

HOW TO CHOOSE Healthy Foods

Which brand of cereal should your teenager pick out at the store? At a restaurant, what can she order that doesn't contain an entire day's worth of calories? And how could she find something nutritious when a vending machine is her only option?

With these tips, your child will discover how to evaluate foods and choose healthier ones whether she's with you or out on her own.



Stocking up

Eating well at home begins with buying nutritious foods. Take your teen grocery shopping, and show her how you make good decisions. She'll not only have healthy foods for meals and snacks, she'll also begin learning to be a smart shopper.

Before: Let your teen help you write a grocery list. Suggest that you both eat a nutritious snack at home so you're not hungry while shopping. These strategies will make you more likely to buy what you need—and avoid impulse purchases like cookies or a gallon of ice cream.

During: Look for fresh, healthy choices, such as fruits and vegetables, fat-free or low-fat dairy products, and lean meats.

For packaged foods, recommend that your child scan labels to find the best options. For example, the amount of sodium in jarred pasta sauce varies widely—have her pick a jar with less. Ditto for the sugar content in cereals.

After: As the two of you put groceries away, place the healthiest items front and center in the pantry and refrigerator.

Idea: Your tween could slice onions, peppers, mushrooms, and carrots, and put them into zipper bags to make “vegetable packs” for snacking or stir-fries. And she might arrange fresh fruit in a bowl on the counter for easy access.



Too good to be true?

Encourage your teen to be mindful of these grocery items that sound nutritious—but may not be.

Multigrain bread. The word *multigrain* simply means that different grains are included. They're not necessarily *whole* grains—some could be *refined*, or stripped of most of their nutrients. Have your child look for breads labeled “100% whole grain” or “100% whole wheat.”

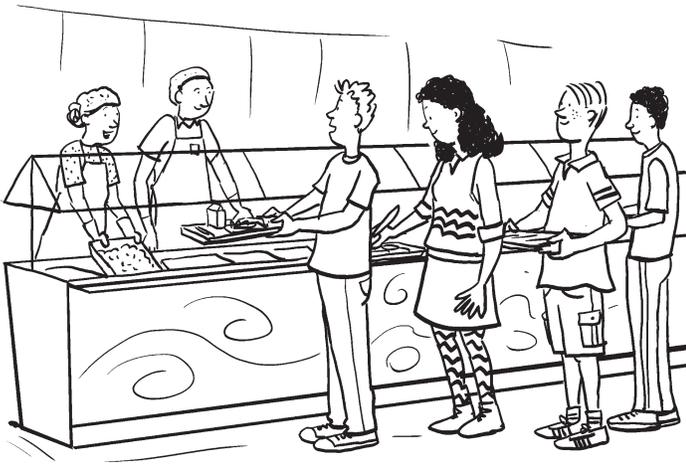
Fat-free salad dressings. All too often, these dressings use lots of salt and sugar to replace the flavor from fat. Teach your tween to opt for regular salad dressings with healthy fats from olive oil and avocado. In addition to keeping him full longer, these fats help his body absorb nutrients from salad greens and other vegetables.



Yogurt-covered snacks. Most “yogurt-covered” nuts, raisins, or pretzels contain very little actual yogurt. Instead, your teenager might top plain Greek yogurt with raisins. Or he could roll grapes in Greek yogurt, sprinkle with chopped nuts, and freeze for a sweet and crunchy snack.

Energy bars. Does your tween know that his favorite protein bar may contain more sugar than a typical candy bar? Suggest that he choose bars with less than 8 grams of sugar per serving and that have short, simple ingredient lists. Better yet, he can refuel with a banana and a glass of fat-free milk.

Eating away from home



Lunch in school, dinner out with friends, snacks at the movies...regardless of when and where your teenager eats, he can find his best bets with these strategies.

The school cafeteria

School breakfast and lunch play important roles in maintaining an overall healthy diet. Have your teenager read the cafeteria menu at the start of each week. Thinking ahead of time about what he might buy may lead to better decisions. *Tip:* Remind your child to actually *eat* lunch in school—since students sometimes let studying or socializing get in the way of a midday meal. Point out that lunch will help him do his best in afternoon classes and at after-school practices and activities.

