

Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

October 2014

FAST TAKES



Strong arms

Here's a quick exercise to help your teenager build stronger triceps. Using light free weights (3 lbs. each) or even soup cans, she should stand with her arms straight above her head. Have her slowly bend her arms at the elbow



to a 90° angle and return to the start position. Repeat 8 times.

Pack it up

Keep an eye on portions by making personalized snack packs. Your teen can divide his favorite crackers into single-serving zipper bags for an easy grab-and-go. (Tip: Have him read the nutrition label to discover what one serving really is.) Then, he could keep the bags in the original box for easy storage.

Did You Know?

There are 7,500 varieties of apples grown across the world, with 2,500 of them grown in the United States. The next time you go to the grocery store or a farmer's market, try a new variety. There are lots of crunchy options to help your teen fall in love with this fruit.

Just for fun

Q: What did the banana peel say to the banana?

A: I've got you covered.



Morningside High School - Dr. Reginald Sirls, Principal
Program Instructional Facilitator - Ms. Crystel Axel

Be a weight-loss success story

Losing weight is hard work, and keeping it off can be even harder. Help your children do both with tips from teens and tweens who have succeeded. Share these stories with them.

Set smaller goals

"I wanted to lose a lot of weight, and it was overwhelming. My mom suggested that I try focusing on one thing at a time, such as cutting out soda or eating more fruits and vegetables. Once I started setting smaller goals, I had an easier time losing pounds and sticking with it."

Form workout habits

"When my dad and I were losing weight together, we would change into our workout clothes as soon as we came home from work and school. That got us used to exercising first thing—and soon enough it became a habit. Once we're in our gear, we feel ready to go."

Overcome food triggers

"The hardest part for me was finding a way to handle stress without reaching



for food. I decided to come up with a list of activities that would help me blow off steam in a healthier way. It turns out that I feel better biking to the park or going skateboarding than I did after eating a bag of cookies."

Go for whole grains

"My best friend gave me a tip that really worked. She told me to try to stay away from the 'white stuff.' That meant eating more whole grains and not as much sugar, flour, white rice, and pasta. Visualizing the color of the foods helped me remember to choose whole grains over white." ●

Foods to keep you full

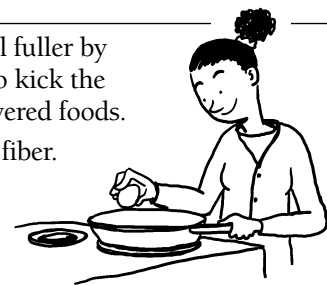
Fiber and protein are keys to making your teen feel fuller by slowing digestion of the entire meal. Encourage her to kick the midmorning or afternoon slump with these high-powered foods.

Oatmeal. Just $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of uncooked oats has 4 grams of fiber. An oatmeal breakfast (made with fat-free milk) will keep your child full through all her morning classes.

Eggs. The protein in eggs can help fuel her for hours. To keep it lean, try one egg yolk per two egg whites.

Note: The yolk and the white each have about 3 grams of protein.

Almonds. A handful of almonds is perfect for on the go—these nuts have fiber and protein all in one! One-quarter cup of almonds contains 5 grams of protein and 3 grams of fiber. ●



Tech & fitness

Your child's phone probably goes with her wherever she goes, so why not take it to her workout, too? Apps and websites can help her get in shape by tracking her progress and providing daily encouragement. Here's how.

Trackers. Have your teen search online for free trackers like *MyFitnessPal* or *DailyBurn*. These will let her monitor her physical activity both daily and over time.



Maps. Whether your child walks, jogs, or runs, online maps can improve her experience. These apps use GPS to record her routes and miles per hour, and they might even tell how many calories she's burning. Have her try *RunningMap* or *RunKeeper* to plan safe routes based on the distance she wants to go.

Playlists. Fitness-inspired playlists will really pump up a workout. She might create playlists with slower songs for warm-up and cool-down and "power" music for the middle. Or she can listen to podcasts tied to her interests. *Tip:* Suggest that she choose podcasts to match her exercise time—when the podcast is over, so is her workout! ♡

ACTIVITY CORNER



Fitness challenges

Your teen or tween can take fitness to new heights by adding fun challenges. Suggest that he try to beat his own records or compete with family and friends in these activities.

● **Stairwell.** Use the stairs to your advantage. At the bottom, do 20 squats and 20 jumping jacks. Then, jog up and down a flight of stairs as many times as possible.



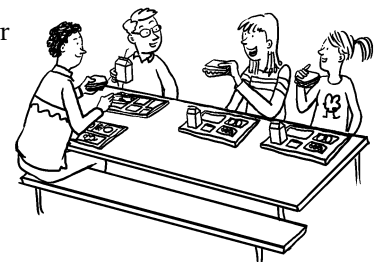
● **Basketball court.** No ball needed for this basketball challenge! Start at one hoop, sprint to the free throw line, and run back to the start. Next, run to the 3-point line and back, and finally to the half-court line and back. Time yourself—and each other.

● **Track.** Complete this sequence at a school or community center track: Jog one loop ($\frac{1}{4}$ mile), then do 10 push-ups and 10 sit-ups. How many repeats can each person do? ♡

PARENT TO PARENT

Eating school lunch

Recently I asked my daughter in passing what she had for lunch at school, and she just mumbled a response. It turned out that Courtney was often skipping the cafeteria to work on projects for art club or to get extra help from a teacher. I was glad she cared about her schoolwork and activities, but I knew skipping lunch wasn't healthy.



I reminded her that eating lunch would help her feel her best and focus on her schoolwork. Then, we talked about ways she could "do it all." I suggested that she invite her art club friends to sit together in the cafeteria. That way, they can discuss their projects—while still fueling up for the afternoon.

Courtney also agreed that it would be easier to concentrate on her school subjects the first time around if she wasn't hungry. Then, she might not need as much extra help with her classes. ♡

In the Kitchen

Chicken dinner

Add some zest to your chicken dinners with these fun meals. *Note:* Each recipe uses two boneless, skinless chicken breasts.

Bruschetta

Place chicken in a baking dish, and cover with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil, $\frac{1}{8}$ cup balsamic vinegar, and a sprinkle of salt and pepper. Bake 35 minutes at 375°. Dice 4 tomatoes, 1 small onion, and $\frac{1}{8}$ cup fresh basil. Stir together, and spoon over the cooked chicken.

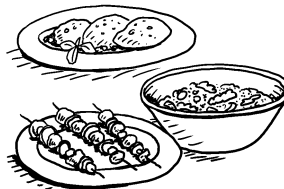
Stir-fry

Heat 1 tbsp. sesame oil in a large skillet. Saute

chicken strips on medium-high for 5 minutes. Chop and add 1 red bell pepper, $\frac{1}{2}$ onion, 1 clove garlic, and 2 scallions, along with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cashews and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. ground ginger. Cook another 2 minutes, and serve.

Kebabs

Cut the chicken into 1-inch cubes, and marinate in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup orange juice and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil for 20 minutes. On skewers, alternate the chicken with slices of bell pepper, zucchini, and onion. Grill 3 minutes on each side, or until cooked through. ♡



OUR PURPOSE

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

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Teen Food & Fitness™ is reviewed by a registered dietitian. Consult a physician before beginning any major change in diet or exercise.

ISSN 1935-8865