



Grandparents Corner

March 2013

National Nutrition Month

Children learn about living by watching what you do and by doing what you do. Making good food choices doesn't mean you have to give up your favorite foods; rather, it means that you need to learn to make trade-offs in your daily lifestyle. When you make sensible food choices, children learn to like these foods.

Balancing calories with physical activity and consuming an overall healthy eating pattern is the first step to maintaining a healthy weight and reducing the risk of your child developing diet-related chronic diseases.

Lifetime nutrition habits are formed during childhood. An extra 200 calories a day (the amount in four chocolate chip cookies) could cause your child to gain almost a half a pound a week.

What can you do to help your child stay healthy?

- **Know what's appropriate.** Speak with your child's physician to understand how your child compares to established standards for height and weight. Learn about proper nutrition and appropriate expectations for food intake.
- **Help children develop individual controls and styles.** You should know by your child's cues that they have eaten enough or that they are still hungry. Food preference takes time to develop. Allow your child to participate in meal choice and preparation and expose them to a variety of foods.
- **Focus on the whole child.** Avoid calling attention to a child's weight. When you are trying to change a behavior, nagging is unsuccessful. To a child, pressure to lose weight can feel like criticism.
- **Avoid using food as a punishment or reward.** Resist the temptation to soothe or bribe with food or threaten to withhold a child's favorite food.
- **Emphasize mealtime.** Work towards having meals be a pleasant experience. Make time to eat together as a family, even if it is only a few meals a week.
- **Check your lifestyle.** Avoid those "grab and go" meals. Limit the amount of television and video games and EXERCISE!

Source: www.eduguide.org; www.aboutourkids.org

Understanding what you can do to improve nutrition for the person in your care will improve their energy and medications will work better. Read this issue and answer True or False to the questions below.

1. Weight alone is not a good measure of proper nutrition. T F
2. The best way to make sure the person in your care is receiving the right amount of calories, vitamins and minerals is to provide a healthy, balanced diet. T F
3. An underweight person is not at risk for falls and hip fractures. T F
4. Being obese or underweight reduces stamina and limits muscle strength. T F
5. Calcium is important for strong bones and muscles. Dairy products are a good way to make sure the person in your care is receiving enough. T F
6. Seniors with chronic diseases like COPD, Parkinson's or Alzheimer's often have trouble eating well. T F
7. It is too late to change bad eating habits in older people and the change will have no good effect on health. T F
8. If you suspect poisoning, determine what was swallowed, how much, and at what time.
T F
9. Changing eating habits is easier in small steps. T F
10. With both over and underweight, it's not only how much a person eats, but what kind of food they eat that matters. T F

KEY: 1. T 2. T 3. F 4. T 5. T 6. T 7. F 8. T 9. T 10. T