



TIPS FOR  
PARENTS & CHILDREN

**Funding for MYOC2 (the second Maine Youth Overweight Collaborative) was provided by the Bingham Program, Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust, MaineHealth & Eastern Maine Healthcare.**



### Recommendation:

- ⇒ Eat fruits & vegetables at least five or more times on most days.
- ⇒ Limit 100% fruit juice.

### From Who:

- The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans published from the United States Department of Health & Human Services, Department of Agriculture recommends that fruits and vegetables be key parts of your daily diet (up to 13 servings a day).
- Everyone needs 5—9 daily servings for the nutrients they contain to support general good health.
- Whole fruits and vegetables are better than juice. When pulp is extracted the fiber content, which is what helps you feel full, is lost.



### Why—The Reason:

- A diet rich in fruits and vegetables provides vitamins and minerals, important for supporting growth and development, and for optimal immune function in children.
- Most fruits and vegetables are low in calories and fat, making them a healthy choice anytime.
- They also may contain phytochemicals (fight-o-chemicals) that work together with fiber to benefit your health in many ways. Different phytochemicals are found in different fruits based on their color—that's why it's important to put a rainbow on your plate.
- High daily intakes of fruits and vegetables among adults are associated with lower rates of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, and possibly, some types of cancers.
- Emerging science suggests fruit and vegetable consumption may help prevent weight gain, and when total calories are controlled may be an important aid to achieving and sustaining weight loss.

### Tips to help increase your fruits & veggies:

Try It—Try the three bite rule. Offer new fruits & veggies different ways and try at least three bites each time—it can take 7 to 10 tries before you like a new food.

- Many fruits & veggies taste great with a dip or dressing. Try a low-fat salad dressing with yogurt or get protein with peanut butter.
- Make a fruit smoothie with low-fat yogurt.



Mix It—Add them to foods you already make, like pasta—soups—casseroles—pizza— rice etc.

- Add fruit to your cereal, pancakes or other breakfast foods.
- Be a good role model for your family and have at least one veggie at every meal.

Slice It—Wash and chop veggies & fruits so they are ready to grab and eat.

- Most people prefer crunchy foods over mushy ones. Enjoy them fresh or lightly steamed.
- When you are increasing the amounts of fruits & vegetables you eat, eat them *instead* of less nutritious foods.



**Eat fruits & vegetables at least 5 times a day!**

## What's a Serving?

- A whole fruit the size of a tennis ball
- 1/2 cup of cut up fruit or vegetables
- 1 cup of raw leafy greens
- 1/4 cup of dried fruit

3/4 cup of 100 % juice

Limit to one serving per day

However, serving sizes for very young children are less.

Age 1—3 years a serving is 1/4 cup.

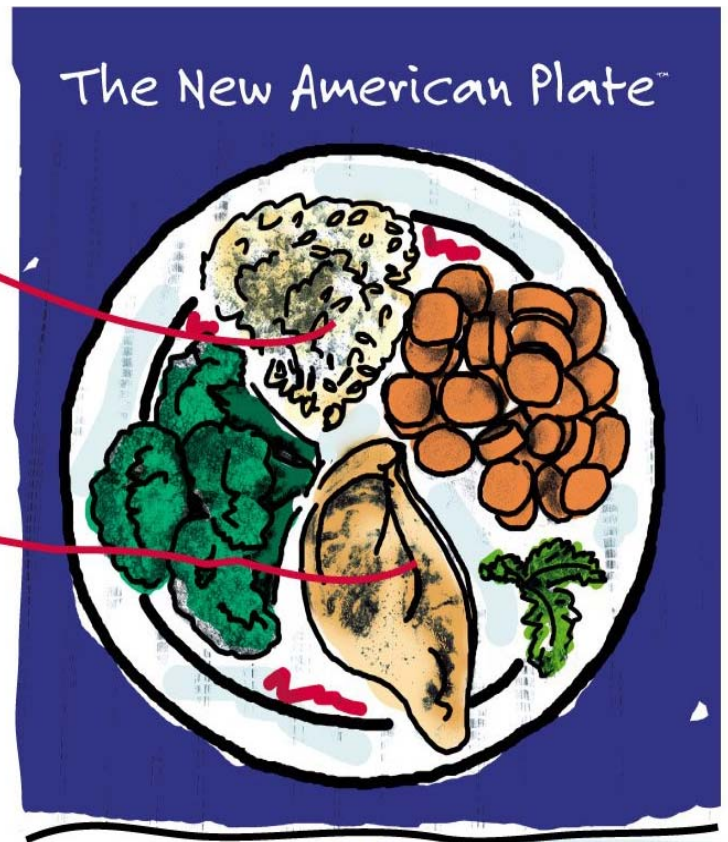
Age 4—6 years a serving is 1/3 cup.



