



Healthy You for Life

Spring 2023

Spring is here!! With the warm weather and longer daylight, it is the perfect time to get your family involved in some movin' and groovin'!!

It can be difficult to find the right time to incorporate physical activity during the fall and winter months due to the cold and dark weather. But now that the sun and warmth is here to stay, here are a few ideas to get your family outside and active!

- ✿ Take a family walk after dinner- a 20 min walk following dinner is a great way to get that last breath of fresh air before bedtime and enjoy a beautiful sunset rather than staring at the TV!
- ✿ Search for your local arboretum and take a family weekend walk through and see how many different color plants or different critters you can find.
- ✿ Local activities such as strawberry picking, or farmers markets can be a great way to get the kiddos outdoors and engaging with their community.
- ✿ If you belong to a local YMCA or Rec center, look online for different classes they offer and make a goal for your family to try a new class every week!! If you don't belong to a local YMCA or rec center, search a new youtube video to dance to or workout to try.
- ✿ Challenge your family to a soccer match, basketball game, tennis match, etc. There's no better way to get the kids involved in physical activity then being a positive example to them.
- ✿ Start your own garden! Whether you have acres of land or a small corner plot, planting some seeds and taking care of a garden can be a fun way to get outside and working with the environment!!



Family Meals Matter

Do you want your family members to make healthier choices? Do you wish you had more chances to connect with your family? If you answered yes to either of these questions, family meals might be for you!

Family meals are a great time for adults and children to connect! With today's busy schedules, sitting down for family time often gets overlooked. Did you know that children who sit down and eat meals with their families at least 4 times a week make healthier food choices? These kids also have higher self-esteem and do better in school.

Adults and children who eat meals as a family make healthier choices and feel better about themselves. Sitting down to family meals not only allows parents to role model healthy eating, but it gives all family members a chance to connect during a busy day. Children learn a lot by simply watching adults make healthy choices.

What do family meals look like?

Eating family meals means that everyone is sitting down together (with no distracting screens), and choosing from the same foods. The food served at meal time does not need to be perfect, but there should be foods from multiple food groups, and all family members should have the same choices. Using MyPlate as a guide can help families plan which types of foods to offer - be sure to include lots of vegetables to encourage all family members to fill their plates with healthy choices.

My family never eats together...how do we start?

- 🥕 Start by choosing 1 or 2 days a week to designate as family meal days.
- 🥕 Family meals can happen at breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Choose what works best for you, but make sure you have time to sit and talk during the meal.
- 🥕 Turn off all electronics and set phones aside before sitting down.
- 🥕 Encourage the whole family to participate in the meal planning, food preparation, and clean up.
- 🥕 Have fun! Try new recipes your child finds, or do theme nights such as Italian or Mexican night. Kids of all ages can come up with new ideas or make decorations to make meals more fun.
- 🥕 Make it easy! Sandwiches, healthy snacks, pre-made salads or pre-cut fruit can all be part of eating together.