

# Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

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Henrico School Nutrition Services  
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## FAST TAKES



### Nutritious nights out

Hot dogs, candy, popcorn, nachos... when your child goes to a movie or basketball game, he's apt to find high-fat foods at the snack bar. Before he heads out, encourage him to take the edge off his hunger with a nutritious snack (rice cakes, banana). Then, he can split one treat with a friend.

### Did You Know?

Carrots are an excellent source of vitamin A, which is good for your eyes and immune system. Encourage your family to eat them with this healthy spread. Grate ½ pound carrots. Blend with 8 oz. softened low-fat cream cheese, 1 cup chopped pecans, 1 tbsp. chopped green onion, and ¼ cup fat-free mayonnaise. Serve with celery sticks.



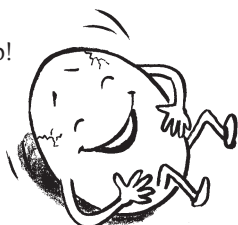
### Spring workouts

As the weather gets warmer, look for ways to stay fit outdoors. Fly kites, do a project (clean the garage, plant a garden), and walk places that you'd normally drive (school, grocery store). Also, keep an eye on the newspaper for community activities, such as a neighborhood cleanup or a nature hike.

### Just for fun

**Q:** What happens when you tell an egg a joke?

**A:** It cracks up!



## Get involved

How can you encourage your child to participate in—and enjoy—sports? From talking about his games to helping him prepare for practices, your support can make a difference. Try these ways to stay involved.

**Provide equipment.** Before the season begins, shop together for supplies. Your teen can find out from his coach what he'll need, such as practice clothes, an equipment bag, water bottles, and protective gear.

**Volunteer.** Share carpooling duties with parents of other players. Help with team fundraisers, such as car washes or discount cards for local businesses. If possible, sign up as an assistant coach or a team parent.

**Practice together.** You and your teen can enjoy each other's company while he works on his skills. On weekends, find an empty soccer field or tennis court and kick or hit a ball around.



Or visit batting cages or driving ranges together.

**Attend games.** Post the season's schedule on your refrigerator and try to make as many games as possible. You might also take your child to local college or community games where he can watch other athletes for inspiration.

*Tip:* Make your teen's sport a regular part of family conversations. Ask him how practice went or how he's feeling about an upcoming game. ●

## Carbs: the real deal

Carbohydrates are an important part of your youngster's diet—as long as she eats the right kinds and the right amounts. Consider these facts:

- *Carbohydrates* are sugars and starches found in grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and legumes. Your child needs at least 250 grams per day for a balanced diet.
- *Complex carbohydrates* (or “good carbs”) will give your teen energy for several hours and should make up the majority of her daily carbs. Encourage her to eat brown rice, dark green vegetables, and whole-grain bread, pasta, and cereal.
- *Simple carbohydrates* are mostly sugar and are found in sweets such as juice and cookies. They'll give your child a quick burst of energy, followed by a “crash.” They're also high in calories, so she should limit them in her diet. ●



# Family meal traditions

Spaghetti on Friday night. Bagels on Sunday morning. Family traditions enrich life around the table. Here are some healthy rituals to pass on to your children:

- Enjoy food traditions any time of day. Try incorporating family favorites into breakfast, like homemade waffles or a special fruit salad that everyone loves. For lunch, invent a family sandwich or hold picnics in the park. Make dinner special by dressing up and using your nicest dishes.



- Schedule special kinds of meals one or two days of the week. You might have slow-cooker Monday, when you serve soup, chili, or stew made in a crock pot. On Thursday nights, have a dinner of appetizers, such as baked chicken fingers, potato skins with low-fat cheese, and raw vegetables with fat-free ranch dressing.

- Update ingredients. Classic family recipes can sometimes be high in calories and fat. Try creating healthier versions. For example, use olive oil instead of bacon fat in your grandmother's roasted potatoes. If your uncle's lasagna calls for heavy cream in the sauce, use low-fat milk or substitute low-fat ricotta cheese. ●

## ACTIVITY CORNER

### Run, bike, swim!

A triathlon: a .46-mile swim, a 12.4-mile bike ride, and a 3.1-mile run. A family triathlon: a fun, active way to spend time together. Here's how you can enjoy one with your children.

First, decide how you'll set up your triathlon. You could spread it out over a few weeks (go running, biking, or swimming every Sunday afternoon, for example). Or shorten the distances (swim 2 laps, bike a mile, and run ½ mile)—and do your triathlon in a day.



Then, look for places to hold your events. You might run on your school track, swim at an indoor community pool, or bike around your neighborhood.

When you finish your triathlon, celebrate with a healthy dinner—and schedule your next one! ●

### OUR PURPOSE

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

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## In the Kitchen

### Breakfast treats

Put a fresh twist on breakfast with these recipes.

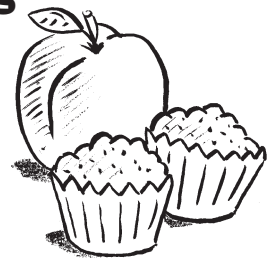
#### Peach muffins

Mix 1½ cups whole-wheat flour, ½ cup sugar, ½ tsp. salt, 2 tsp. baking powder, 1 tsp. cinnamon, ⅓ cup unsweetened applesauce, 1 egg, ⅓ cup milk, and 2 sliced fresh peaches. Spoon into a muffin pan, and bake at 400° for 20 to 25 minutes.

#### Feta frittatas

Crack and beat 3 eggs. Pour into an ovenproof skillet, and cook until the eggs are almost set. Sprinkle 2 oz. feta cheese, 1 oz. sun-dried tomatoes, and

1 oz. sliced black olives on top. Place in oven, and broil for 3 to 5 minutes until the eggs are cooked through.



#### Fruit topping

Replace sugary syrup with this naturally sweet homemade topping. In a skillet, cook 3 cups fruit (blueberries, blackberries, peeled and chopped pears and apricots) over low heat until soft. Stir in 1 tsp. honey. Serve over pancakes or French toast. ●

## Q & A

### Eating disorders

**Q:** I don't think my son eats enough, and he works out all the time. Can a boy have an eating disorder?

**A:** While eating disorders like anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating are more common among girls, boys can experience them, too. Boys with eating disorders tend to overexercise and may use diet and nutritional supplements excessively. Or they may eat mostly protein (meat, eggs) while neglecting other food groups.



Eating disorders can lead to malnutrition, delayed growth, and even heart problems. Be on the lookout for warning signs in your son, such as skipping meals, losing a lot of weight in a short time, complaining that he's fat despite being thin, exercising constantly, or eating large amounts of food in one sitting. If you notice any of these symptoms, contact your child's doctor right away. ●