

# Nutrition Nuggets™

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

September 2017



## BEST BITES

### Chalk up fitness

Boost your youngster's activity by having her draw a sidewalk-chalk fitness course. On a sidewalk or blacktop, she can create "obstacles," such as a ladder to "climb"



or a river to jump over. Then, she could write words like *cartwheel* or *crawl* beside her pictures to guide her and her friends along the course.

### Pasta—or squash?

If your child likes playing with his food, he'll enjoy this low-carb and low-calorie pasta alternative. Cut a spaghetti squash in half, put it on a baking sheet (cut sides up), and bake 30 minutes at 400°. Cool slightly. Let your youngster use a fork to scrape the flesh and pull out spaghetti-like strands! Top with your favorite sauce.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Calcium plays a key role in strengthening your child's bones and teeth—and it's not just found in dairy products. Dark leafy greens also count toward the 1,000 mg of calcium your child needs each day. And look for the phrase "calcium-fortified" on orange juice, cereals, English muffins, and non-dairy "milk" (almond, soy, coconut).

### Just for fun

**Q:** If I cut an apple into fourths and a pear into eighths, what will I get?

**A:** Fruit salad!



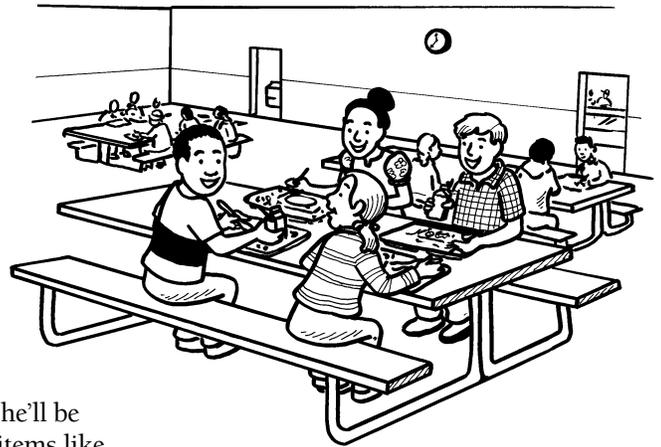
Washington County Virginia Public Schools  
Ms. Francine Ivery, Manager School Nutrition

## Dine out in the cafeteria

Does your child love to eat out? Do you want him to eat healthy foods during the school day? Encourage him to dine in the cafeteria!

### Eat breakfast at school

Suggest that your youngster start a "breakfast club." He could meet friends in the cafeteria for a nutritious meal before school. It's easy and convenient—you won't need to make breakfast, and he'll be able to choose from healthy items like eggs, cereal, fruit, and milk.



### Sample new fruits and veggies

What does kiwi taste like? How about radishes? The cafeteria is a great place to try different fruits and vegetables. Read the school menu together each week, and let your child circle foods to "taste test." After school, play a guessing game: He gives clues about items he sampled, and you identify them. *Example:* "White and crunchy," "tastes kind of like an apple" (jicama).

### Serve "cafeteria foods"

Try making cafeteria foods at home to help your youngster get used to new flavors. For instance, coat skinless chicken pieces with whole-grain breading for healthier chicken nuggets. He'll be more likely to enjoy the flavor of whole grains if he also eats them outside of school.

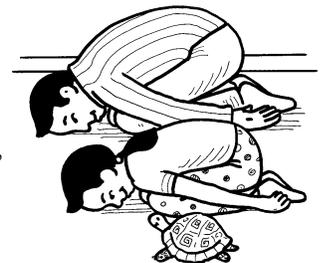
*Note:* Your family might qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. Look for a form in your child's backpack or on the school website. ♡

## Stretch those muscles

March like a toy soldier, then tuck in like a turtle! Stretching improves your youngster's flexibility, and you can make it interesting with these playful stretches:

- Together, imagine that you're toy soldiers. Stand tall, and kick one leg high, trying to touch your toes with the opposite hand. Repeat with the other leg and arm, and alternate until you've crossed the room.
- Pretend to be turtles in their shells. Kneel with feet together, and sit back on your heels. Then bend over, touching your forehead to the floor with your arms along your sides. Hold for 15–30 seconds.

*Note:* To prevent injury, your child should warm up before stretching with five minutes of light aerobic exercise (dancing, walking). ♡



# Healthy weeknight buffets at home

Make dinners easier—and more fun—by creating healthy do-it-yourself buffets ahead of time. Follow these steps.

**1. Brainstorm.** On the weekend, ask your child to help think of ideas for the week like a pizza buffet, a taco bar, or an Asian wrap station.

**2. Shop.** Have your youngster write or draw a grocery list for each buffet. For pizza, her list might include whole-wheat dough, turkey pepperoni, shredded mozzarella cheese, tomato sauce, and mushrooms.



