

It all adds up

Exercise doesn't have to be done all at once. Encourage your youngster to be active throughout the day—small amounts of time will add up! In general, school-age children should get at least an hour of physical activity each day. Here are some ways to put more exercise into your child's routine:

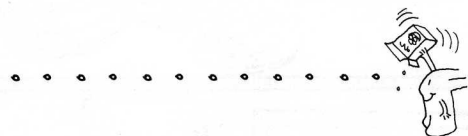
- Have her invite friends over for a backyard game of tag or capture the flag.



- Suggest that she jump rope for 10 minutes.
- Put on some music, and dance to it.
- Bike together to the library or a friend's house. *Note:* For safety, use sidewalks and wear helmets.
- When you do errands together, park far from the store to encourage more walking time.

- Take the steps rather than the elevator when you're shopping or at the dentist.

Remember: Regular exercise will not only make your child healthier—it will help her sleep better at night and be in better shape to learn and play all day.



ACTIVITY CORNER

A walk a day

A daily family walk is a great way to get your child—and you—moving. Some families take a walk after dinner. Others plan a morning walk on the weekends. For parents who are home after school, that's often a great time to walk.

Figure out the best time for your family's schedule, and use the time to walk and talk—you'll be helping everyone get healthier, and you'll be spending special time together. Make the walk more fun by mixing it up: walk one block and skip for the next, or alternate walking fast and slow.

You can even sneak in some learning time on your walk. For example, have your child count how many trees you pass or read the signs along the way.



IN THE KITCHEN

Smoothie time

Here's a sure-fire way to get kids excited about eating healthfully. Toss fruit, a few ice cubes, yogurt, and juice into a blender, and mix until thick. With your supervision, your youngsters can even do it themselves! Try these combinations.

Red & White—4 strawberries, 1 banana, 1 container low-fat vanilla yogurt, 1 cup orange juice

Cool Blue—1½ cups fresh or frozen blueberries, 1 container low-fat blueberry yogurt, 1 cup 100% grape juice

Just Peachy—1 cut-up peach or 1 cup frozen peaches, 1 container low-fat peach yogurt, ¾ cup orange juice

Tip: Add a teaspoon of wheat bran (available at your grocery or health food store) to put fiber into your youngsters' treats.



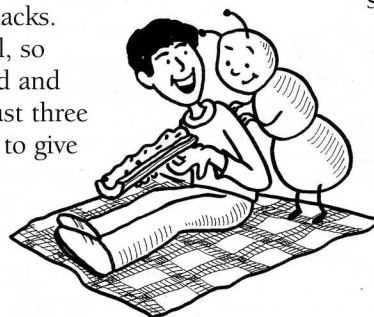
Q & A Too many snacks

Q: When my child comes home from school, he snacks all afternoon and then isn't hungry for dinner. How can I get him to change this habit?

A: You may be surprised to know that children actually need snacks. Their stomachs are small, so they can't get all the food and nutrients they need in just three meals a day. The trick is to give your youngster a snack that's both healthy and filling so he will be able to wait until dinnertime to eat again.

Try giving your child a choice of snacks when he comes home. Offer foods like microwave low-fat popcorn, string cheese and fruit, or "ants on a log" (peanut butter spread on celery stalks and covered with raisins).

Tip: If your youngster is in day care after school, find out when they serve the last snack of the day. Ask that your child not have one too close to your dinnertime.



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity for their children.

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