

Helping Children Maintain a Healthy Weight



One in 5 children in the United States is obese. Childhood obesity puts kids at risk for health problems that were once seen only in adults, like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. Children with obesity are also more likely to experience bullying, social isolation, depression and lower self-esteem.

It's important not to focus on weight loss. Focus instead on helping your children develop healthy eating habits:

- Provide plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole-grain products.
- Choose lean meats, poultry, fish, lentils and beans for protein.
- Encourage your family to drink lots of water.
- Limit sugary drinks.
- Limit consumption of sugar and saturated fat.

Staying active is equally important. The CDC recommends that children and adolescents ages 6 through 17 years should be physically active at least 60 minutes each day. This includes aerobic activity, which is anything that makes their hearts beat faster, as well as bone-strengthening activities such as running or jumping and muscle-strengthening activities such as climbing or push-ups.

For more tips and information, go to:

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** for suggestions on how to prevent childhood obesity
- **Dietary Guidelines for Americans**
(and download the PDF)
- **Choose MyPlate** for children
- **MyHealthfinder resource** for helping kids stay at a healthy weight