



WELLNEWS

SEPTEMBER 2012

Protect the Health of Your Child Now and in the Future

Childhood obesity is a serious medical condition that affects children and adolescents. It occurs when a child is well above the normal weight for his or her age and height. Childhood obesity is particularly troubling because the extra pounds often start children on the path to health problems that were once confined to adults, such as diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Childhood obesity can also lead to poor self-esteem and depression. One of the best strategies to reduce childhood obesity is to improve the diet and exercise habits of your entire family.

Healthy eating

Parents are the ones who buy the food, cook the food and decide where the food is eaten. Even small changes can make a big difference in your child's health.

When buying groceries, choose fruits and vegetables. Convenience foods, such as cookies, crackers and prepared meals, are high in sugar and fat. Always have healthy snacks available. And never use food as a reward or punishment.

Limit sweetened beverages, including those containing fruit juice. These drinks provide little nutritional value in exchange for their high calories. They also can make your child feel too full to eat healthier foods.

Sit down together for family meals. Make it an event — a time to share news and tell stories. Discourage eating in front of a screen, such as a



television, computer or video game. This leads to fast eating and lowered awareness of how much you're eating.

Limit the number of times you eat out, especially at fast-food restaurants. Many of the menu options are high in fat and calories.

Physical activity

A critical part of weight loss, especially for children, is physical activity. It not only burns calories but also builds strong bones and muscles and helps children sleep well at night and stay alert during the day. Such habits established in childhood help adolescents maintain healthy weight despite the hormonal changes, rapid growth and social influences that often lead to overeating. Active children are more likely to become fit adults.

To increase your child's activity:

Limit recreational computer and TV time to no more than 2 hours a day. A surefire way to increase your child's activity levels is to limit the number of hours he or she is allowed to watch television each day. Other sedentary

activities — playing video and computer games or talking on the phone — also should be limited.

Emphasize activity, not exercise. Your child's activity doesn't have to be a structured exercise program — the object is just to get him or her moving. Free-play activities, such as playing hide-and-seek, tag or jump-rope, can be great for burning calories and improving fitness.

Find activities your child likes to do. For instance, if your child is artistically inclined, go on a nature hike to collect leaves and rocks that your child can use to make a collage. If your child likes to climb, head for the nearest neighborhood jungle gym or climbing wall. If your child likes to read, then walk or bike to the neighborhood library for a book.

If you want an active child, be active yourself. Find fun activities that the whole family can do together. Never make exercise seem a punishment or a chore.

Vary the activities. Let each child take a turn choosing the activity of the day or week - batting practice, bowling and swimming all count. What matters is that you're doing something active.

Source: www.mayoclinic.com

Personalized Care

10 Reasons to Practice Yoga

September is National Yoga Month!



- 1. STRESS RELIEF:** Yoga reduces the physical effects of stress on the body. By encouraging relaxation, yoga helps to lower the levels of the stress hormone cortisol. Related benefits include lowering blood pressure and heart rate, improving digestion and boosting the immune system as well as easing symptoms of conditions such as anxiety, depression, fatigue, asthma and insomnia.
- 2. PAIN RELIEF:** Yoga can ease pain. Studies have demonstrated that practicing yoga asanas (postures), meditation or a combination of the two, reduced pain for people with conditions such as cancer, multiple sclerosis, auto-immune diseases and hypertension as well as arthritis, back and neck pain, and other chronic conditions. Some practitioners report that even emotional pain can be eased through the practice of yoga.
- 3. BETTER BREATHING:** Yoga teaches people to take slower, deeper breaths. This helps to improve lung function, trigger the body's relaxation response and increase the amount of oxygen available to the body.
- 4. FLEXIBILITY:** Yoga helps to improve flexibility and mobility, increasing range of movement and reducing aches and pains. Many people can't touch their toes during their first yoga class. Gradually they begin to use the correct muscles. Over time, the ligaments, tendons and muscles lengthen, increasing elasticity, making more poses possible. Yoga also helps to improve body alignment resulting in better posture and helping to relieve back, neck, joint and muscle problems.
- 5. INCREASED STRENGTH:** Yoga asanas (postures) use every muscle in the body, helping to increase strength literally from head to toe. And, while these postures strengthen the body, they also provide an additional benefit of helping to relieve muscular tension.
- 6. WEIGHT MANAGEMENT:** Yoga (even less vigorous styles) can aid weight control efforts by reducing the cortisol levels as well as by burning excess calories and reducing stress. Yoga also encourages healthy eating habits and provides a heightened sense of well-being and self-esteem.
- 7. IMPROVED CIRCULATION:** Yoga helps to improve circulation and, as a result of various poses, more efficiently moves oxygenated blood to the body's cells.
- 8. CARDIOVASCULAR CONDITIONING:** Even gentle yoga practice can provide cardiovascular benefits by lowering resting heart rate, increasing endurance and improving oxygen uptake during exercise.
- 9. FOCUS ON THE PRESENT:** Yoga helps us to focus on the present, to become more aware and to help create mind body health. It opens the way to improved concentration, coordination, reaction time and memory.
- 10. INNER PEACE:** The meditative aspects of yoga help many to reach a deeper, more spiritual and more satisfying place in their lives. Many who begin to practice for other reasons have reported this to be a key reason that yoga has become an essential part of their daily lives.

Source: www.yogamonth.org

Healthy Family Activities

Be sure to check out this month's healthy family activities in your community at:

<http://search.active.com/?tab=events>



Herb-Bread-Stuffed Tomatoes



Ingredients

- 6 ripe firm plum tomatoes (about 1 1/2 pounds), cut in half lengthwise
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 4 ounces whole wheat bread (about 2 slices), toasted and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh basil
- 1 1/2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon minced fresh thyme
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons grated fresh Parmesan cheese

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. Scoop pulp and seeds from tomato halves into a sieve over a bowl; press with a spoon. Reserve 1/4 cup liquid in bowl. Discard pulp mixture.
3. Place tomato halves, cut sides up, in an 11 x 7-inch baking dish. Sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper. Place bread in a bowl; drizzle with tomato liquid. Stir in remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt, basil, oil, oregano, thyme, and garlic. Fill tomato halves with bread stuffing, pressing gently. Sprinkle each with 1/2 teaspoon cheese. Bake at 375° for 12 minutes or until thoroughly heated.

Nutritional Information (per serving)

- Calories: 151
- Calories from fat: 46%
- Fat: 7.7g
- Saturated fat: 1.2g
- Monounsaturated fat: 4g
- Polyunsaturated fat: 0.8g
- Protein: 6.7g
- Carbohydrate: 16.6g
- Fiber: 5.3g
- Cholesterol: 2mg
- Iron: 1.3mg
- Sodium: 423mg
- Calcium: 95mg

Source: www.cookinglight.com