

Questions:

1. How many hours of sleep do you get on a school night?
2. Do you eat something every morning before school?
3. Do you eat lunch everyday?
4. Do you eat more than one time between lunch and dinner?

THE HEALTHY DAY

To create a healthy day, you need several key ingredients:

1. Sleep! - This is important for both your brain and your body!

Not getting enough sleep can make you eat more food than your body needs. If you are tired, your body thinks that food will wake you up and give you more energy. But if you are tired, what you really need is more sleep and not more food!

Getting enough sleep will help you:

- Grow, stay healthy, fight sickness, and fix injuries
- Have energy, feel good and reduce bad tempers
- Pay attention, concentrate and remember what you learn
- Solve problems, think of new ideas and respond more quickly to questions

How much sleep do you need?

Age	Hours of sleep per night	Comments
3 to 5	10-12	A 5 year old getting enough sleep at night only needs some quiet time in the afternoon.
6 to 9	10	At these ages, children can benefit from some private time with a parent at night .
10 to 12	9	
13 to 18	8- 9 1/2	Staying up late and then needing to wake up early during the week leads to trying to catch up on sleep during the weekend. This sleep schedule can actually make getting to sleep at a reasonable hour during the week even harder. Ideally, a teenager should try to go to bed at the same time every night and wake up at the same time every morning, allowing for at least 8 to 9 hours of sleep.



2. At least something in the morning to eat

You have probably heard over and over that “breakfast is the most important meal of the day.” There are many reasons for this, including that your body will feel less tired and you’ll be able to concentrate better. Another important reason is that if you don’t eat something for breakfast, your body will think it has to conserve energy. Think of your body as a car, the food as the gas, and the act of eating your first bite in the morning as the key to starting your body that day. If you get in the car in the morning and don’t turn on the engine, what happens to the gas? Nothing! It just sits there waiting for the car to be turned on, and the gas does not get used. Your body does the same thing; it does not turn on until you do so by eating something. All meals and snacks are important, but the first thing you eat will start your engine and you want it to be early in the day so that your body uses as much fuel as possible.

3. Meals and snacks - don’t skip!

If we go more than four hours without food during the day, our body will start to slow down. Our body is trying to conserve our energy or fuel (food). If we eat more food than our body burns in a day, it puts the extra food into “storage” for later use, which is the same as weight gain. We want our bodies to be burning as much food as possible so that we can eat more and still be a healthy weight.

Skipping meals or snacks will also lead you to be hungrier at the next meal and may cause you to eat your food more quickly. It takes your body 15-20 minutes after eating to feel like it has had enough food. If you eat your meal or snack too quickly, you can eat too much food because your body will not have time to signal to you that you have had enough. People say they feel “stuffed” or have a stomach ache after the meal when this happens. Try having a fruit or some veggies before a meal when you are super hungry, and try to eat slowly.

Smaller meals throughout the day will also help keep our stomach the right size. With a healthy sized stomach, your body will have an easier time knowing just the right amount of food for your body. Eating too much food at a meal is not good because it will stretch your stomach like a balloon and over time it may cause you to start eating more food than your body needs.

4. Have a routine of eating three meals and two snacks during the day, and do not graze between these meals and snacks

Grazing on food between meals may cause you to eat more food in a day. The extra food may lead to gaining more weight than you should for your age. See the next page for what a typical healthy day looks like. Every family is different and the sequence of meals and snacks may need to be changed. Speak with



your nutrition coach about what is right for you and what your schedule should be.

5. Treats are a “sometime” food and are not forbidden

When you do have a treat, enjoy it by eating small bites and by eating it at a slow pace. Eating too many sweets can cause our bodies to be unhealthy inside, cause us to be constantly hungry, and lead to weight gain.

Dessert pattern options:

- 60 calories daily
- 100-120 calories every other day
- small portions twice per week

Go out for treats versus keeping them in the house. Many kids do best if you go out for a treat versus having it always around in the home.

Pre-portioned out treats make it easier as it eliminates the need for measuring out desserts. For example, buy Hoodsie cup™ ice cream treats versus getting a tub of ice cream.

Why are daily eating routines important?

