

Teen FOOD & FITNESS

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

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Herington USD 487

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FAST TAKES



Concussions: Know the signs

Tweens and teens who play a contact sport like football, ice hockey, or soccer are at risk for concussions. Symptoms, including headache, nausea, dizziness, and sensitivity to light, don't always show up right away. That means your athlete should tell an adult immediately after any blow to the head so he can be tested for a concussion.

Did You Know?

Just 15 minutes of daily meditation is thought to improve memory and reduce stress.

This may lead to better performance in school and a calmer child at home. Your teen could meditate any-time simply by sitting silently and focusing on her breathing. Or she might search online for meditation apps.



Easy on the cheese!

As an excellent source of protein and calcium, cheese can be a healthy snack. But it's also high in fat and calories. Keep your tween from overdoing it by having him aim for a 1-oz. serving (about the size of two dice). For shredded cheese, he could use a loosely packed $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup measure— that's about 1 oz.

Just for fun

Q: If you were running a race and just passed the person in second place, what place would you be in?

A: Second place.



The magic of family meals

Celebrate Family Meals Month by making a commitment to eat healthy foods together. You'll help your teen maintain a healthy weight, eat a more nutritious diet, and develop better lifelong food habits. Plus, you'll connect as a family. Consider these strategies.



Involve your child

Get her excited about preparing and eating nutritious meals. You might give her a weekly mission to find a recipe that uses seasonal produce. Or let your teenager plan a theme night like "Food Truck Friday," featuring healthier versions of food truck favorites like street corn (swap yogurt for mayo) or grilled cheese sandwiches (use whole-wheat bread).

Set an example

Mealtime is a chance for parents to demonstrate healthy eating. Studies show that people pick up the eating habits of those they share meals with. That means

seeing you pile vegetables on your plate, take a small portion of meat, and choose fruit instead of cake for dessert can be contagious!

Take time to talk

Discuss nutritious foods to help your tween learn about them. You could challenge everyone to guess the ingredients and describe the flavors in each dish. Try to keep the conversation pleasant by mentioning nice moments from your day and avoiding topics that cause tension. This helps your teen have a good attitude toward family meals. ●

Make the most of the stairs

Taking the stairs can get your tween's heart rate up, strengthen muscles, and burn double the calories of walking on a flat surface. Use these tips to help him step it up.

Start a habit. When you're out and about, urge the whole family to seek out the stairs. In a tall building, you could walk up as far as possible and ride the elevator the rest of the way. Or take breathers by stopping on landings.

Use household stairs. Encourage your child to walk up and down the stairs in your house or apartment building when he needs a break from homework or chores.

Visit the track. The school bleachers are ready-made for running steps. Have everyone start simply: Run up a set, jog across the top row, then jog down. ●