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2/3 (or more)  
vegetables,  
fruits,  
whole grains  
and beans

1/3 (or less)  
animal  
protein



## Choose with the seasons!

**Summer**—enjoy the harvest, whether from your own garden, vegetable stands or markets. Eat and preserve fruits and vegetables that are local, fresh, and at the peak of ripeness.



**Fall**—most tree fruit is plentiful and will store well in a cool shed or cellar. Winter squash, cauliflower, broccoli are in season and provide a great value.

**Winter**—root vegetables like carrots, turnip, onions, beets, and cabbage.

**Spring**—Think dark leafy greens and add nuts or dried fruits to spice up a salad.



**Make Vegetables the largest portion on your plate.**



## Recommendation:

⇒ **Cut screen time to 2 hours or less daily.**

[Screen time includes television, computer & video games—usually does not include computer time necessary for home work]

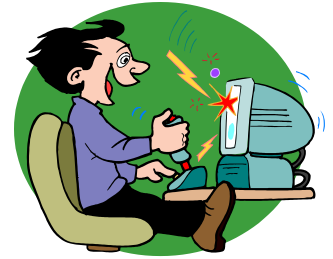


## From Who:

- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation is children have less than two a hours a day of screen time.
- They also recommend keeping the TV out of the bedroom.
- Children under the age of 2 should not have any at all while ages 3—5 should have less than an hour.

## Why—The Reason:

- Watching television occupies many children for several hours each day, and is associated with physical inactivity, increased energy intake (sitting in front of the TV many children snack more than they should), and increased obesity.
- Too much TV has been linked to lower reading scores and attention problems.



## Tips to tame the TV:

Set Limits: Know how much TV your child is watching.

- Set some basic rules such as no television before homework or chores are done.
- Do not watch TV during mealtime.
- Negotiate rules and weekly plans with your children.
- Choose specific shows to watch; don't just have the TV on as a constant background.
- Use a timer and when the bell rings its time to turn off the TV or eliminate TV time during the week.

Participate: Don't put computers and TV's in your child's room.

- Having the TV in a common room makes watching a family activity.
- Watch TV with your child and discuss the program. Ask them questions and express your views.
- This will also let you know what your children are watching.

Monitor: Encourage children to watch programs about characters who show cooperation and caring.

- Having kids keep a journal recording the amount of TV watched helps them see how much time they spend in front of the television instead of other activities they enjoy.

Analyze Commercials: Help children to critically evaluate advertisements and recognize exaggerated claims.

- Limit the number of commercials seen by taping shows and then fast-forwarding through them. This will also help maximize the allowed TV time.

Be a Good Role Model & Create Alternatives: Follow your own rules. Because children model behavior, set a good example with your own television viewing habits. Avoid watching programs containing adult content when your child is in the room or nearby.

- Have children help with dinner. It gets them involved and shows them helping is important.
- Put on music and let the kids dance.

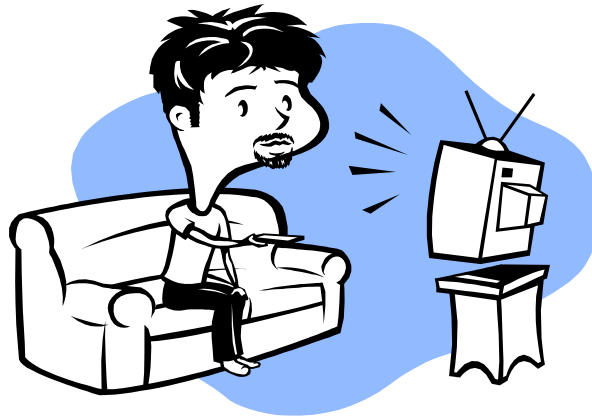
**Cut screen time to 2 hours or less daily!**

- ⇒ Every time you turn on the TV, you see commercials, right? (More than 40,000 a year). Companies pay big money to get their ads on TV—just so we will see them.
- ⇒ In 1999, advertisers spent over **13 billion dollars (WOW)** on advertising.
- ⇒ When we see their products, we are more likely to buy them or ask for them. Think about many of the new products you have tried lately, where did you get the idea that you had to have them? Hmm....I bet you've seen commercials for at least some of these things. YIKES! Maybe those advertisers gotcha.
- ⇒ Now advertisers are getting really smart and promoting their products in the shows we watch. Next time look at what your favorite character is eating or drinking. Do you recognize the brand?

