12 steps to a healthy family

About one third of American children are overweight or obese, and risk future health problems.

How can I help my child avoid a weight problem?

You can **take small steps** to make changes in your family's eating and activity routines.

Healthy habits begin at home.

1 enjoy family meals

Sit down and eat with your child. Plan a family meal at least once a day.

Make a schedule for breakfast, lunch and dinner that works for your family.

- Try to eat around the same times every day
- Limit eating between meals and snacks.

Have fun when eating with your family - table talk filled with laughter and love will create happy memories.

2 start every day with breakfast

Show your child that breakfast is too important to skip - **eat together.**

keep it simple -

- cereal with milk and fruit
- toast with peanut butter
- scrambled egg burrito
- oatmeal or bulgur

small steps can add up to a **big difference** in your child's life.

3 cook at home

plan and **cook together** with your family

Collect simple meal ideas and recipes, and learn how to prepare more meals at home. Have a plan for busy days - make a list of quick and easy meals.

Limit take out foods, fast foods, and eating at restaurants.

4 clean out the cupboards

"give your kitchen a makeover"

Keep high fat and high sugar foods out of your home -

chips, cookies, candy, soda, sweet drinks.

Bring healthy foods into your home -

fruits, vegetables, whole grain breads and crackers, lean meats, low fat yogurt and skim milk.

Do you buy the groceries for your family?

you can decide what types of foods your family eats at home.

5 change the menu

Most families don't eat enough fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy and whole grain foods.

oose skim or 1% milk for yourself and children over the age of 2 years.

Eat nonfat or low fat yogurt, cottage cheese and other dairy foods.

oose whole grain breakfast cereals, breads, ls, pasta, tortillas, brown rice and bulgur least 1/2 of your family's grain foods.

Do you have family recipes that are not so healthy?

Change the recipe - less fat and sugar

at a small serving of the food

mit how often the food is served - once a month or once a year.

Your child will eat what he sees you and others eating.

6 eat more fruits and vegetables

Eat at least 5 servings of colorful fruits and vegetables each day, especially dark green and orange veggies....

Broccoli, Spinach, Bok Choy, Romaine Lettuce and dark green leafy lettuce

Carrots, Pumpkin, Sweet potatoes, Winter squash

Serve at least 1 vegetable or fruit at every meal. Snack on fruits and vegetables.

7 be active with your child

Encourage your child to play actively at least 60 minutes every day.

Find a safe play area and active toys for your child.

Don't let your child sit still for more than 60 minutes at a time - **get up and play!**

8 limit screen time

(television, computers and video games) **to less than 2 hours each day**

Choose the best programs for your child, and turn off the rest.

Don't use the TV for background noise.

Listen to your child or radio instead of the TV.

Keep the television out of your child's bedroom.

9 offer nutritious snacks at scheduled times

Offer healthy foods for snacks -

yogurt, apple slices, banana, whole grain crackers.

Chips, candy and cookies can ruin a child's appetite for healthy foods.

don't snack all day long

plan 2 small snacks during the day -

- one snack between breakfast and lunch
- one snack between lunch and dinner

10 the right drinks

what you drink is as important as what you eat

thirsty? reach for water first

plenty of fruits and vegetables - a lot of water and help satisfy your thirst.

milk at meals with your child.

juice to 4 to 6 ounces or less each day.

sweet drinks such as soda, fruit drinks, punches, sport drinks and other sugar sweetened beverages.

bies are meant to be breastfed.

11 p your child develop od sleeping habits

th a scheduled nap and bedtime

Preschool children need 11 to 14 hours of sleep each day, including naps and nighttime sleep.

12 be a good role model

Your habits may not have been the best before you had children, but you can change and develop new habits with your children now.

Let your child see you eating and enjoying a variety of healthy foods, and being active every day.

Serve normal size portions for yourself. Serve child size portions to your child.

Let your child decide how much he will eat. Don't bribe or comfort your child with food.

What steps will your family take for a healthier tomorrow?

Talk to your family. Decide which healthy habits your family can do together.