

THE DREADED “E” WORD AND HOW TO MAKE IT FUN

When it comes to exercise, many of us think of it as a form of punishment. There are probably a lot of other things we would rather do than spend time at the gym, but in order for American’s to win the battle of the bulge we need to change our mindset. Think in terms of “activity” rather than “exercise.” Aim for at least 30 minutes (for adults) and 60 minutes (for children) of activity on most days of the week. Have fun and play – even grown ups need to go out for recess, too! Here are some suggestions from www.mayoclinic.com:

- Be creative! Take your child on a Huckleberry Finn adventure hike or a Nancy Drew mystery run around the block.
- Play games – Tag, “cops ’n robbers”, and “Mother may I?” If you don’t remember the rules for these games, walk to the library and check out a book on games.
- Unleash your inner animal - run like a gorilla, walk like a spider, hop like a bunny, and stretch like a cat!
- Plan active family vacations – such as hiking, skiing, snorkeling, swimming, or camping. Take it a step further by bringing along a ball or Frisbee to sneak in some activity at rest stops.
- Help make chores less tedious by turning them into contests: who can pull up the most weeds, collect the most trash, or shovel the most snow to build a snow fort!
- Batting cages, bowling, and fast food play areas all count as activity.
- Have fun exploring your local community – bike trails, family oriented health clubs, ice-skating or roller-skating rinks, etc.

SNACK TIPS:

- Keep fruits, vegetables, & yogurt on hand for quick, easy, & healthy choices.
- Choose higher fiber and/or higher water-content foods. For example for 100 calories you can have either ¼ cup of raisins or nearly 2 cups of grapes – the grapes will fill you up faster and longer!
- High protein foods can help decrease hunger and help you feel full longer. Choose reduced-fat cheese, yogurt, or tuna rather than potato chips.
- Avoid the temptation to over-indulge by buying individual sized snacks or pre-portion your snacks ahead of time.
- Take time to enjoy your food and remember it takes 20 minutes for your brain to recognize that you’re full.

FROM WWW.SCHOOL-NURSING.ORG