

A Fun and Healthy Summer for Kids

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Ball games, swimming, ice cream trucks, no school...sounds like the perfect summer!! But add those nachos at the ball game, high fat snacks at the pool, endless ice cream, increased snacking, and nonstop lounging, and that can lead to a not-so-healthy summer. So what can parents do to help kids eat smart and stay healthy this summer?

- Leave the high fat and high sugar foods in the grocery store
 - Don't buy sugary drinks, soda, sports drinks or snacks like cookies, chips and cakes
 - Allow kids to choose healthier snack ideas before shopping
- Establish routine meal and snack times
 - Plan for 3 meals and 1-2 snacks at set times
 - Once children have a routine they will be hungry at regular times and are less likely to graze
- Offer healthier snacks
 - Fresh fruits and vegetables with low fat dips make good snacks
 - Light popcorn, pretzels, granola bars, homemade trail mix, low fat cheese sticks, yogurts, peanut butter, 100% fruit juice bars, or other nutrition-packed snacks are also encouraged
- Bring your own snacks to ball games and other outings
 - Take along nuts, seeds, fresh fruit and lots of water
- Drink plenty of water
 - It is cheap, healthy and can help hydrate children on hot summer days
- Continue to stay active
 - Have them put away the video games, turn off the TV and stay away from the computer – limit to no more than 2 hours/day
 - Get involved in at least 60 minutes of moderate intensity activity each day
 - Encourage them to play outside, get involved in sports, swim, ride bikes
 - Get the family involved, go for trips to the beach, take a hike, a bike ride, wash the car together, go for a walk after dinner

Following these guidelines will help your kids stay fit and healthy all summer long. And maybe you, too boot!