**3. Prep.** On Sunday, work together to prep ingredients. Your child could roll out individual pizza crusts to pre-bake. Or you can cook lean ground beef for tacos while she drains and rinses canned black beans.

**4. Store.** Let your youngster put items for each buffet into individual containers. For Asian wraps, she might place diced grilled chicken, cooked brown rice, mandarin oranges, and peanut dressing into separate bowls.

**5. Enjoy.** At dinnertime, set out the ingredients for that night's buffet, along with anything else you need (tortillas, lettuce leaves, dressing). Reheat items if necessary. Then, family members can make their way through the line and customize their dinners! ♥

## ACTIVITY CORNER

### Creative catches

Throwing and catching build your youngster's arm strength and improve her hand-eye coordination. Try these games for a catch-y twist.

#### Play hot potato

Don't be caught holding the ball when the music stops! Players toss a ball back and forth while one person stops the music every few throws. Whoever is holding the ball is the new DJ.

#### Count it out

Have your child throw a ball high in the air and count how many times she can clap her hands before catching the ball. Or take turns, and see who claps the most times.

#### Go for variety

Vary the "balls" you throw. Consider small pillows, bean bags, or socks filled with rice. *Idea:* Go outside and play catch with water balloons. ♥



## Q&A Get excited about PE

**Q:** My son doesn't like to participate in PE class because he says he's "not athletic." How can I help him get comfortable so he enjoys PE?

**A:** PE is a great opportunity for your son to run and play with classmates while he learns and stays active.

You could start by mentioning his hesitation to his PE teacher. She might suggest activities you can do at home or pair him up in class with a student who seems more confident about PE. Then, send the teacher occasional notes to check on his progress.

Also, visit a playground, and encourage your son to teach you skills he is learning or games he plays in class. As he shows you how he can do a chin-up or cross the balance beam, or explains the rules for kickball, he'll build confidence in his athletic ability. ♥



## IN THE KITCHEN

### Think outside the bottle

Salads can pack a lot of nutrition into one bowl. But store-bought dressing may add unwanted ingredients like preservatives, saturated fat, or MSG. With your youngster, whip up these good-for-you dressings.

• **Tahini.** Whisk together  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup plain yogurt, 2 tsp. tahini, 1 tbsp. lime juice,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. oregano,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. cumin, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. minced garlic. Pair with butter-head lettuce, chickpeas (canned, rinsed), and sliced cucumber.

• **Pico de gallo.** Combine 2 diced tomatoes, 1 small

diced onion, and 1 minced garlic clove in a bowl. Stir in 2–3 tsp. lime juice and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped cilantro. Toss with shredded romaine lettuce, diced bell pepper, and avocado chunks.

• **Citrus.** Mix  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup orange juice with 2 tsp. balsamic vinegar and 1 tsp. olive oil. Sprinkle over a salad of spinach, dried cranberries, and sliced almonds.

*Note:* Toss dressings with salad just before serving, or refrigerate for 3–4 days. ♥



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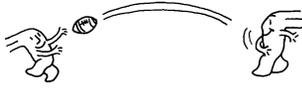
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October 2017



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Ms. Francine Ivery, Manager School Nutrition

## BEST BITES

### Mason jar omelet

Here's a fun breakfast to make with your youngster. Crack 2 eggs into a Mason jar. Add chopped veggies like bell pepper and tomatoes, plus 1 tsp. shredded cheese. Screw the lid on tightly, and let him shake it well. Remove the lid. Microwave 2–3 minutes until eggs are set. Cool, and enjoy. *Note:* You can also make this in a mug. Whisk the mixture instead of shaking.

### Burpees for kids

Show your child how to do burpees, a great cardio exercise with a silly name.



Stand up straight, then squat down and place your hands palms-down in front of your feet. Kick back and do a push-up. Jump your feet back toward your hands and leap up. How many burpees can she do?

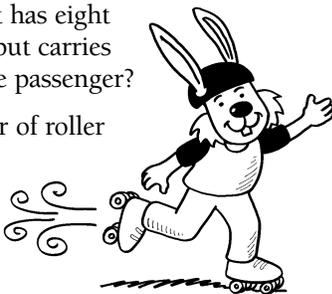
### DID YOU KNOW?

Quinoa (pronounced “keen-wah”) is prepared like a grain, but it's actually a seed from the same plant family as spinach and beets. It packs a whopping 8 grams of protein and 5 grams of fiber in each 1 cup serving! Consider tossing cooked quinoa into your youngster's favorite soup, casserole, or salad for a healthy (and tasty) twist.

### Just for fun

**Q:** What has eight wheels but carries only one passenger?

**A:** A pair of roller skates.



## Encourage active time

Want to get your child away from video games, television, or computers? Try these tips for helping her spend less time in front of screens and more time being active.



### Involve everyone

At breakfast, have family members talk about how they'll get exercise that day. You might mention a lunchtime walk you've planned with coworkers, and your youngster could explain a game she's going to play at recess. *Tip:* Let your child see you being active. When you put away your laptop and announce you're going for a run, you're setting a great example.