#### Some Stats:

- ◆ **By the time you are 65, you will have seen about 2 million ads on TV.**
- ◆ **By the time a child is 18, they will have seen more than 200,000 violent acts on TV.**
- ◆ **The number of programs with sexual content has doubled since 1998.**
- ◆ **Children who watch more than 10 hours per week of TV are less likely to do well in school.**

Adapted from Growing Healthy Kids—Nemours Health & Prevention Services



## The Hidden Persuaders



### Recommendation:

⇒ **Participate in a least 1 hour or more of moderate physical activity every day & 20 minutes of vigorous activity at least 3 times a week.**

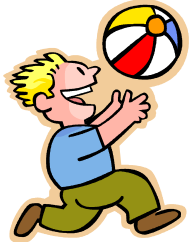
[Moderate intensity physical activity is defined as hiking or dancing while vigorous activities include running, aerobics, basketball etc. Either type of activity should increase heart rate.]

### From Who:

- Key recommendations from the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans from the US Department of Health & Human Services, Department of Agriculture state that children and adolescents should engage in at least one hour of moderate physical activity on most, preferably all days of the week.

### Why—The Reason:

- While most school age children are quite active, physical activity sharply declines during adolescence.
- Children who are raised in families with active lifestyles are more likely to stay active as adults than children raised in families with sedentary lifestyles.
- Learning to be physically active as children will help them grow into healthy adults.
- Regular physical activity is essential for weight maintenance and prevention of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer and osteoporosis.
- Physical activity can provide energy and help you feel better when you are sad or worried.



### Strategies to help increase physical activity and ... remember to keep physical activity fun!

- Encourage “30 minute” rule for inactivity—i.e. don’t allow kids to sit for more than 30 minutes without moving.
- Encourage kids and adults to be active after prolonged periods of inactivity—i.e. encourage them to be active for 30 minutes after school (or work) before sitting to begin homework. Fit physical activity / play into your schedule every day.
- Walk while talking on your cell phone. Take a family walk after dinner.
- Encourage “weekend rule”—i.e. encourage some type of physical activity for at least 30 minutes of each day of the weekend.
- Increase daily activity levels (park further from door, take the stairs instead of an elevator & plan family activities that involve walking—a hike or visit to a local park or museum).
- Turn off the TV and keep the TV out of your bedroom.
- Limit recreational computer time.
- Use a pedometer and keep track of your steps—aim for 10, 000 steps a day.
- Act as role model and be a good example. Keep sports equipment in your trunk so you are ready to play anytime!



**Enjoy 1 hour or more of physical activity!**

- ⇒ Most people know what physical activity is, but do you know why it is so important?
- It isn't so you can look all sweaty like people on TV commercials for equipment. And it isn't so you can have huge muscles to bust out of your clothes like a superhero, either.
  - Physical activity is important because it keeps people's bodies—and minds—healthy. Without it, we wouldn't feel or look very good.

Actually, there are so many reasons why physical activity is good for you; it's time to get right into it and see why it's cool to be fit!

### Benefits of Physical Activity

Helps control appetite	Decreases stress	Builds strength
Prevents disease	Improves health	Increases social contact
Burns calories	Helps you to deal with emotions and feelings	Helps keep your mind off of eating

#### Reason # 1: Physical Activity Makes You Feel Good

- Being physically active is a most excellent way to feel happy, whether you do it on your own or with a group.
- Plus, when you're breathing deeply during physical activity and bringing more air into your lungs, your brain likes the extra oxygen. And when you're active and running around, sometimes it's hard to think about what was bothering you.

#### Reason # 2: Physical Activity Helps Keep Your Weight Healthy

- Every time you eat food; your body does the same thing: it "eats" the nutrients in the food as fuel. It burns these nutrients, or calories, to give you energy. But if the body isn't able to use all the calories that are coming from food, it stores them away as fat. Physical activity helps keep your weight right for your height by burning up extra calories. When you are physically active, your body uses that extra fuel to keep you going strong.

#### Reason # 3: Physical Activity Makes Your Heart Happy

- Your heart is the hardest-working muscle in your body. Its #1 job is to pump blood through your body every day of your life! Since it can't lift weights to get stronger, it needs you to do aerobic physical activity.
- Aerobic is a fancy word for needing oxygen and aerobic physical activity is any kind of activity that makes your muscles use oxygen. When you do aerobic physical activity and bring in that oxygen, your heart becomes stronger (and even a tiny bit bigger!).

