

More and more kids in Canada are overweight or obese. Research tells us that not only are our kids eating too many calories and not moving enough but many are not getting the vitamins and nutrients they need to lead a healthy life.

Parents need to be active role models for their kids. There is a direct link between active healthy parents and active healthy kids. They need to become leaders in teaching their kids about healthy food choices and the benefits of being active.

*What can parents do?* Become a positive role model in healthy eating and physical activity.

### Healthy Homes

☑ **Teach your kids** about food and why they need to eat healthy nutritious foods. Protein is a source of building blocks for strong muscles, bones and tissue. Carbohydrates provide energy needed for daily activity, growth and development. Good fats are essential for hormonal function and brain development. Minerals such as calcium keep bones strong and healthy. Zinc helps build your immune system. For more information on nutrients and health, go to [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

#### Suggested resource "Nutrient Value of Some Common Foods"

- ☑ Keep mostly healthy, nutritious foods in the house on a regular basis. Only keep a small amount of high sugar/salty snacks at home to be enjoyed as a treat. If your child wants an unhealthy snack such as chips/chocolate, make sure this is balanced out with a nutritious food; sliced oranges are excellent with a small handful of chips. Better yet, offer a fruit first and then, the option of a less nutritious snack. Chances are, the child will not be hungry or will eat significantly less of the salty/sweet starch.
- ☑ Keep washed fruit on the counter, ready to go. If it is at eye level they will reach for it first; quick & easy.
- ☑ Always have an assortment of bite size veggies on hand in the fridge; place in a clear container so they are visible. Have a low fat dip prepared to accompany these nutritious morsels.

☑ Serve lean meats such as chicken. To make chicken even leaner, remove the skin before serving.

☑ Limit consumption of pop and juice. Encourage your kids to drink plenty of water. A 250 ml serving of juice is approximately 120 calories. This will take a child 30 minutes of running to burn it off. Juice is a nutritious beverage choice but one serving size = 125 ml (1/2 cup) only. Buy juices with no added sugar.

*Tip:* Add water to juice before serving

☑ **Breakfast- Breakfast - Breakfast...** It is the most important meal of the day. Parents, be positive role models; sit and enjoy breakfast with your kids.

☑ **Food Game:** Tasting different healthy foods, fruits and vegetables as a fun activity. Pick one night a week or month where you all sit down as a family and take turns trying out new healthy foods. Start up a discussion on the flavors, textures; was it good, tasty? Show your kids that foods come in a wide variety.



Parents are a very powerful teaching tool for healthy eating and regular physical activity.

We teach our kids about the importance of education and BRAIN POWER; let's make sure we fuel our brains in the right way by eating smart and playing smart.

### Healthy Schools

☑ Recess should be active play time and healthy snack time: try nature's snack of fruit - cut up or as is, always tasty, quick, easy and nutritious. A snack should be approximately 100 calories so watch those breakfast bars; make sure they contain no more than 10 g of sugar and at least 3 grams of fiber.

☑ Parent should play an active role in the foods available at school in the vending machines and at the cafeteria. Fried foods, high calorie sweet foods and prepackaged salty foods should be kept to a minimum. Remember, your kids get enough exposure to these foods in other environments. Schools should not be one of them.



☑ Lunch bags should contain all food groups; don't forget the fruits and vegetables. Cut them up so your child will be more apt to eat them. Choose low fat low sugar dipping sauces to accompany fruits and vegetables.

☑ Stress the importance of physical education classes with your kids and the school. Active kids are healthy kids!

### Healthy Play

☑ Prepare healthy snacks for the playing field; fruit (cut up or whole), multigrain pretzels or crackers, cut up cheese.

☑ To help curb the unhealthy "snack attack", kids should participate in play with a satisfied stomach. A light meal or healthful snack prior to an activity will not only help their performance but will also lessen their junk food craving.

*Play outside:* a game of tag or hide and seek is always fun. Activity does not always have to be structured ie: gym, practices. It could simply be a walk or bike ride through the neighborhood or a quick game of pick up soccer or ball hockey. Set limits on watching TV, computer time, and playing video games.

Parents should be very positive role models so get moving! "Screen Time" should be kept to a minimum.

Whether at the hockey arena, music camp or simply "hanging out" with friends, kids are exposed to unhealthy foods.