Restaurants

Suggest that your tween look at the menu online before she heads out. Seeing the calorie count on the General Tso's chicken or the bacon double-cheeseburger may be enough to

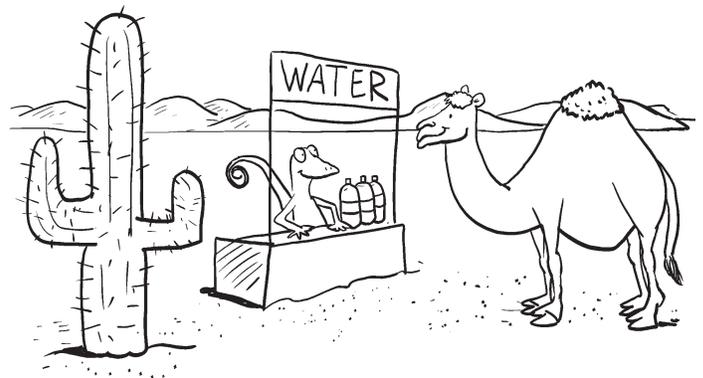
steer her toward a healthier choice. To keep things in check, she might split an entree or a sandwich with a friend. Or she could up the nutrition by ordering brown rice instead of white or a small salad in place of french fries. If the website has a nutrition calculator, encourage her to experiment with different toppings and sauces to make dishes better for her. Sometimes a simple adjustment, like swapping mustard for mayo or getting sauce on the side, can make a big difference. Say $\frac{1}{4}$ of the calories in a burrito bowl come from the sour cream it's smothered in—maybe she'll request it on the side and drizzle on a small amount.

Vending machines

Share this tidbit with your teenager: Look “high and low” when selecting a vending-machine snack. Usually, more nutritious items are in the top and bottom rows (with the chips and candy bars at eye level). He may find snacks like plain popcorn, sunflower seeds, and trail mix in the “good” rows.

Parties

If your child is invited to a party, encourage her to ask the host if she can bring a dish to share. She'll have fun researching “healthy party appetizers” on Pinterest—and she'll be guaranteed at least one nutritious treat to munch on. Perhaps she'll make a seven-layer veggie dip or corn-and-black-bean salsa—or draw on ideas she finds to invent her own recipe. And when your tween hosts a party, offer to help her plan a healthy menu.



Concession stands

At a ballpark, pool, fair, or movie theater, your teenager may be tempted by hot dogs or cotton candy. Remind him that while an occasional treat is okay, other options are usually available at concession stands these days. He could skip the candy bar and look for a turkey wrap, baked chips, or fresh fruit. He should also avoid soda—water is a better drink choice.



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Unplug and Get Fit

The time that your tween or teen spends using cell phones, playing video games, and watching TV is time he could spend being active. Motivate your child to power down electronic devices, get off the couch, and stay healthier with these ideas.



Reduce screen time

Experts recommend that parents put consistent limits on screen time. Here are ways you can help tame the habit in your house.

Establish ground rules

Consider keeping devices put away and the TV off until homework and chores are finished. Or cut off electronics after a certain time at night. Also, you might ban cell phones from the dinner table and during family outings.

Plan ahead for TV viewing

On Sunday evenings, have your tween choose one show to watch each day that week. She could post the schedule by the TV as a reminder. *Tip:* If she has a hard time picking just one show per day, suggest that she “bank” extras to watch later. Maybe she’ll skip a night of TV if she has a lot of homework and watch two shows Friday night or Saturday morning.

Make simple adjustments

A few easy changes can lessen screen time for everyone. For example, avoid using the TV as background noise—turn it off when no one is watching.

Have your child shut down the computer when he’s finished so it’s less tempting to start mindlessly browsing the internet. You might even give away an extra TV or video game system—fewer devices mean fewer opportunities for screen time.



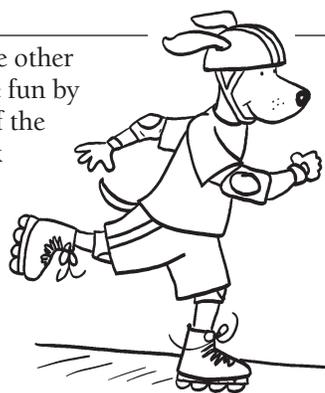
Keep it public

You’ll have a better chance of monitoring screen time if your teen doesn’t have a TV or computer in her room. In fact, teenagers with TVs in their rooms tend to watch more, see shows they otherwise wouldn’t be allowed to view, and get less sleep. They also run a greater risk of being overweight, because kids often snack while watching.

Go screen-free!