#### Reason # 4: Physical Activity Makes You Stronger

- All the muscles in your body do a fine job when you use them for easy stuff, like picking up a book or walking down the stairs. But what about using them for harder stuff, like taking long bike rides, climbing a tree or carrying your backpack to class? That's where physical activity comes in: it makes your muscles get stronger and sometimes larger. As your muscles get stronger, you can do more active things for longer periods of time.
- And strong muscles also help protect you from injuries when you play, because they give better support to your joints (where your bones meet).

#### Reason # 5: Physical Activity Makes You Flexible

- Can you touch your toes easily without yelling "ouch"? If so, you're pretty flexible, which means you can bend and stretch your body without too much trouble. But as people get older they tend to get less flexible, so that's why it's important to be active when you're a kid—to stay flexible.
- Plus, when you're flexible, you can play harder without having to worry about getting sprained and strained muscles.

**Top 5 Reasons Why Physical Activity is Cool!**





### Recommendation:

- ⇒ **Restrict soda and sugar-sweetened sports & fruit drinks.**
  - ⇒ **Instead, drink water and 3—4 servings/day of fat free/skim or 1% milk.**
- [A serving of milk is 1 cup.]

### From Who:

- The Beverage Guidance Panel was assembled to provide guidance on the relative health and nutritional benefits of various beverage categories. Comprised of leading authors and scholars from the top health schools across the US they systematically review literature and provide guidance to consumers.

### Why—The Reason:

- Sugar-sweetened beverage consumption has increased dramatically over the past 20 years; high intake among children is associated with overweight/obesity, displacement of milk consumption, and dental carries.
- Whole milk is the single largest source of saturated fat in children's diets. Switching to low or non-fat milk products significantly reduces dietary saturated and total fat, as well as total calories.

### Strategies to help you pass on the soda.

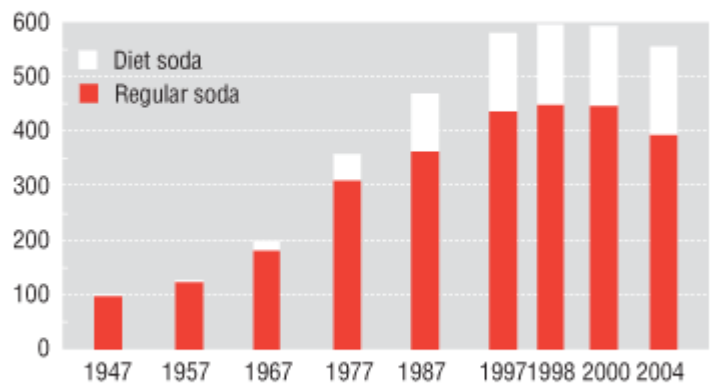
- Don't have it around. It has no nutritional value, adds calories and can increase the occurrence of cavities.
- Reach for water. It's better for you. Keep is on hand to quench your thirst when you are out and about.
- Sports drinks are also high in sugar. Sometimes they have added nutrients that your body needs, but it is better to get these from fruits & vegetables.
- 
- Read drink labels before you buy them. If they have added sugars, find a healthier choice.

#### **Soda Drinkers: Better Keep Exercising!**

To burn off the 250 calories in a 20-ounce bottle of non-diet soda pop, a 135-pound person would have to:

- walk three miles in 45 minutes
- play vigorous basketball for 40 minutes
- bike vigorously for 22 minutes

**Figure 1**  
**Annual soft drink production in the United States**  
**(12-oz. cans/person)**



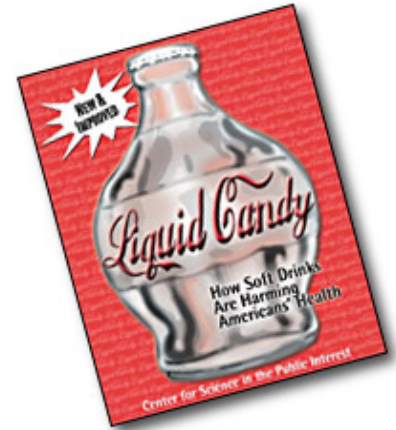
Sources: USDA Economic Research Service (1947–87); Beverage Digest (1997–2004).

# Restrict Soda & Sugar-Sweetened Drinks!

## Soft drinks and fruit drinks have contributed to a major increase in calorie intake in the last 20 to 30 years. We don't need them!

- ⇒ Soft drinks provide large amounts of sugars (mostly high-fructose corn syrup) to many individuals' diets.
- ⇒ Soda provides the average 12- to 19-year-old boy with about 15 teaspoons of refined sugars a day and the average girl with about 10 teaspoons a day.

Those amounts roughly equal the government's recommended limits for teens' sugar consumption from all foods.



