



# *Eat Right, Play Hard,* **Live Well**

*A guide to help keep your kids healthy*

Overweight children today are more likely to be overweight as adults. In the U.S., at least 1 child out of every 3 is overweight. Learning good habits early is key to a healthy future.

## *Healthy children*

For your children to be healthy, they need to:

- Eat healthy food and drinks every day. They need a variety of foods and drinks that are low in sugar, salt and fat.
- Be active at least 1 hour every day. Regular exercise helps make children's bones, muscles and heart stronger. It also helps their ability to pay attention at school.



Take a look at the ideas below. They are tips to help your children eat healthy foods and be active.

## *Nutrition tips for children from birth to 12 months*

### **Birth to 6 months**

For the first 6 months, breast milk is the healthiest option for your baby. No other foods or fluids are needed. Your newborn baby's tummy is very small, so your baby may need to nurse every 1 to 2 hours in the first few weeks. Breastfeeding often helps build your milk supply.

You should only consider formula if you cannot breastfeed.

### **Between 7 and 8 months**

After 6 months, most babies are ready to start eating other foods. Continue breastfeeding 6 times or more per day. Then, slowly begin to offer rice or oatmeal cereal with iron. You can also offer smooth or mashed vegetables and fruits. Try a variety such as spinach, peas, peaches, apricots or sweet potatoes. Start with vegetables first. Begin with 2 tablespoons, 2 to 3 times a day. Slowly increase the amount to about 8 tablespoons, 2 to 3 times a day.

Wait 5 to 7 days before trying a different food. Watch for rashes, diarrhea, constipation, or breathing problems. If anyone in your family has food allergies, talk to your doctor about food options.



Don't forget to wash your hands and your baby's hands before each feeding! Hands are often filled with germs, and germs make babies sick.

#### **Between 9 and 11 months**

Your baby may be able to eat finely chopped pieces of food that are soft-cooked or mashed, such as potatoes, bananas, carrots, rice, and green beans. Include choices that your baby can pick up. Small pieces of cooked ground meat, dry cereal, small pieces of soft tortilla, or unsalted crackers are okay too. Offer your baby about 8 tablespoons, 3 to 4 times a day. Don't forget that breast milk should still be your child's first source of nutrition during the first 12 months!

By the time your baby is a year old, he or she can eat many of the foods you eat. Whole milk, whole eggs or honey are fine to offer only at this time or later. Avoid foods that can cause choking, such as round, hard or crunchy vegetables or fruits, or nuts. Cut food into small pieces. Continue breastfeeding as long as you and your baby want.



#### ***Nutrition tips for toddlers, children and teens***

Your child's bones grow quickly. Choose foods and drinks that are high in calcium, such as low fat milk, low fat cheese, yogurt, and tofu. Vegetables, such as cabbage, broccoli and kale are good options too.

#### **Ages 1 to 3 years**

Offer a variety of foods, such as whole wheat bread, vegetables, beans, milk, pasta, fruits, lentils, yogurt, rice, low fat meats, cottage cheese, potatoes, eggs, low fat cheese, cooked cereals, tofu, corn tortillas and rice milk. You can also try soy milk with calcium.

Your baby or toddler may not eat all the foods you offer. Sometimes he or she will eat a few bites and other times eat more. Stop feeding your small children when they tell you they are full. Sometimes they will want one or two foods over and over. Babies and toddlers choose the foods they need when given healthy choices.

### **Ages 4 to 11 years**

Your child needs help as he or she learns to make healthy food choices. Use these years to help guide kids toward healthy eating habits. If your young child refuses a healthy food the first time, try again later. It can take 10 tries or more before they will eat a new food.

### **Ages 12 to 17 years**

As your teen is growing, he or she is also dealing with life's new and challenging experiences. Your teen wants to be more

independent but still needs your help in choosing when and what to eat. At times, teens will skip meals because they are experiencing normal appetite changes, or they are concerned about the way they look.

Your teen should be able to decide how much to eat. However, it is important for your teen to balance food intake during the day. Morning meals or healthy snacks before school are especially important for learning and concentration.



Together, you and your children can eat right, play hard and live well!

## **Set a good example for your children...**

- Offer healthy meals, snacks (such as carrots and bite-size vegetables) and drinks at regular times each day.
- Provide breakfast, as it is an important part of the day for children in school.
- Pack your child a healthy lunch or arrange for a school lunch.
- Continue to offer new, healthy foods, even if your child does not accept them at first.
- Turn off the TV during mealtimes.
- Encourage home-cooked foods by including your children in preparing meals. This will help them learn about healthy foods.
- Choose cooking methods such as broiling, steaming or boiling, which use less fat and oils. Choose low fat meats. Avoid frying foods in oil. Drain off excess fat.
- Avoid foods or drinks that are high in sugar, salt or fat (such as sodas, chips and cookies). Most importantly, do not use food or desserts as rewards! Children may think that these foods have more value.
- Offer your child water 5 to 6 times a day. Encourage your teen to drink at least 8 glasses of water every day. If your child plays in sports, more than 8 glasses of water per day is beneficial as it may help prevent dehydration (lack of body fluids). Water is the best beverage to drink.
- Keep only healthy foods in the home. This will help your children make the healthy choice an easy choice.



## ***Fitness tips***

### **For babies and young children**

- Play with your baby. Gently stretch the baby's limbs. Let the baby move around and kick.
- For young children, go to a jungle gym or playground at a local school.

### **For you and your older children**

It only takes 30 to 60 minutes of exercise each day to keep you and your family healthy! You can:

- Skip/jump rope or play tug-of-war.
- Ride bikes or rollerblade.
- Hula Hoop or play hopscotch.
- Play soccer, basketball, kickball, or any other sport.



You can also encourage your child to join organized sports at school. Your city might also offer organized activities. By joining organized sports, your child will stay active on a regular basis.

Make sure your child wears protective items such as helmets and knee and elbow pads when biking, rollerblading or playing other fun sports.

## ***For more information***

### **CalViva Health Medi-Cal members**

For questions about your Medi-Cal benefits, call **1-888-893-1569**.

For assistance for the hearing and speech impaired, contact our TTY/TDD line at **1-800-431-0964**.

For information about CalViva Health's *Fit Families for Life-Be in Charge<sup>SM</sup>* weight control program or to receive health education materials, call **1-800-804-6074**.

***www.CalVivaHealth.org***