

Teen Food & Fitness

Healthy Ideas for Middle and High School Students

May 2020

Union School District

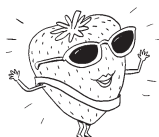
Mrs. Jessica McCleary, Food Service Director

FAST TAKES



Celebrate strawberries

May is National Strawberry Month! Packed with vitamin C, strawberries are in season and are fun to eat in different ways. Your teen can add them to salads or use them in place of tomatoes for a sweet and savory salsa. Try a dessert pizza, too: Dust toasted flatbread with cinnamon, and top with a thin layer of low-fat cream cheese and strawberry slices.



Hit the trails

Whether you live near the mountains or in the city, your family can go for a hike. Encourage your child to look up trails in the mountains or a nearby park. Or he could let city sidewalks be the "trails," climbing stairs for elevation, and planning routes so he explores different streets and neighborhoods.

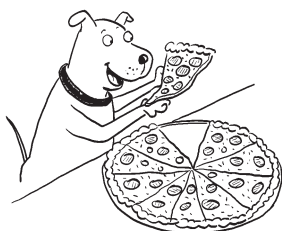
Did You Know?

Protein bars may be convenient and sound nutritious, but they can have as much fat and added sugar as candy bars. Search for whole-grain bars with no saturated or trans fats. They should also be high in fiber and protein (3 grams or more of each) and low in sugar (no more than 10 grams).

Just for fun

Q: Waiter, will my pizza be long?

A: No. It will be round!



Add healthy food to summer outings

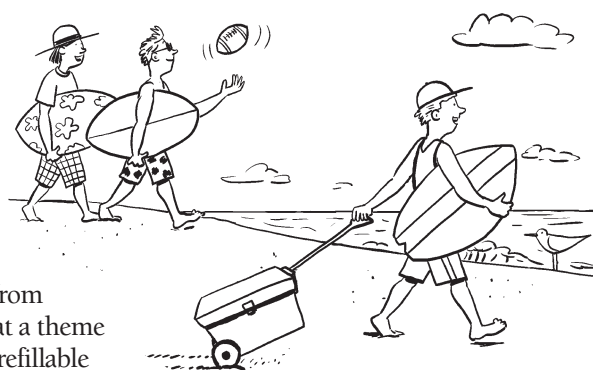
Summer fun is calling, but that doesn't mean your teen has to leave healthy eating at home. Share these ideas for making good choices when he's out and about.

Amusement park

Your child will work up an appetite walking and running from ride to ride and game to game at a theme park. Encourage him to take a refillable water bottle along—and skip the soda. At mealtime, maybe he'll order a veggie kebab or turkey burger instead of fried foods like chicken tenders or a corn dog.

Pool or beach

Suggest that your teenager spend pool or beach days with a cooler in tow. He and his friends could take along Greek yogurt cups, blueberries, and baby carrots for snacking. For lunch, they might make turkey roll-ups by wrapping low-fat string cheese or pickle spears in slices of lean deli turkey.



On vacation

Staying with relatives? Your child could offer to cook his favorite healthy dinner for everyone. Maybe he'll put together foil packets with shrimp and zucchini, then grill them alongside corn on the cob. Staying in a hotel with a refrigerator? Stop by the nearest supermarket for breakfast staples like low-fat milk, whole-grain cereal, and fresh fruit. You'll save money and start each day with a nutritious meal. ♥

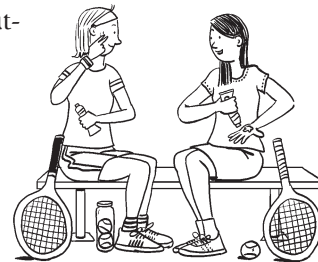
Outdoor safety for active teens

Long summer days mean more time to play outside. Help your tween or teen stay safe and healthy with these tips.

● **Take a friend.** No matter how great a swimmer your child might be, she should swim with others and in places with a lifeguard on duty.