## Meal Planning

**Protein:** Choose low fat chicken and other meats, fish, legumes, nuts, eggs, and dairy products

**Starch:** Potatoes are great but eat a smaller amount; don't fill up on French fries. Always choose whole grain breads, pasta, cereal and rice

Choose and eat foods as close to the farm as possible. Processed foods often have more salt and fat. Offer your kids a piece of fruit more often and not fruit juices.



## Sample Meal Plan

### Snack suggestions:

**Morning:** cut up fruit in a baggie, multigrain pretzels, cheese string, yogurt

**Afternoon:** low fat low sugar pudding, yogurt, fruit cup

**Evening:** fruit with dip, low fat low sugar ice cream, 2-3 cups low fat popcorn

### Recommended serving sizes:

Always check the label for the serving size

**Fruits and Vegetables:** ½ cup (125 mL) or the size of a lightbulb

**Low fat milk or milk replacement products:** 1 cup (250 mL)

**Low fat dairy products (yogurt, cottage cheese):** ½ cup (125 mL)

### Cheese:

The size of a school eraser

**Chicken, fish and lean meat:** 3-4 oz (50-100 g) or the size of a deck of cards

**Peanut butter:** The size of an adult thumb

### Eggs:

1 to 2 large eggs

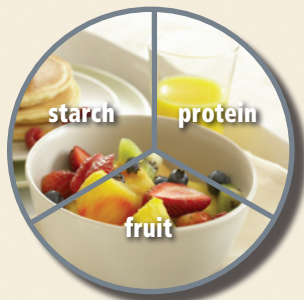
### Fats:

1 tbsp (15 mL)

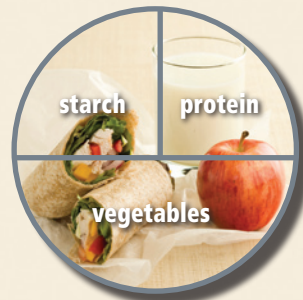
Includes butter, oil, non-hydrogenated margarine and salad dressing

### Dessert:

Ice cream, frozen yogurt, pudding ½ cup (125 mL) or the size of a tennis ball



Breakfast



Lunch



Dinner



Snacks



Snacks

### Breakfast

**Starch:** multigrain cereal (can be mixed with a small amount of sweet cereal)

**Protein:** low fat milk or yogurt

**Fruit:** lots of berries, banana and 125 ml juice

### Breakfast

**Starch:** whole grain waffle

**Protein:** cheese or yogurt

**Fruit:** berries and apple sweetened with maple syrup

### Lunch

**Starch:** whole wheat wrap

**Protein:** strips of chicken breast meat with tazi sauce

**Vegetable:** cut up veggie sticks – avocado, carrots, red pepper

**Fruit:** Cut up or whole fruit (apple, pear, berries, banana, kiwi, mango) 2 oatmeal cookies

### Lunch

**Starch:** wheat crackers

**Protein:** cheese

**Vegetable:** vegetable soup

**Fruit:** Cut up or whole fruit with yogurt or pudding for dipping

### Dinner

**Starch:** brown rice

**Protein:** chicken

**Vegetable:** julienne vegetables or broccoli

**Fruit:** (snack after dinner): Cut up or whole fruit, jello, fruit cup, parfait

### Dinner

**Starch:** whole wheat pasta

**Protein:** chicken in a light sauce

**Vegetable:** pepper sticks or broccoli

**Fruit:** (snack after dinner): Cut up or whole fruit, or small piece of cake with mixed fruit

## Did you know???

☑ One can of regular pop has 8-10 teaspoons of sugar! It takes 1 hour of running for your child to burn this off.

☑ High fructose corn syrup (HFCS) is found in many "kids" foods. Recent research is now revealing that it may be linked to abdominal obesity (the fat bellies) and that it may decrease the feeling of being full. This translates into more eating & more obesity.

## Summary

**PARENTS MESSAGE:** FOCUS ON THE WHOLE FAMILY; ENJOY REGULAR MEALS TOGETHER; OFFER HEALTHY FOODS AND SNACKS. GET MOVING, BE ACTIVE! BE A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL FOR YOUR KIDS!

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More information and  
recipe ideas at [www.chicken.ca](http://www.chicken.ca)