### Set ground rules

Come up with rules that encourage physical activity and limit electronics. For example, you might require your youngster to do at least 60 minutes of physical activity before playing video games—and limit video game time to 30 minutes a day. Your child could write the rules on signs to post around the house, perhaps on the

### Screen-free alternatives

Let your youngster plan activities that don't involve sitting in front of a screen. She might:

- create a workout routine that you can record for your family to follow along with later.
- map out new routes through your neighborhood for family bike rides.
- organize a neighborhood kickball or softball game.

front door or by the TV. Encourage her to use clever wording (“Turn me off. I need a break!”) and illustrations (a drawing of a tired TV). 🍎

### A puzzle full of nutrition

Help your youngster “puzzle” out what a balanced meal looks like with this food-group activity.

First, talk about what makes up a healthy meal.

*Tip:* Show him the MyPlate guide at [choosemyplate.gov/myplate](http://choosemyplate.gov/myplate). He'll see that his plate should include about a quarter each of vegetables, fruits, grains, and protein. On a paper plate or a circle cut from construction paper, he could use crayons to draw a balanced meal. Maybe he'll include chicken, brown rice, green beans, and oranges.

Have your child cut the plate into puzzle pieces, and see if you can put his puzzle back together. Then, create more healthy food puzzles for each other to assemble. 🍎



# Healthier fast food

When your family's busy schedule leaves you eating on the fly, use these strategies to keep everyone's nutrition on track.

## Know the facts

Teach your youngster to spot healthier menu items. Words and phrases to look for include *grilled*, *thin-crust*, *baked*, and *roasted*. On the other hand, he'll want to stay away from anything labeled *fried*, *loaded*, *stuffed*, or *bacon-wrapped*.

## Split it

Your child asks for french fries, but you want him to eat carrot sticks. The solution? Order both! Get a small order of



fries for the whole family so everyone gets just a few—and several orders of carrots so everyone fills up on the good stuff. Or share an oversized sandwich. Ask for it with a whole-grain bun (or wrapped in lettuce), mustard instead of mayo, and extra veggies.

## Bring your own

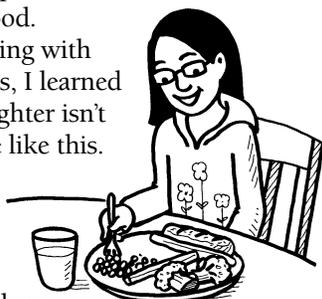
Grab a piece of fruit, string cheese, and a bottle of water for each person before leaving the house. You'll save money, *and* everyone will be guaranteed healthy side items and drinks to pair with your drive-thru order. ♥



## PARENT TO PARENT Foods can't touch? No problem!

My daughter doesn't like it when the food on her plate touches—even if she loves each food.

After talking with other parents, I learned that my daughter isn't the only one like this. Now I'm trying strategies that have worked for them.



First, I let her spoon her foods into separate tiny bowls. She enjoyed arranging the bowls on her dinner plate, and she ate all the healthy foods—separately. Another time, she put colorful cupcake liners into a muffin tin and filled each one with a different food. Then, just yesterday, we used a carrot stick and a green bean to keep her food apart. When she finished everything else, she even ate the dividers!

With these simple changes, my daughter now eats without a fuss, making mealtimes happier for everyone. ♥

## ACTIVITY CORNER A fitness carnival

Homemade carnival-style games can be a fun and inexpensive way to be active with your child. Here are two ideas to get him started.

● **Ring toss.** Make rings by cutting the centers from sturdy paper plates. Line up a few pumpkins with good-sized stems. Step back a few feet, and take turns trying to toss a ring onto each pumpkin. *Idea:* For a glowing good time, get glow-in-the-dark necklaces at a dollar store to use as rings, and play after the sun goes down.

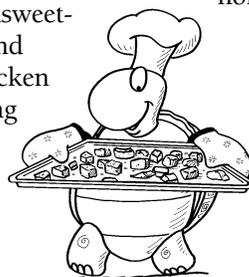


● **Cup pyramid.** Help your youngster build a pyramid with 10 plastic cups (four on the bottom row, then three, then two, and finally one cup on the top). On each turn, throw a Wiffle ball toward the pyramid twice, scoring 1 point for each cup knocked down. Restack. The winner is the first player to reach 50 points. ♥

## IN THE KITCHEN A harvest feast

Take advantage of fall's harvest with these good-for-you recipes.

■ **Pumpkin apple soup.** In a large pot, heat 2 tbsp. olive oil over medium heat. Sauté 1 cup diced onion and 2 cups diced apples for 3–5 minutes. Add 3 cans (15 oz. each) unsweetened pumpkin puree and 5 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth. Bring to a boil, then simmer 10 minutes. Leave chunky, or puree in a blender (a few cups at a time).