Encourage your tween to explore other interests and find new ways to have fun by designating certain days or hours of the week as screen-free. Together, think about the best times for this, then brainstorm things to do instead, such as:

- Hold regular neighborhood basketball or kickball games.
- Play a few sets of tennis at a community court.



- Take a family hike through the woods, up a mountain, or around a lake.
- Work out along with exercise videos from the library, or find some online to stream for free.
- Jog around the school track.
- Sign up for sports or fitness classes through your local parks and recreation department. Attend open gym at the community center.
- Go roller skating or inline skating.
- Head to the park and play Frisbee.



Increase active time

At least 60 minutes of physical activity a day will help your tween be healthy, strong, alert, and energetic. Inspire her to get moving with tips like these.

Set goals

Forget the word “exercise”—encourage your teen to be active just because it’s fun! She might start by writing down how many minutes a day she’s physically active. Have her note organized activities (PE, team practices) as well as time spent walking to a friend’s house or playing outside when she

babysits. She could gradually increase her active time, perhaps by adding 10 minutes a day for two weeks, another 10 minutes a day the following two weeks, and so on.

Work out together

Your good habits will rub off on your child. When you exercise, invite him along. Or maybe you have an active hobby like gardening or dancing. Share your interest, and your teen will stay active and learn a new skill in the process. As a bonus, you’ll spend more time with him. *Note:* If you don’t get much physical activity, consider starting alongside your tween. He’ll see that you’re trying, too.

Try something new

A soccer player might like rock climbing—a great all-around workout that strengthens hands, shoulders, back, stomach, legs, and feet. Or your cheerleader may enjoy biking on weekends.

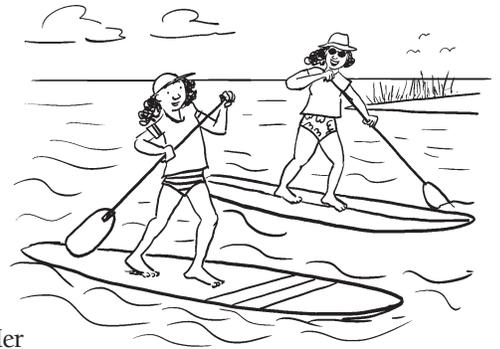
If your teen likes to

swim, suggest other water sports, such as rowing, canoeing, kayaking, waterskiing, or paddleboarding.

A child who prefers quiet activities might take to yoga,

Pilates, or tai chi. Her school may offer some

of these as PE options, or she can look for free or low-cost classes at your community center. *Tip:* Your tween could ask a friend to discover a new sport with her.



Track your steps

Fitness trackers or pedometers can motivate your family to walk more by counting the steps you take—and making you want to take more! Look for reasonably priced ones at a discount retailer or online. Then, challenge each person to walk at least 10,000 steps a day. *Idea:* Hold a friendly family competition. Every night, check your devices together. Who will win each day’s walking challenge?

Be a volunteer

Support your favorite charity and get fit at the same time. Many towns and cities organize walks, runs, or bike rides to raise money for causes like health or the environment. To learn about local events, read the newspaper or go online. Encourage your teenager to participate in other types of active community service, too, such as walking dogs for an animal shelter or cleaning up neighborhoods and parks. Websites like volunteermatch.org can help him find opportunities in your community.

Activity around the house

Your teen will get a good workout and burn calories with these suggestions he can use at home:

- Pace or walk briskly around the house while talking on the phone.
- Run up and down the stairs five times.
- Do 20 jumping jacks during TV commercials.
- Pull weeds.
- Wash the windows.
- Invite friends over for a group car wash.
- Clean out the garage, and then have a yard sale. *Idea:* Use the proceeds to buy active equipment like a basketball, skates, or a jump rope.

