14-18 years old

Nutrition Advice

By providing nutritious foods to your teenager you help him or her improve strength, energy, attention span and the ability to keep up with friends.

Breakfast ~ Eating breakfast every day helps your teenager do well in school and improves overall health.

Lunch ~ Buying school meals can be nutritious. If your teenager packs a lunch, it is important they include at least 4 out of the 5 food groups (low-fat/fat-free dairy foods, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean protein).

Snacks ~ Eat when hungry. Stock up on ready-to-eat vegetables, fruit, low fat cheese, yogurt, milk, lean meats, whole grain crackers, bread, low sugar cereal or nuts.

Dinner ~ Eat as many meals as possible as a family at the dinner table. Be sure to slow down, enjoy, eat when hungry and turn off the TV.

Eating Out ~ Keep portion sizes small or share meals (don’t “super size”).

● Choose fruit or salad instead of French fries, milk instead of pop, baked or broiled instead of fried.

● Limit dressings and mayonnaise; ask for them on the side or choose low fat options.

Beverages - Think your Drink!

● The best choices are water, low fat (1%) or nonfat (skim) milk and 100% fruit juice (limit fruit juice to 1 cup or 8 oz. serving per day).

● Limit sweetened beverages such as soft drinks, punch, juice drinks, energy drinks and caffeine containing beverages.

Be Active

● Make sure you and your teenagers are active 60 minutes every day.

● Count time spent doing chores: car washing, walking the dog, dusting, sweeping, pulling weeds, raking leaves or shoveling snow.

● Involve the whole family in physical activity because you are role models!

● “Screen time” (computers, TV, gaming systems, texting, etc) should be limited to 2 hours or less daily.

● Screens may be monitored easily if moved to a common area; keep them out of teenager’s bedroom.

● A good night sleep with a regular bed time is critical to good health and weight maintenance.

● If you have concerns about your teenager’s weight, physical activity or eating behaviors, ask your healthcare provider.

More Parent Tips...

● Do not criticize your teenager about their size and shape. Focus on strengths rather than appearance.

● Remember that parents can still influence choices...as a parent you are still the role model!