■ **Pear grilled cheese.** Thinly slice 1 pear. On a piece of whole-wheat bread, layer 1 tbsp. shredded cheddar cheese, pear slices, and another 1 tbsp. cheese. Top with a second piece of bread, and brown in a heated skillet (coated with nonstick spray), 2–3 minutes per side.

■ **Baked butternut squash.** Peel and cube 1 large squash, or buy it already cubed. Toss in a bowl with 1 tbsp. olive oil, spread on a baking sheet, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake 30–40 minutes at 400°, turning once, until golden brown. ♥

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## BEST BITES

### Count the ingredients

A long list of ingredients on a cereal box or a jar of pasta sauce often means the food is highly processed. At the grocery store, let your youngster compare several brands of an item on your list (say, cereal bars). She can count the ingredients in each—and put the one with the fewest ingredients in your cart.



### Explore the great outdoors

Cooler temperatures offer the perfect opportunity to discover outdoor community “gems” with your child. Help him find local plants and animals while you walk along a trail or through a park or botanical garden. For extra fun and exercise, bring along helmets and explore on bikes, skateboards, or scooters (where permitted).

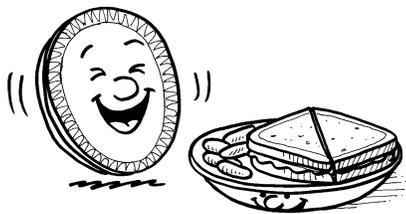
### DID YOU KNOW?

November 6 is National Nachos Day. Make this popular appetizer healthier by using whole-grain tortilla chips and swapping plain Greek yogurt for sour cream. Melt real cheese on top (rather than store-bought queso). Then, add vegetables like chopped tomatoes, corn, shredded lettuce, and diced red onion.

### Just for fun

**Q:** What did one plate say to another?

**A:** Lunch is on me.



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## Just add water (or milk)!

Does your child ask for juice boxes, soda, or sports drinks when he's thirsty? Loaded with sugar and calories, these choices offer little nutrition. The best way to quench his thirst is to drink water or milk. Try the following tips to encourage healthier beverage choices.



### Make it motivating

Let your youngster choose a special cup at the dollar store to use only when he drinks milk or water. Or have him decorate a reusable water bottle. Using permanent markers, he can jazz up a plain bottle with his name, colorful pictures, and creative designs.

### Add flavor

Enhance the flavor of water and milk with these healthy twists. Fill an ice cube tray with water, invite your child to add a flavor mix-in (a mint leaf, a pineapple chunk, a raspberry) to each compartment, and freeze. Then, he could choose a cube to flavor his water. When

he drinks milk, he might try stirring in a sprinkle of cinnamon or a few drops of vanilla extract.

### Go for fizz

Your youngster may enjoy the fizzy effect of plain seltzer or sparkling water. With zero calories, sugar, or artificial colors or flavors, this bubbly water is fun to drink—without all the unhealthy stuff that's in soda. And seltzer is now sold in a variety of interesting natural flavors like mandarin orange, cucumber, and pomegranate. ●

### Get your groove on

Keeping fit can be as simple as dancing! Put on music, and enjoy these ideas with your youngster.

● **Shadow dancing.** In a darkened room, have your child face a blank wall while someone else shines a flashlight on her from behind. She could create cool moves to make her shadow “dance.”

● **Chain reaction.** Build a dance sequence together. The first person does a simple movement like swinging her arms overhead. The next dancer copies that move, then adds one of her own. Take turns, each time repeating the sequence from the beginning and adding a new move at the end. ●



# Science in the kitchen

Boost your youngster's enthusiasm for healthy eating with these hands-on experiments that weave in science fun.

## "Egg-cellent" snack

**Experiment:** Let your child fill two glasses with water and add 1 tbsp. salt to one. Place a fresh egg in each. What happens? The egg in salt water will float. Why? (The egg is denser than plain water, but less dense than salt water.) *Note:* If the egg doesn't float, have her add 1 tsp. salt at a time until it does.

**Eat:** Hard-boiled eggs are a protein-rich snack. Place eggs in a saucepan, and cover with water. Put on a lid, boil 1 minute,



and remove from heat. Let sit covered for 12 minutes. Drain, rinse under cold water, and peel.

## Popping perfection

**Experiment:** Have your youngster observe unpopped popcorn kernels. (They're small, brown, and hard.) Then, she should place  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup kernels in a paper lunch bag and fold the top over a few times.

Microwave 2–3 minutes, pour into a bowl, and let her observe again: The kernels are big, white, and fluffy! What happened? (Kernels contain water that turns into steam when heated. Steam expands, making the kernels explode.)

**Eat:** Popcorn is a healthy whole grain. Instead of salt, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese, garlic powder, or paprika. ♥

## Q&A

### DIY convenience foods

**Q:** Our grocery store stocks precut vegetables and other time-saving items, but they're too expensive for my budget! Any suggestions?

