

A Healthy Lifestyle for Your Child: Care Instructions

Your Care Instructions

A healthy lifestyle can help your child feel good, stay at a healthy weight, and have lots of energy for school and play. In fact, a healthy lifestyle will help your whole family. It also will show your child that everyone needs to take care of his or her health. Good food and plenty of exercise are the main things you can do to have a healthy lifestyle. Healthy eating means eating fruits and vegetables, lean meats and dairy, and whole grains. It also means not eating too much fat, sugar, and fast food. Your child can still eat desserts or other treats now and then. The goal is moderation.

It is important for your child to stay at a healthy weight. A child who weighs too much may develop serious health problems, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or type 2 diabetes. Good eating habits and exercise are especially important if your child already has any health problems.

You can follow a few tips to improve the health of your child and your whole family.

Follow-up care is a key part of your child's treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if your child is having problems. It's also a good idea to know your child's test results and keep a list of the medicines your child takes.



How can you care for your child at home?

Start with some small steps to improve your family's eating habits. You can cut down on portion sizes, drink less juice and soda pop, and eat more fruits and vegetables.

Eat smaller portions of food. A 3-ounce serving of meat, for example, is about the size of a deck of cards.

Let your child drink no more than 1 small cup of juice, sports drink, or soda pop a day. Have your child drink water when he or she is thirsty.

Offer more fruits and vegetables at meals and snacks.

Eat as a family as often as possible. Keep family meals fun and positive.

Make exercise a part of your family's daily life. Encourage your child to be active for at least 1 hour every day.

Walk with your child to do errands or to the bus stop or school.

Take bike rides as a family.

Give every family member daily, weekly, or monthly chores, such as housecleaning, weeding the garden, or washing the car.

Let your child watch television or play video games for no more than 1 to 2 hours each day. Sit down with your child and plan out how he or she will use this time.

Do not put a TV in your child's room.

Be a good role model. Practice the eating and exercise habits that you want your child to have.

Where can you learn more?

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