● **Avoid the hottest part of the day.** Encourage your teen to do vigorous activities, such as playing tennis or basketball, in the morning or evening when it's cooler.

● **Wear sunscreen.** Your child should protect her skin from the sun to decrease her chance of skin cancer. Have her apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going outside and reapply it every 2 hours. If she's swimming, she should reapply each time she gets out of the water. ♥



"I can cook!"

Your teen is more apt to eat a healthy meal that she helps prepare. Show her how to cook with these basic techniques.

Saute. For this quick-cooking method, chop or slice vegetables, and cut meats into cubes or strips. Heat a little olive oil in a skillet, add ingredients, and stir regularly with a wooden spoon until the



vegetables are tender and the meats are cooked through.

Steam. Heat 1 cup fresh or frozen vegetables in a covered microwave-safe bowl along with 1–2 tbsp. of water. Cook 4–6 minutes, stirring occasionally. Test for doneness by piercing with a fork.

Poach. Here, the cooking heat comes from the liquid. For example, put chicken pieces in a pot of water or chicken broth. Bring to a boil. Then, reduce heat to a low simmer, and cook until the color of the chicken changes from pink to white. *Tip:* This is a great way to make juicy, low-fat chicken to use in chicken salad or burritos. ♥

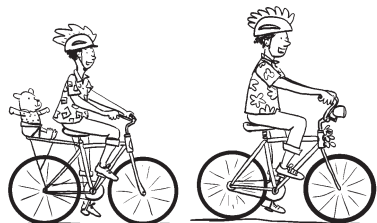
ACTIVITY CORNER

Bike party

Nothing says "summer" like riding bikes with friends. Gather your fellow cyclists, set a date and time, and have a party on wheels!

Pick a theme. Maybe your teen will choose an '80s theme and wear bright, colorful clothes and glow-stick necklaces. Or he could channel his inner superhero and hit the road with his friends in costume. Stay safe: Make sure costumes won't get caught in the bicycle tires, spokes, or gears during the ride.

Choose a route. Wherever the group is riding, be sure the route is safe. Follow the rules of the road. They should look for trails in parks.



Calculate the miles. After your child maps out the bike party path, have him calculate the distance. He might even set a goal for a certain number of miles he wants to ride this summer. ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators,
a division of CCH Incorporated
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630
800-394-5052 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com
www.rfeonline.com

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

ISSN 1935-8865

PARENT TO PARENT

Skipping meals?

My middle schooler, Jessica, mentioned that her friends sometimes skip lunch as a way of dieting. Although she said it in passing, I was afraid she might be thinking about trying the same thing.

I pointed out that food gives her energy and the nutrients she needs to grow. I also shared my own experience—when I tried dieting in the past by skipping meals, I ended up eating more, not less, by the end of the day.

Now I give my daughter gentle reminders. In the mornings, I mention interesting choices on the school lunch menu like sriracha honey chicken or baked green bean "fries." And after school, I tell her what I ate for lunch and ask her what she had. Having these conversations is a nice way to connect when we get home, and I'm hoping it'll make her less likely to skip lunch. ♥



In the Kitchen

Pasta salad: Lightened up

Traditional pasta salads are often prepared with creamy dressings, making them high in fat. For more nutritious options, your teen can mix up lighter versions of colorful summer favorites.

Very veggie

Drizzle 4 cups macaroni (cooked, drained) with 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil in a bowl. Stir in 1 cup chopped broccoli florets, 1 diced carrot, 1 diced red bell pepper, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Parmesan cheese.

Zesty Italian

Toss 4 cups cooked

whole-wheat rotini with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup light or fat-free Italian salad dressing, 1 cup halved grape tomatoes, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped mushrooms, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup each finely chopped basil and red onion.

Southwest spice

In a bowl, whisk $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil, juice from 1 lime, 1 tsp. chili powder, and 1 tbsp. honey. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. cooked whole-grain penne pasta, 2 cups black beans (drained, rinsed), and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup corn. Sprinkle with fresh chopped cilantro. ♥