**A:** With a little planning, you can make your own convenience foods at home.

On week-ends, ask your child to help you prep vegetables for the week. For example, wash and dry lettuce, and place in a covered container with a dry paper towel to absorb moisture. You can also wash, chop, and store firm veggies like carrots, broccoli, and cauliflower.

Cook chicken pieces or portions of meat, and seal in zipper bags to use within 2–3 days. You can even make pasta or rice in advance. Toss with olive oil so it doesn't get sticky, and put in an airtight container.

Your refrigerator will resemble the prepared-foods case at the grocery store—but you won't spend any extra money. ♥



## ACTIVITY CORNER

### Fitness: It's in the cards!

Put a clever twist on physical activity by helping your youngsters make their own deck of family fitness cards. Here's how.

Together, come up with at least a dozen active ideas that can be done in less than five minutes. Be as creative or silly as you like! Write each one on the front of a separate index card. For example:

- Hop on one foot for one minute while holding the other foot with one hand and pinching your nose. Switch feet and hop for one more minute.
- Lie on your stomach, and pretend to swim like a frog for three minutes.
- Hold hands with a partner. Skip back and forth across the room five times.



On the back of each card, your children can illustrate the activity. Put the cards into a box, and pull one out whenever it's time for a burst of activity! ♥

## IN THE KITCHEN

### Healthier holiday classics

No need to forgo favorite Thanksgiving dishes. Consider these better-for-you versions.

● **Green bean casserole.** For the topping, toss 1 chopped onion and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sliced fresh mushrooms with 2 tbsp. whole-wheat breadcrumbs. Spread mixture on a greased baking sheet, and bake 10–15 minutes at 400° or until browned. Microwave 12 oz. fresh or frozen green beans, transfer to a dish, and add topping.

● **Cranberry-orange sauce.** In a medium saucepan, combine 10 oz. fresh cranberries, 1 cup water,  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup honey, 2 tbsp. grated

orange rind,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup orange juice,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. cinnamon, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. allspice. Boil, reduce heat, and simmer 20 minutes until mixture thickens.

● **Sage-couscous stuffing.** Cook 1 cup whole-wheat pearl couscous according to package directions. Then, heat 2 tbsp. olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup each diced onion, celery, and carrots. Saute until soft. Stir in couscous, 1 tbsp. fresh sage, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. each salt and pepper. ♥



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# Right-Size Your Portions

**Q:** What in the world does a hamburger have to do with a yo-yo?

**A:** When a hamburger is a healthy portion size, it's about the same size as a yo-yo!

Today's oversized portions often lead to overeating. Keep that from happening in your family with these simple tips for recognizing and enjoying healthy serving sizes. Then, share the illustrated guide on the back with your youngster for a fun reminder of what healthy portions look like.

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## Recognize a serving

Play the "How big is a serving?" game. Set out measuring cups and spoons, and choose an item from your refrigerator or pantry (say, a tub of cream cheese or a box of crackers). Each person measures or counts out what he thinks is one serving. Together, check the label. Whoever came closest picks another food to play again. Over time, your child will learn to "eyeball" the appropriate amount.



## Downsize plates

Did you know that dinner plates are actually 3"-4" larger than they were a generation ago? Try instantly reducing portions by bringing plates back down to size. For instance, serve dinner on salad plates. Or use cups instead of bowls.

## Cook—and serve—smart

Cut back on how much food everyone eats before the meal even begins. You might bake macaroni and cheese in individual ramekins, one per person. Or plate food before bringing it to the table. Your youngster will get used to enjoying reasonably sized meals.

## Portion out leftovers

Store leftovers in sectioned plates or containers. Your child can place individual servings of entrees and side dishes in separate sections. When she's ready to heat up a meal, her portions will be just right.

## Single-size your snacks

Eating from a bag or box makes it hard for your youngster to know how many servings he consumes. Instead, help him count or measure single servings into snack-size bags. *Examples:* 20 mini pretzels, 1 cup popcorn.



## Dining out

Restaurants often serve extra-large portions. Try these strategies to help your family trim them to a healthy size.

### Go small

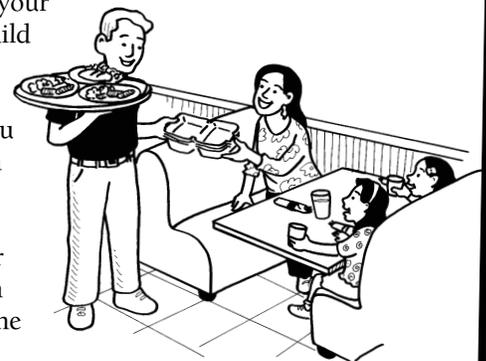
At fast-food or fast-casual places, encourage your youngster to avoid "super-size" items. In a sit-down restaurant, suggest that she order an appetizer or two side dishes for her meal.

