

HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

TAKING CARE OF YOU

Taking care of yourself, whether you have a baby or a busy toddler or preschooler, will give you the energy to feel your best and help keep up with the needs of your family. Try these healthy lifestyle tips:

FEEL GOOD

- **Celebrate yourself** and be thankful for your skills, relationships and interests.
- **Make time for yourself** and find a balance between commitments, family and friends. Take at least 15 minutes each day to do things like take a quiet bath or read a book.
- **Focus on the best possible you.** Accept who you are and focus on your strengths and abilities. Your health is more important than a number on a scale.
- **Make sleep a priority.** When possible, sleep when they sleep. Aim for seven to nine hours total each day, even if it is only one to three hours at a time.
- **Pause** before comparing yourself to anyone, including celebrities. Think of your experiences and be proud of who you are.
- **Go easy on yourself.** Good health comes in many body shapes and sizes.

BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

- **The benefits of being active** include more energy, better sleep and less stress.
- **Talk to a health care provider** about getting active after delivery, if you just had a baby.

- **Start small.** In 10 minute increments, gradually increase to 150 minutes a week of moderate to vigorous-intensity aerobic activity (e.g. 30 minutes, five days per week).
 - Moderate intensity activities include brisk walking or bike riding.
 - Vigorous intensity activities include jogging or cross country skiing.
 - Consider adding muscle and bone strengthening activities twice weekly. Activities include heavy gardening (e.g. shoveling) or doing activities like push-ups, using resistance bands or lifting weights.
- **Listen to your body.** Stop and rest if you feel unwell. Get medical attention if needed.
- **Enjoy the outdoors.** Take a walk with family or friends.
- **Join a parent group** or recreation program with stroller walking, yoga or dance classes.
- **Find an activity you enjoy.** You'll be more likely to be active more often.
- **Warm up** before physical activity; **cool down** and **stretch** after physical activity.

EAT WELL

- **Follow [Canada's Food Guide](#).** Healthy eating is more than the foods you eat.
- **Eating patterns can vary.** Follow your body cues and pay attention to feelings of hunger and fullness.

PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/feedingkids

- **Take time to eat and eat without distractions** to help enjoy your food and help to recognize when you are hungry or satisfied.
- **Plan ahead** and make a menu for the next few days or week. You will be more likely to make healthier choices and save money on groceries.
- **Fill half your plate with fruit or vegetables.** Enjoy plant-based proteins like bean salad, lentil soup, hummus, nuts and seeds often.
- **Make the healthy choice the easy choice.** Store foods like boiled eggs, cut vegetables and fruit for easy snacks.
- **Cook once, eat twice.** Double recipes to freeze or use what you cook in different ways (e.g. leftover cooked chicken can be used to make chicken salad the next day)
- **Drink water** especially before, during and after you are active. For flavour, add slices of lime or cucumber.
- **Avoid sugary drinks** like iced tea, juice, sweetened milk, energy drinks and pop.
- **Diets don't work.** Quick fixes rarely work and can be harmful to your health.
- **There is no special diet if you are breastfeeding.** However:
 - **Avoid high mercury fish** like fresh or frozen tuna, swordfish, pickerel, shark or orange roughy.
 - **Limit caffeine** to no more than 300 mg per day of caffeine (about two 250 mL or 8 oz cups of coffee).
 - **Some herbs and herbal teas may not be safe.** Talk to your health care provider.

QUICK AND EASY MEALS AND SNACK IDEAS

Breakfast

- Peanut butter smoothie: blend one cup (250 mL) milk (2% or less) or unsweetened fortified soy beverage, one frozen banana, one teaspoon (5 mL) vanilla and two tablespoons (30 mL) peanut butter.
- Frozen blueberries and sunflower seeds on plain hot oatmeal.
- Yogurt (2% or less) with granola and diced fruit.
- Any leftovers from the previous day.
- Mix one mashed or diced avocado with two tablespoons of salsa and spread on whole grain toast.

Lunch and dinner

- Bean/chickpea salad and fruit yogurt (2% or less).
- Cottage cheese (2% or less) with fruit and a bran muffin.
- Peanut butter and sliced banana sandwich.
- Salad with boiled egg or sliced meat.
- Egg, salmon or tuna salad sandwich and pepper strips.
- Beef vegetable stew with cheese (2% or less) and crackers.
- Lentil soup, naan and vegetable sticks.
- Cheese (2% or less) and refried bean or leftover chicken quesadillas with a green salad.
- Egg and vegetable frittata with whole grain toast.
- French toast topped with yogurt (2% or less) and berries.
- Tacos made with canned black beans topped with lettuce and cheese (2% or less).
- Bean and vegetable chili with whole grain toast.

Snacks

- Trail mix with nuts, seeds and dried fruit.
- Vegetable sticks or pita with hummus.
- Apple slices with peanut butter.
- Fresh fruit and vanilla or plain yogurt (2% or less).
- Banana bread with almond or seed butter.
- Whole grain cereal (six or less grams of sugar per servings – read label) and milk (2% or less).

Include a cup of lower fat milk (skim, 1% or 2%) or unsweetened, fortified soy or other plant-based beverage to these ideas for added calcium.

GET SUPPORT

Self-care is not always easy. Call Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 to get support on how to take care of you and your family.

For online information, visit york.ca/parenting or the Best Start Resource Centre

To speak to a registered dietitian at no cost, call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 or visit unlockfood.ca

May be reproduced without permission provided source is acknowledged. 2020.