

Great Eating Tips for Families

Feast on family meals

- Plan balanced meals ahead of time, so the family can eat together
- Never coax, bribe, punish or nag kids to eat... avoid the battles
- Focus on pleasant topics and be a good role model when it comes to mealtime

Manage the kitchen environment

- Change buying habits to limit junk foods, soda and desserts
- Leave cut up veggies on the counter after school
- Cut up a fruit salad and keep in the refrigerator—It's more likely to be eaten
- Make fresh fruit popsicles with fruit and yogurt

Parents rule

- The Division of Responsibility: Parents decide what to offer and when, kids decide how much and what of the food offered to eat
- Don't make separate "kid meals" at mealtime or be the "short order cook"
- Keep introducing new foods over again

Movin' past media

- Turn off the TV while eating and don't snack in front of the TV
 - Limit combined TV, computer, video game time to less than an hour or two a day
- Mark out 7 or 8 days a month on the calendar as NO MEDIA DAYS—turn off electronics all day, play a family game or plan an outing with physical activity
 - Avoid placing televisions and computers in children's bedrooms

Gimme 5 to stay alive

- A fruit and/or vegetable with every meal and snack= 5 to stay alive
- Offer fruit as dessert and with dessert
 - Add grated veggies (carrots, zucchini) to turkey burger, meatloaf, grilled cheese
- Have kids shop for new fruits and veggies they want to try

Drinks to dump

- Limit juice:
 - 1-6 years old < 6 ounces/day
 - 7 years old + < 12 ounces/day
- For kids over 2 years, use 1% or nonfat milk
- Make soda a very rare treat, encourage water at restaurants

Eating out with control

- Find healthy style fast food restaurants over fried fast food places
- Share meals among the family to help portion control for everyone
 - Find grilled meats, salads, pastas with red sauces
- Share a side salad and grilled veggies with the family

Become the family nutrition expert

- Learn to label read and estimate % calories from fat; limit to < 30%
- Make sure all family members are meeting their calcium and fiber requirements
- Learn how to avoid the bad fats (trans fats or "partially hydrogenated fats") and find good fats, like omega-3 fats in fish, nuts, and seeds