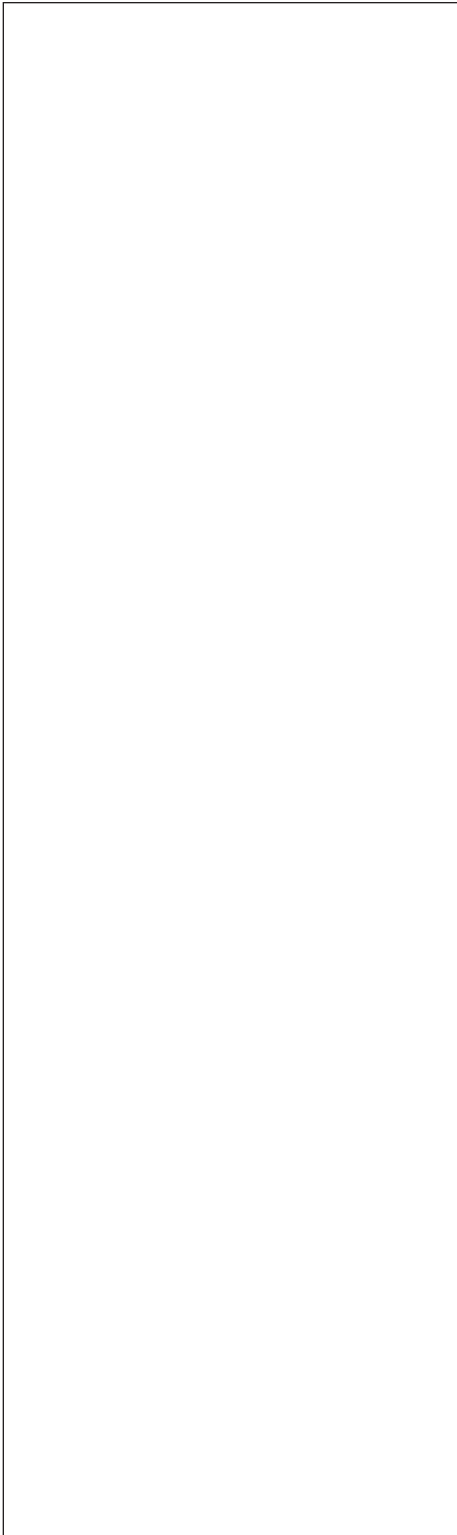


Health Ideas for Middle and High School Students

September 2009



After-school snacking

Snacks give your growing teen a much-needed energy boost between lunch and dinner. Follow these ideas to help her make healthy choices:

- Fill your refrigerator with snacks that you and your child prepare ahead of time. For instance, stuff whole-wheat pitas with tomato sauce and shredded skim mozzarella cheese. She can pop one in the microwave for an instant pizza pocket. Or, if

you make chicken for dinner, slice extra and put together sandwiches on whole-grain bread.

- Prepared snacks are okay sometimes, but there can be a surprising difference among brands. Some “whole grain” granola bars have less whole grain than others. And some varieties of dried fruit have added sugar. Be sure to read the ingredient lists and nutrition fact labels before choosing snacks.

- Encourage your youngster to take healthy snacks to sports practices or to her job so she won't be tempted by fast food. She can pack unsalted pretzels, carrot sticks, or an orange. ●

A running routine

Running builds endurance, strengthens muscles, and relieves stress. As an added bonus, it's free! Here are ways your teenager can start a running regimen.

Train for a cause

Suggest that she sign up for a charity run. She can train by running slightly longer distances each day. Keep an eye on the newspaper for announcements, or contact your local United Way (www.unitedway.org).

Join the crowd

Running with others is a great motivator. If your child likes competition, she might enjoy being on her school's track or cross-country team. Your community may also have a running group. Or consider running with your youngster. It's a great way for you both to stay in shape—and to stay connected with each other. ●

Kid's kitchen

Does your teen know there are more than 7,500 varieties of apples in the world? Bring home different kinds (Gala, Golden Delicious, Granny Smith) for him to sample. Then, try a few in these easy recipes.

Apple salad

Cut one apple and two celery stalks into thin sticks. Toss with 1 tsp. lemon juice, 1 tbsp. low-fat mayonnaise, and 1 tsp. Dijon mustard. Top with chopped walnuts.

Apple waffles

Peel and slice two apples. Place in a skillet with 1 tsp. butter and 1 tsp. brown sugar. Stir over medium-high heat until soft. Spoon onto toasted whole-wheat waffles, and sprinkle with cinnamon.

Apple sandwich

Layer thinly sliced apples with brie cheese and honey mustard on whole-wheat bread. Wrap in foil, and warm for 10 minutes at 350°. Or make a sandwich with sliced apples and creamy peanut butter. ●

Q & A

Q: *Now that my son is a junior, gym class isn't required. How can I make sure he still gets enough exercise every day?*

A: If your child didn't sign up for PE this semester, he'll need to fit in physical activity outside of school hours. Suggest that he walk or bike to school and join a school sports team. He could also swim, play

racquetball, or sign up for a fitness class at a local recreation center or YMCA.

Add exercise to your teen's routine at home, too. Take a family walk after dinner, or ask for his help with chores that will break a sweat, such as weeding the garden or cleaning out closets.

When your son registers for classes next year, remind him that he can take PE as an elective. It's good exercise, it'll give him a nice break from sitting in classes, and it's a fun way to work out with friends. ●

OUR PURPOSE

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

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