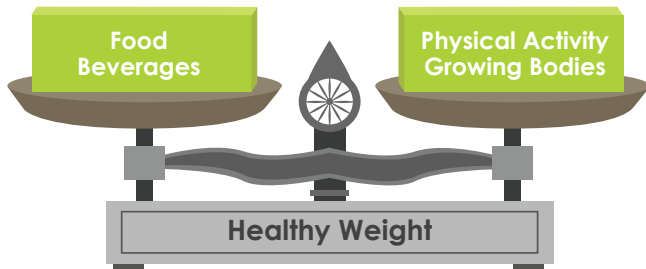


Healthy Weight Healthy Kids

As a parent, it's your job to help your child reach and stay at a healthy weight. The right weight for your child is about **balance**. The foods he or she eats must balance with his or her activity each day, while still allowing enough energy to grow.

Maintaining Balance



- Children who struggle with their weight are likely to struggle with it as adults also.
- Cutting back on unnecessary calories or burning more energy through daily exercise and activity can help create balance and a healthy weight for your child.
- Eating too much means weight gain—as much as 10 pounds a year with just 100 calories extra each day. Over time, childhood weight gain can add up to obesity.
- Overweight and obesity places your child at risk for diseases—heart disease, diabetes, high cholesterol and more. Being at a healthy weight—or losing any extra weight—can help reduce risk of disease.
- If you're concerned your child is bigger than he should be, talk to your WIC nutritionist or doctor. They can figure out a healthy weight for your child using a measure called BMI-for-age (body mass index) that takes into account your child's height, weight, gender, and age.

How to Help Your Child Maintain a Healthy Weight

- Breastfeed your infant for at least 6 months.
- Have five fruits and veggies per day. Include a variety of foods in your child's diet—especially fruits and vegetables that are lower in calories and higher in water content than many other foods.
- Eat breakfast each morning and enjoy a cereal breakfast often. Studies show that frequent cereal eaters are less likely to be overweight and more likely to meet their nutrient needs.
- Limit sweetened beverages including sports drinks, soft drinks, and juices to no more than 1 serving daily. Drink water and nonfat or skim milk most often. Milk is calcium- and vitamin D-rich; and water quenches thirst.
- Don't overdo it. Children need just 4-6 ounces of 100% juice and no more than 16 ounces of nonfat or skim milk each day.
- Teach children to listen to their bodies so they know when they are full and when they are hungry. Help them to eat slowly—it takes 20 minutes for your brain to know that your tummy is full.
- Learn about "right-size" portions of foods and serve proper amounts to your family.
- Limit screen time to 2 hours or less a day—that means TV, DVDs, computer games and electronics—but doesn't include computers needed for homework. Remove TVs from children's bedrooms to keep track of their screen time.
- Eat family meals together. Research shows that families who eat together have healthier kids—both physically and mentally.
- Limit the number of meals your family eats away from home, especially fast foods.
- Spend more time playing sports, walking and running, climbing, jumping, biking, swimming, and moving around—at least 60 minutes each day.

One out of three children and as many as two out of three adults are overweight or obese—very overweight—and the numbers are growing.