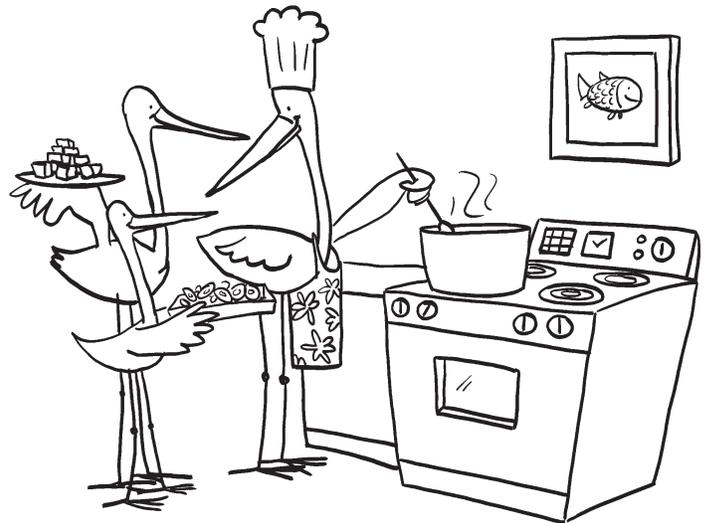


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Best Recipes

2018 Edition

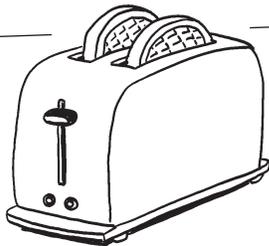
Pick a recipe, and get cooking with your family! Try all of these simple and healthy options to make food everyone will enjoy.



Apple waffles

- 1 tsp. butter
- 1 tsp. brown sugar
- 2 apples, peeled and sliced
- 4 whole-wheat frozen waffles, toasted
- 1 tsp. cinnamon

Melt butter and sugar in a skillet and add the apple slices. Stir over medium-high heat until soft. Spoon onto waffles, and sprinkle with cinnamon. Makes 4 servings.



Slow-cooker chicken spaghetti

- 4 chicken breasts (4 oz. each)
- 1 jar marinara sauce (24 oz.)
- 3 tbsp. water
- 1 lb. whole-wheat spaghetti
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup low-fat shredded mozzarella cheese

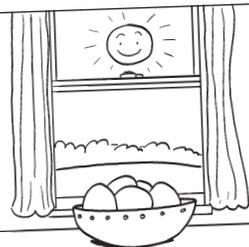
Place chicken breasts, marinara sauce, and water in a slow cooker. Cook on low for 6 hours. Prepare spaghetti according to package directions, and drain. Top pasta with chicken, sauce, and mozzarella. Serves 4.



Sunny egg sandwich

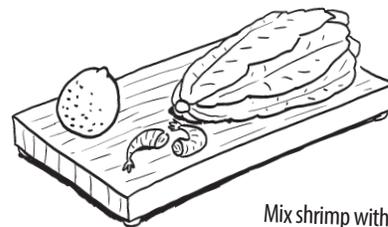
- 1 tsp. butter
- 1 egg
- 2 slices whole-wheat bread, toasted
- 1 tomato slice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup greens (arugula, spinach)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat. Crack egg into the sizzling butter. Cook until the white and yolk are both solid. With a spatula, place the egg on 1 piece of toast. Layer on a tomato slice and the greens, season with salt and pepper, and top with the second piece of toast. Serves 1.



Shrimp Caesar salad wrap

- 1 lb. cooked shrimp, chopped
- 2 tbsp. light mayonnaise
- 3 tbsp. lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. garlic powder
- 4 spinach tortillas
- 2 cups shredded romaine lettuce
- 2 tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese



Mix shrimp with mayonnaise, lemon juice, and garlic powder. In each spinach tortilla, place $\frac{1}{4}$ of the shrimp mixture, romaine, and Parmesan, and roll up. Serves 4. *Idea:* Make with canned salmon or grilled chicken breast instead of shrimp.

Pumpkin shepherd's pie

- 1 russet potato, peeled and diced
- 1 can pumpkin puree (15 oz.)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup low-fat shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 bag frozen vegetables (16 oz.)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. extra-lean ground beef
- 1 tbsp. flour
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- 1 cup fat-free, low-sodium beef broth

Boil potatoes until tender. Drain, return them to the pot, and mash. Add 1 cup pumpkin puree and cheddar cheese to the potatoes, and beat together. Microwave frozen vegetables. In a skillet, brown the beef, and drain. Stir in flour and onion powder, and cook 4 minutes. Mix in broth and the remaining pumpkin puree until thick, and add vegetables. Spoon mixture into a casserole dish, top with the potato-pumpkin mixture, and broil 5 minutes. Serves 6.



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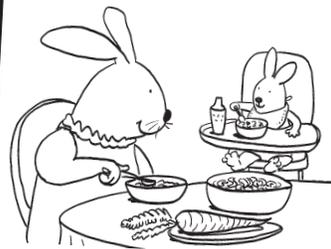
Lemon-pepper salmon

- 1 lb. salmon fillet
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. lemon zest
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. garlic powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. pepper
- 3–4 thin lemon slices



Preheat oven to 400°. Line a baking sheet with foil and place fish on top. Stir together oil, lemon zest, lemon juice, garlic powder, salt, and pepper, and rub mixture on fish. Place lemon slices on top. Cook for 20 minutes or until the fish flakes. Cut into 4 portions and serve.