### Share food

Rather than ordering a full-sized meal for each person, get one meal for every two people. Then, add side salads or extra servings of healthy vegetables.

### Bring home a doggie bag

Doggie bags aren't just for dogs! Ask the server to bring a to-go box with your meal. Let your child help you scoop half the food in the box before you even put a fork in it. You'll not only avoid overeating, you'll have dinner tonight and lunch tomorrow—for the price of one meal.



*continued*



Here's a fun way to serve up healthy portion sizes: Have your youngster use familiar items to visualize how big her servings should be. Post this chart as a handy reference for comparisons between some favorite foods and everyday objects.

## Fruits

1 cup grapes: a baseball



1 cup strawberries: a doorknob



1 cup diced watermelon: a lightbulb



## Vegetables

1 cup raw, leafy greens like lettuce or spinach: rolled-up ankle socks



1 cup baby carrots: a tennis ball



1 cup peas: a child's closed fist



## Grains

1 cup dry cereal: a medium pinecone



1 bagel or hamburger bun: a hockey puck



$\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked pasta or rice: 2 ice-cream scoops



## Protein

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked beans: a computer mouse



3-oz. serving of meat, chicken, or turkey: a yo-yo



2 tbsp. peanut butter or other nut butter: a golf ball



## Dairy

1 oz. cheese: 4 dice



1 tsp. butter: a Scrabble tile



1 cup yogurt: a cupcake wrapper



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# Nutrition Nuggets™

# Best Recipes

2017 Edition

Need inspiration in the kitchen? Choose a recipe, and enjoy making and eating it with the whole family!



## Squash pancakes

- 1 medium zucchini
- 1 medium yellow squash
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 egg, beaten
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup whole-wheat flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. baking powder
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup shredded carrot
- Nonstick spray

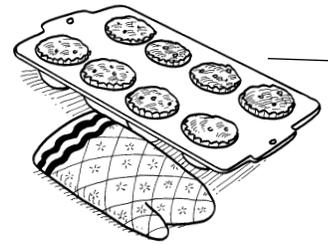
Grate zucchini and yellow squash. Sprinkle on salt, and set in a colander for 20 minutes (to remove moisture). Rinse well. Combine with egg, flour, baking powder, onion, and carrot. Put large spoonfuls into a hot skillet (coated with nonstick spray), and saute the pancakes until brown on both sides. Serves 4.



## Mini meat loaves

- 1 lb. lean ground turkey
- 1 egg, beaten
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup quick-cooking oats, uncooked
- 1 tbsp. ketchup
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp. ground pepper

With clean hands or a spoon, combine all ingredients in a bowl. Divide the mixture into 8 muffin cups, and bake at 375° for 30 minutes. Serves 4.



## Egg dog



- Nonstick spray
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped red onion
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped asparagus
- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp. fat-free milk
- 1 whole-wheat hot dog bun
- 1 tbsp. tomato salsa

Coat skillet with cooking spray, and saute diced vegetables until tender. Whisk eggs with milk, and add to the pan. Stir quickly until the eggs are set. Place in a bun, and drizzle on salsa. Serves 1.

## Bell pepper "pizzas"



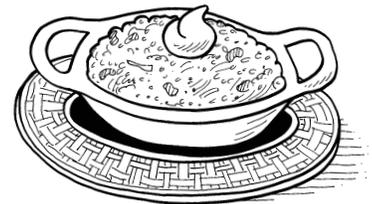
- 4 bell peppers (any color)
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup marinara sauce
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 tsp. dried basil

Slice each bell pepper into 4 quarters, removing the tops, bottoms, and seeds. Lightly brush the inside of each piece with olive oil. Spoon on marinara sauce, and sprinkle with mozzarella and basil. Bake at 350° for 15 minutes. Serves 4.

## Quinoa taco bowl

- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 2 tbsp. low-sodium taco seasoning
- 1 15-oz. can kidney beans, drained
- 4 cups cooked quinoa
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup low-fat sour cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup salsa

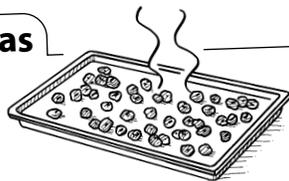
Brown the meat in a skillet. Add taco seasoning and beans, and cook until liquid evaporates. In 4 bowls, add quinoa and then the meat and bean mix. Top with cheese, sour cream, and salsa. Serves 4. *Variation:* Leave out the beef and add avocado for a vegetarian version.



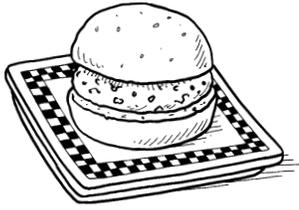
## Chili-roasted chickpeas

- 2 15-oz. cans chickpeas (drained, rinsed)
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. chili powder

Use a paper towel or clean cloth to dry the chickpeas. In a bowl, combine the chickpeas with olive oil, salt, and chili powder. Spread on a baking sheet, and cook at 400° for 20–30 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes. Makes 4 servings.



