



## Keeping Families Healthy & Active during COVID-19

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We're spending more time at home to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus that causes [COVID-19](#). But that's made it easy for families to fall out of normal routines. Relaxed schedules, more screen time, changes in access to food, and no regular recess or gym class can add up to unhealthy weight gain and reduced fitness.

So, what can you do to help your family stay healthy? Here are some tips to keep everyone active and eating well.

### Smart Snacking

The best snacks are nutritious — low in sugar, fat, and salt. Fresh fruit and vegetables and foods that contain whole grains and protein are also good choices.

Snacks can keep younger children from getting so hungry that they become cranky, and they can keep older kids from overeating at larger meals. And for picky eaters of all ages, snacks can be added insurance that they're getting the necessary nutrients.

If the right foods are offered at the right times, snacks can play an important role in managing kids' hunger and boosting nutrition. A well-timed snack can even out spikes in hunger and provide a much-needed energy boost between meals.

Kids who are allowed to graze all day long often have a hard time figuring out when they're truly hungry — one key to maintaining a healthy weight in childhood and later in life.

### Healthy snacks include:

- Cut-up Fruit or Applesauce
- Yogurt
- Sliced or Chopped Veggies

- String Cheese
- Nuts & Raisins
- Dried Fruit
- Trail Mix

## What Kinds of Food Should We Avoid?

Chips, cookies, and ice cream are OK once in a while, but not every day. Keep junk food and treats out of the house so your kids are not tempted.

Save sugary drinks, like soda, juice, sports drinks, and sweet teas for special times. Offer water and milk instead.

Packaged foods and prepared meals are convenient, but can be high in fat, sugar, and calories. Check food labels and choose the healthier options.

## What Should I Serve?

Make your home a healthy food zone. Put the focus on:

**Fruits and Vegetables.** Fresh is great, but frozen or canned fruit and veggies are good options, especially when you want to limit trips to the grocery store. Just choose ones with no added salt, sugar, syrups, or sauces.

**Whole Grains**, such as whole-grain bread, brown rice, quinoa, and whole-wheat pasta.

**Foods high in Protein**, such as lean meats, dried or canned beans, eggs, and peanut butter.

## How Active Should Kids Be?

Encourage your kids to be active for least 30 minutes each day. Whenever possible, let them go outside and play. Go for a walk, run, bike ride, or play sports like soccer, basketball, or whiffle ball together as a family.

Remember to keep at least 6 feet from people you don't live with when you are out. Kids over 2 years old and adults should wear a mask or cloth face covering if they can't stay apart from others. **Children under 2 years old should not wear a mask.**

On cold or rainy days, look for ways for kids to be active inside. Try dancing, yoga, exercise videos, apps, or online classes.

## Suggestions for Activities:

- Nature scavenger hunts can be fun for the whole family. How many different kinds of plants, flowers, animals or birds can you see? Walking or biking.
- Beach Ball Volleyball.
- Play Mosquito Badminton - a [silly twist on badminton!](#)
- Assemble a wriggle-through tunnel using cardboard boxes - see how fast everyone can get through the tunnel.
- Make a chalk maze or obstacle course on a sidewalk or driveway.