Drink	Size	Total Calories	Tsp. Sugar
<i>Mountain Dew</i>	20 oz	275 cal	18
<i>Hawaiian Punch</i>	20 oz	300 cal	17
<i>Pepsi</i>	20 oz	250 cal	16
<i>Coke</i>	20 oz	250	16
<i>Sprite</i>	20 oz	250 cal	15
<i>Dole 100% Apple Juice</i>	15.2 oz	220 cal	11
<i>Tropicana Orange Juice</i>	14 oz	190 cal	9
<i>Fanta Orange</i>	20 oz	275 cal	17
<i>Dunkin Donuts Strawberry Fruit Collata</i>	16 oz	290 cal	15
<i>Vault</i>	20 oz	290 cal	18

*Adapted from NICHQ Drink Comparison Chart*

- ◆ Soft drinks are a problem not only for what they contain, but for what they push out of the diet. In 1977–78, boys consumed more than twice as much milk as soft drinks, and girls consumed 50 percent more milk than soft drinks. By 1994–96, both boys and girls consumed twice as much soda as milk.
- ◆ The empty calories of soft drinks are likely contributing to health problems, particularly overweight and obesity. That weight gain, in turn, is a prime risk factor for type 2 diabetes, which, for the first time, is becoming a problem for teens as well as adults.
- ◆ Soft drinks are heavily consumed in part because companies promote them vigorously and market them everywhere—in stores, restaurants, gas stations, museums and vending machines. Soda companies spend roughly \$700 million on media advertising each year, and hundreds of millions more on other promotional activities, which may involve musicians, actors and price discounting.

Adapted from the Center for Science in the Public Interest Website—Liquid Candy

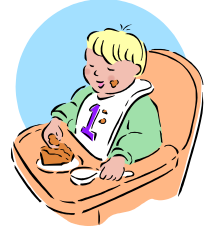
## Babies can

- ◆ sit at the table in a high chair;
- ◆ smile and laugh;
- ◆ notice smells, textures and colors;
- ◆ listen to sounds and voices;
- ◆ play with objects (banging, shaking, and dropping things are ways that babies play);
- ◆ put things in their mouths (watch out for dangerous objects).



## Toddlers can

- ◆ eat finger foods
- ◆ reach for foods;
- ◆ sit at the table in a booster seat;
- ◆ express likes and dislikes;
- ◆ hold and drink from a cup;
- ◆ assist with some simple tasks, such as table setting;
- ◆ enjoy table conversations.



## Pre-schoolers can

- ◆ sit at the table in their own seat;
- ◆ enjoy helping with food preparation;
- ◆ express likes and dislikes;
- ◆ serve themselves;
- ◆ pour cereal and beverages (expect spills!);
- ◆ enjoy pretending to be waiter, cook;
- ◆ follow simple directions.



## School-age children can

- ◆ express likes and dislikes;
- ◆ be more helpful with food preparation and cleanup;
- ◆ be more independent with food choices and meal planning;
- ◆ initiate conversations, tell about their day;
- ◆ understand differences in foods: what's healthy, differences in preparation, etc.

## Teens

- ◆ may not value family mealtime as much (be flexible, but keep trying);
- ◆ are concerned about body image;
- ◆ have more demands on time with sports/school activities (they may have less time for family meals);
- ◆ are affected by outside influences of media and peers;
- ◆ still benefit from family mealtimes.



Adapted from The University of Maine Cooperative Extension, "Making the Most of Family Mealtimes"

# Dos & Don'ts of Talking to Children of All Ages

Do	Don't
Provide information	Lecture
Make observations	Be judgmental
Ask questions	Have all the answers
Offer suggestions	Reprimand
Be honest	Be manipulative
Tread lightly	Nag
Provide support	Threaten
Praise their attributes	Criticize
Provide encouragement	Push

## Examples of quick, healthy snacks for children age 3 and older.

- Cereal bar or granola bar
- Light microwave popcorn or air-popped popcorn
- Crackers like Melba toast, Saltines, and reduced fat Triscuits
- Pretzels
- Toasted cinnamon raisin bread
- Rice cakes
- Graham crackers & animal crackers
- Oatmeal
- Baked tortilla chips with salsa or any baked chips
- Cereal (dry or with low fat milk)
- Low fat or frozen yogurt
- Low fat milk or soy milk
- Hummus with pita or veggies
- Nuts, sunflower seeds or soy nuts
- Peanut butter, almond butter, or soy nut butter (on celery, apple, or crackers)
- Beans and tortillas
- Raw vegetables (like baby carrots) with reduced-fat ranch dressing or yogurt dip
- Celery with low fat cream cheese
- Fresh fruit, fruit salad or dried fruit such as raisins, craisins, dried apricots
- Frozen grapes or melon
- Applesauce