### Salmon burgers

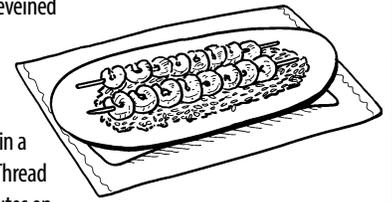


- 2 cans salmon (6 oz. each), drained
- 1 egg, beaten
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup whole-wheat breadcrumbs
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup diced celery
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup diced onion
- Ground pepper
- Whole-grain buns

Mix salmon with egg, breadcrumbs, celery, onion, and ground pepper. Form into 4 burgers, and put on a nonstick baking sheet. Bake at 375° for 10 minutes per side. Serve on whole-grain buns. Makes 4 servings. *Variation:* Make with canned tuna.

### Teriyaki shrimp kebabs

- 1 lb. uncooked shrimp, peeled and deveined
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup low-sodium teriyaki sauce
- 1 crushed garlic clove
- Brown rice or large lettuce leaves



Marinate shrimp for 10–15 minutes in a mixture of teriyaki sauce and garlic. Thread the shrimp onto skewers. Grill 2 minutes on each side until just cooked through. Serve with rice, or put the shrimp onto lettuce leaves and fold into wraps. Serves 4.

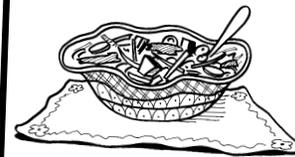
### Watermelon salad

- 6 cups baby spinach
- 2 cups seedless watermelon chunks
- 1 cup diced feta cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup low-fat balsamic vinaigrette



In a large bowl, combine spinach (or another leafy green), watermelon, and feta. Toss lightly with dressing. Serves 4.

### Chicken-apple slaw



- 1 rotisserie chicken
- 1 cup broccoli slaw
- 1 apple, diced
- 1 celery stalk, thinly sliced
- 1 8-oz. can water chestnut slices, drained
- 1 head lettuce, shredded
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup low-fat ranch dressing

Shred the meat from the chicken and toss with broccoli slaw, apple, celery, water chestnuts, lettuce, and dressing. Serves 8.

### Overnight oat yogurt parfait



- 6 oz. nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup old-fashioned oats, uncooked
- 1 cup frozen or fresh fruit, such as mango or berries

Mix the yogurt and oats together in a bowl. In a jar, layer the yogurt-oat mixture and fruit. Cover the jar with a lid and refrigerate overnight. Serves 1.

### Brussels sprout–sweet potato hash

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 8 sliced brussels sprouts, with the ends cut off
- 1 large, diced sweet potato, unpeeled
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. pepper



Heat olive oil in a pan, add brussels sprouts and potatoes, and season with salt and pepper. Saute 10–15 minutes over medium heat until cooked through. Serve as a side dish. *Idea:* Put fresh greens into a bowl. Top with the hash and a fried egg. Serves 2.

### DIY trail mix

Skip the premade trail mix at the store, and help your youngster come up with her own combinations instead. For example, she might toss together cereal, sunflower seeds, and dried apricots. Or she could combine pretzels, banana chips, dried cherries, and cashews. Get started by shopping together for items like these:

- whole-grain cereals
- raisins and other dried fruits like apricots, cranberries, and cherries
- different kinds of unsalted nuts (peanuts, cashews, almonds)
- popcorn
- mini unsalted pretzels or pretzel sticks
- rice cakes, granola bars, cereal bars, or pita chips (broken into pieces)
- banana chips
- unsalted sunflower and pumpkin seeds
- mini marshmallows



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# Active Kids = Healthier Kids

When your youngster gets plenty of physical activity, she not only will be healthier, she'll also be more likely to stay focused and behave well in school. Encourage your child to get at least an hour of exercise a day with these fun games and activities.

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## Zigzag hopscotch

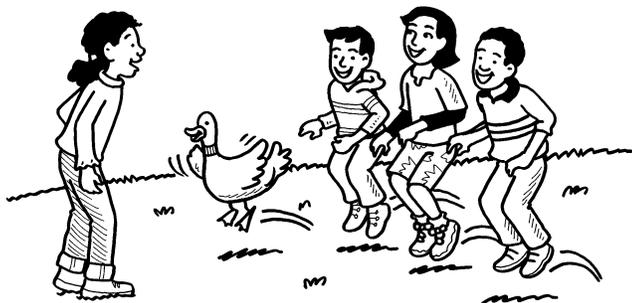
Have your youngster use sidewalk chalk to draw a staircase-shaped hopscotch board on a sidewalk, driveway, or blacktop. To play, she should hop on one foot from start to finish, landing on one square at a time. If she makes it without putting her other foot down, she writes her initials in any square. On your turn, you must hop over the square she initialed. If you get to the end, you initial any empty square. Keep taking turns, hopping only on empty squares or ones with your own initials, until every square is claimed or no one can hop across. The player with the most initials wins.