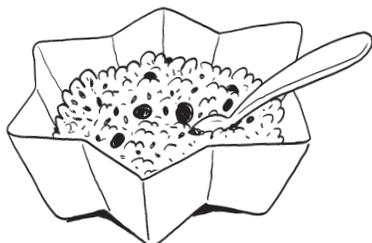
Creamy carrot mac 'n' cheese



- 2 cups canned sliced carrots (drained, rinsed)
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups nonfat milk
- 2 cups low-fat shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 lb. cooked macaroni noodles

Combine the carrots and milk in a blender. Gently stir the mixture in a bowl with the cheese and cooked macaroni. Pour into a lightly greased casserole dish, and bake at 350° for 20 minutes. Serves 6.

Colorful grain salad

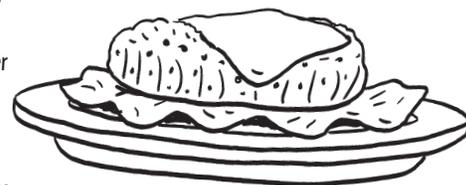


- 1 cup cooked lentils
- 1 cup cooked brown rice
- 1 cup seedless grapes, halved
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sliced almonds
- 1 tsp. olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup nonfat plain yogurt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup light mayonnaise
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. curry powder

Mix lentils, brown rice, grapes, and almonds together. Whisk oil, yogurt, mayonnaise, and curry until blended. Toss the dressing with the salad. Serves 4–6.

Bunless turkey burgers

- 1 lb. lean ground turkey
- 2 tbsp. chopped green onions
- 2 tsp. lime juice
- 2 tbsp. chopped cilantro
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 1 tsp. crushed red pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. pepper
- Nonstick cooking spray
- 4 slices pepper jack cheese
- Large lettuce leaves

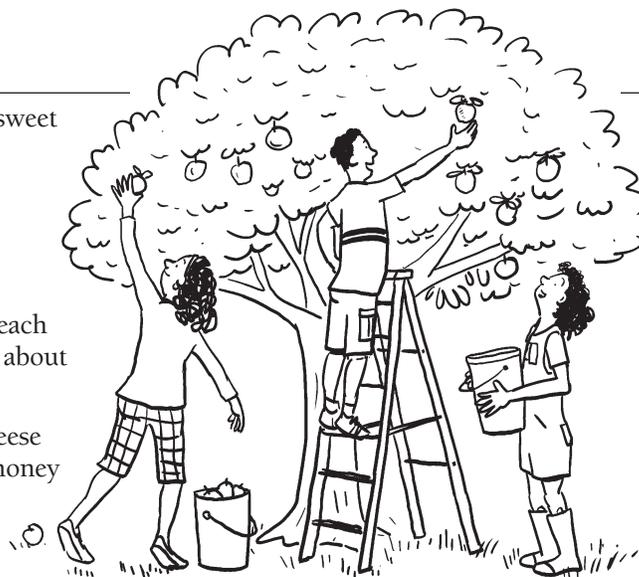


Add ground turkey, green onions, lime juice, cilantro, and seasonings to a bowl, and mix well. Form 4 patties. Coat a nonstick pan with cooking spray, and cook patties for 5 minutes on each side until browned. Top with cheese. Use lettuce leaves as your "bun," or enjoy plain.

Snack corner: Fruit edition

When your children want a sweet treat or need a small snack to hold them over until the next meal, have them go for fruit! Share these ideas:

- Cut a grapefruit in half, and sprinkle 1 tsp. brown sugar on each half. Broil until hot and bubbly, about 2–3 minutes.
- Slice pears, and layer with cheese (Gouda, Jarlsberg). Drizzle on honey for a touch of sweetness.



- Make a fruit salad of apples, oranges, and bananas. Mix in a few spoonfuls of nonfat Greek lemon or vanilla yogurt.
- In a blender, puree 3 cups seedless watermelon chunks with the juice of 1 lime. Make watermelon pops by dividing the mix into 4–6 small paper cups, covering with aluminum foil, and poking a craft stick into each so it stays upright. Freeze.

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