and registered dietitians know how to speak to kids about their health.

# 3 *Play outside of home and school.*

**Go Back to School:** Sometimes schools in your neighborhood offer organized after-hours physical activities like dance classes, recreational sports or fun-walks for fundraising.

**Go to Class:** Check out the YMCA, health club or recreational center in your neighborhood

for a list of yoga classes, team sports, swim lessons or other activities.

**Park It:** Local parks are full of hiking, biking and jogging trails that are perfect for families. Some have lakes or pools for water skiing or swimming. Your kids can fly kites, play catch or throw a Frisbee for the dog.

# 4 *Get more from the grocery store.*

**Whip Up a Menu:** Plan your meals for the upcoming week or more. Need ideas? Check out heart-healthy recipes from the National Institutes of Health (NIH): [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

**Size it Up:** Sometimes even small packages contain more than one healthy serving. If your child eats everything in the package, he or she could be eating two or more portions. Check the label for serving sizes.

**Make it Big:** Block out a few hours on the weekend to make a big batch of chili, a hearty soup, a pasta dish or a casserole. When your kids' schedule heats up during the week, you and your family can just zap-and-eat.

**Brown Bag It:** If you spend \$7 a day on lunch 5 days a week, you'll spend a total of \$1,820 in just one year. Bringing lunch from home saves money—and may help you control calories.

**Even Better:** For the same price as a soft drink from a vending machine, your kids could have their choice of a small apple, an 8 oz. cup of lowfat yogurt, a cup of whole grain cereal, a small banana, 3 cups of unsalted, unbuttered popcorn, a pudding cup, 2 graham cracker sheets or some carrots and celery. In no time, your child can come up with his or her own list of favorites, too.

# 5 *Look for healthier restaurant foods.*

**Start Smart:** Learn what to look for on the menu. Watch for low-fat options like au jus (in its own juices), baked, broiled, fresh, grilled, poached, lean, roasted, or steamed. Avoid foods served au gratin, buttered, breaded, creamed, fried, crispy, or sautéed.

**Set Some Aside:** Bring food storage containers with you. When your order arrives, portion out enough for your kids, and then store the rest for later. Restaurant portions can be large, so you can save money and avoid the temptation to clean your plate.

**Eat Like a Kid:** There's no rule against ordering a kid's meal for yourself. You'll get less food—and fewer calories—for less money.

**And to Drink:** Go with water, 100% fruit juice, or fat-free and low-fat (1%) milk instead sugary, high-fat drinks.

**Down Size:** It may seem like a good "value," but there are lots of extra calories and fats in those value sizes. Regular sizes are usually the better portions.