- A consistent daily routine for eating and living contributes to family health and happiness.
- The body needs a steady supply of energy throughout the day for ideal functioning. Eating in irregular bursts can lead to crashes in energy during the day and poor performance in school or at work. Erratic eating patterns can lead to overeating and unwanted weight gain.
- Children more readily adopt healthy eating habits if learned in the context of routines.
- Regular mealtimes can contribute to family connectedness.
- Structure around daily eating helps parents manage kids who are always hungry or asking for food. If kids know when their snack/meals are coming, they are less likely to ask at other times. Learning that there are eating times and non-eating times is an important part of healthy development.
- Over-snacking or “grazing” all day between meals can lead to lack of hunger at meal times and reluctance to try new foods or to eat the food that is served.



THE HEALTHY DAY

Grow strong, have more energy, and more fun!

	<p>Breakfast</p>
	<p>Snack 1 – piece of fruit with peel</p>
	<p>Lunch</p>
	<p>Snack 2 – a “mini-meal”</p>
	<p>Dinner</p>
	<p>Water - any time!</p>
	<p>Vegetable munch box – any time!</p>

My new goals...

Now that I know this information, what am I ready and willing to change in my day to make me healthier? (Add these goals to your Goal Sheet.)

- Get ___ hours of sleep every night by going to bed by ____ pm.**
- Eat something in the morning every morning.**
- Do not skip meals or snacks.**
- Only have one snack in the afternoon between lunch and dinner.**
- Do not graze on food after dinner.**
- Other:**



Extra information for parents and teenagers

What is an example of a healthy routine?

Here is an example of what one healthy day could look like:

What?		When?	Why?
Breakfast	High fiber, low sugar cereal, 1-2% milk, fruit	First thing in the morning	Kids who eat breakfast do better in school, consume more needed vitamins and minerals, and burn more calories during the day.
Snack 1	One piece of fruit with the skin	3 hours after breakfast	This snack helps kids stay energized and attentive through lunch.
Lunch	Balanced, following the “healthy plate” model	Noon-1:00 PM	
Snack 2	A “mini-meal” containing a healthy fat or protein with a fruit/vegetable/grain	3 hours after lunch	This snack helps kids stay energized and attentive through dinner.
Dinner	Balanced, following the “healthy plate” model	6:00-7:00 PM	
Calorie-free beverages	Water or diet drinks	Any time between meals	Drinking sugary drinks during the day can lead to unwanted weight gain, mood swings, and energy crashes.
Munch box	Box containing bite-size veggies for munching	Any time you are hungry between meals	Allows kids to always have something to eat when they ask, so parents never have to say no to food.

But that won't work for my family! Practical tips for busy families:

If you are too busy for breakfast:

- See if your kids can wake up 10 minutes earlier. You may find that when they get on a regular sleeping schedule they go to bed earlier and waking up is less difficult.
- Prepare “quick” breakfasts, e.g. high-fiber, low-sugar cereals with fruit mixed in the cereal or on the side and 1-2% milk, a piece of fruit with yogurt and nuts. See the “Healthy Meal Ideas – Breakfasts” module for more ideas.
- If all else fails, give kids quick breakfasts to eat on the road, e.g. drink a glass of 1-2% milk before they leave the house and take a bag of high-fiber cereal with them or a healthy smoothie to drink. See the “Healthy



Meal Ideas – Breakfasts” module for more ideas.

If your kids are snacking/grazing all day long:

- Planned snack times may be all you need to address this.
- Replacing nutrient-poor snacks (cookies, goldfish) with fruit, vegetables, high-fiber grains, healthy fats and proteins will help kids feel more full and less tempted to graze. See the “Healthy Snacks” module for more ideas.
- For chronic grazers, the “munch-box,” which is a box filled with bite-sized vegetables and pickles that kids can munch on at any time of the day, will help.

If your kids are drinking sugary soda/juice throughout the day:

- Best solution: replace these drinks with water.
- Second best solution: replace these drinks with zero-calorie sodas or crystal light, Fruit₂O, flavored waters with 0-10 calories per serving.
- Third best solution: dilute fruit juice with water to reduce calories and sugar consumed while maintaining the flavor kids enjoy. Limit intake to a maximum of 4-8 oz. undiluted juice per day.

If your kids are eating after dinner:

- Use the munch-box (see above).
- If kids eat after dinner because they are bored, schedule a family activity. Get the kids away from the dinner table and into something active.
- Instead of offering a glass of milk at dinner, offer it or 6-8 oz. of plain or “light” yogurt afterwards.
- Plan a small treat or healthy snack later where they come back to the table at a certain time.