## Kick and block

Form a garden hose into a large circle, and place a soccer ball in the center. Two players stand in the circle. One person is the "kicker," and the other is the "blocker." The kicker attempts to kick the ball out of the circle—kicking in the direction of the blocker. The blocker uses his feet to try to keep the ball in. When the ball goes out of the circle, swap roles, and play again.

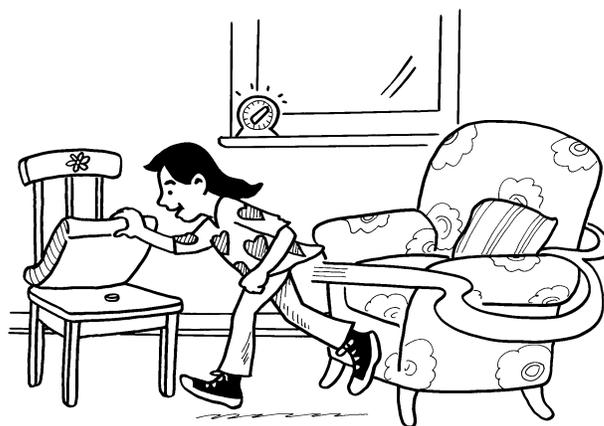
## Fish or fowl

You can play this game on sidewalks or grass. One player is the caller. If the caller names a fish (bass, perch, tuna), the other players jump backward. If she names a bird (robin, woodpecker, seagull), players jump forward. The caller keeps naming fish or fowl, trying to trick the jumpers. If you jump in the wrong direction, you're out. The last person in the game becomes the new caller. Play until everyone has had a turn being the caller.



## Slow-motion race

When you take a walk, try this race where the slowpoke wins. Challenge your family to walk in s-l-o-w m-o-t-i-o-n from one end of a block to the other. Your children will build balance and muscle control as they try to make each step last as long as possible. There's only one rule to follow: Everyone must keep moving—no stopping allowed. The last person to reach the end wins.



## Penny hunt

Ask your youngster to count out 15 pennies. Then, have her cover her eyes while you hide them around the house. Set a timer for two minutes, and let her race to find the pennies before the buzzer rings. Next game, she can hide the pennies, and you hunt. Help each other find the pennies by saying "You're hot" when someone gets close to a hiding place and "You're cold" if she's moving away from one. *Idea:* Move the game outdoors, and hide pennies in bushes, under rocks, or in sidewalk cracks.



**Beanbag tag**

The object of this game is to tag the other person’s feet with a beanbag. Choose an open space with a wood or tile floor, such as a hall or basement. Have your child stand at one end of the room while you stand at the other. Now, take turns sliding the beanbag across the floor at the other person’s feet. Try to dodge the beanbag by jumping over it. Score a point each time you tag your opponent with the beanbag. The first one to score 10 points wins. *Variation:* To make the game more challenging, slide the beanbags toward each other’s feet at the same time.

**This way or that**

There are lots of ways to cross a playground. Let your youngster start this game by saying, “Come across the playground like this...” and then crossing in a funny way (spinning like a top, walking on her heels). All the other players must cross in the same way. Then, the next leader says, “No, no, no. Come across like this...” and leads players across the playground a different way, perhaps walking sideways. How many ways can everyone think of?



**Fitness island**

Turn a sidewalk or driveway into an island. With sidewalk chalk, your child can draw a landscape full of fitness challenges. He might create a stream, a bridge, and stepping-stones, for instance. Then, he can pretend to wade through the stream, walk heel-to-toe on the narrow bridge, and jump from stepping-stone to stepping-stone across a make-believe swamp. When he finishes, it’s your turn to take the island challenge.

**Rainbow walk**

Walk laps up and down a shopping strip or around a mall until you’ve spotted one item for every color of the rainbow. For example, you may find red shoes, an orange safety cone, a yellow sundress, green shampoo, blue jeans, indigo earrings, and a violet rug. Or take a rainbow walk in the neighborhood, and see who can find a red flag on a mailbox, an orange flower, and so on.

**Five-minute ideas**

Here are everyday ideas for short bursts of activity.

**Inside**

- Put on music, and lip-sync while doing your best dance moves.
- Play with a pet.
- Do a “routine” like five forward rolls, five push-ups, and five backward rolls.
- Stand in a line, and have each person put his hands on the shoulders of the person in front of him. See how fast you can snake your way through the house without breaking the chain.



**Outside**

- Practice basketball free throws.
- Play a game of catch.
- Take turns throwing a Frisbee and measuring the distance you tossed it.
- Pick a starting point and a finish line. Have a race.

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