

Keeping your health and well-being in the know

MyHealthTALK

August 2010



Action Steps

1. Commit to taking responsibility for your family's health and health care.
2. Plan a daily or weekly exercise, such as walking, with friends or family.
3. Make active lifestyle choices a part of your daily routine. Limit time on computers, game stations, TV and set an example.
4. Add one new nutritious meal to your family's diet this week. Find great healthy recipes for you and your family at www.foodfit.com.

RAISING A HEALTHY FAMILY

Your health is a valuable asset to your family!

Your health impacts you and your family, both physically and financially. You want the best for your family, but have you ever thought that your best starts with your health? Good health is the greatest asset for you and your family. While most of us think of assets in financial terms, good health is an important asset that will ensure the health and well-being of your family. Just like your financial assets, you must invest in and protect your health.

Your family depends on you and your income. This all starts and ends with your health -- your ability to do the things you do. Without your health, you become financially, as well as physically, disabled. However, when you take active responsibility for your health, you will find yourself healthier and financially more secure.

Family health starts with your example. Research shows your children will be about six times more likely to enjoy physical activity if you serve as a role model. Start with making your health a priority. You may think that you don't have time, that it is too much work, or that the results are hard to see. However, there are many simple things you can learn and do to improve your health and your family's health.

Ways to Protect Your Health

Learn More about Health

One of the most important things you can do for your family's health is to build your knowledge. Learn about nutrition, exercise, health conditions, and how to be a better consumer of health care. This will help you to improve your family's wellness and budget.

Exercise

Exercise is one simple way you can help instill healthy habits in your family. Start out small. Get your family to take a bike ride or walk to a nearby park. Try to make exercise a habit by setting aside at least three times a week to exercise for the next three weeks. Staying active is a great way to keep your body (and your family's bodies) strong and healthy.

Eat Well

Good nutrition impacts the body in a number of positive ways. Planning healthy meals is a way to make sure your family is getting all the nutrients and minerals they need to stay healthy. Try your best to eat dinner together as a family. Studies show that the more often families eat together, the less likely kids are to smoke, drink, do drugs and consider suicide, and more likely they are to do well in school and eat healthy. Involve the family in meal planning and preparation. When kids help prepare a meal, they are much more likely to eat it, and it's a useful skill that helps build self-esteem. ("The Magic Of The Family Meal" www.time.com)

Invest in Your Family's Health

Maintaining yours and your family's good health takes active investment. You need to take time to budget for what it takes to keep your family healthy. When your family is healthy they are able to enjoy the quality of life they want now and in the future.

LIVEN UP YOUR LUNCH!

make lunch anything but
routine



School starts and we seem to get into a routine, even if we don't have children at home. Lunch becomes whatever is the easiest routine. Usually that means sandwich after sandwich or going out at work.

Have you ever thought about how much you spend on going out to lunch in a year? On the average, it costs close to \$2000 a year to buy your lunch on workdays. You could take a very nice family vacation with that money!

With a little planning ahead, you can have a delicious, healthy lunch and save some money too. By not having to run to a restaurant, you'll also have some extra time to do something relaxing during your lunch break. Take a walk, read, and catch up with friends for a few minutes. On nice days, take your lunch outside to eat and enjoy the fresh air. These small changes will rejuvenate you for the afternoon ahead.

You don't need to "brown bag" it anymore with all of the great choices for reusable lunch bags. There are many shapes and sizes of lunch bags available. Reusable bags

and containers often allow you more freedom in what you pack. Some come with their own reusable containers or you can buy them separately for a very low cost. A small thermos is a good idea for soup or chili in the colder months.

Remember to always keep cold foods cold. If you don't have access to a refrigerator at work, put a small ice pack or frozen drink in your lunch bag. The drink will be thawed but very cold by the time you're ready for lunch.

Think outside of the
"sandwich" box. Plan
ahead for the week. Buy
a little extra for dinner so
that you'll have leftovers
for lunch.

When possible, pack your lunch the night before while you're cleaning up the dinner dishes. Whether you're packing for one, or a family, you can accomplish this quickly. Assign this task to one or two family members. They can set up an assembly line to package up the food and get it into the lunch bags. Just grab and go in the morning!

- Leftover chicken or turkey breasts on Sunday can be sliced and used for rollups or salad topping
- Reuse empty sour cream containers for the perfect amount of salad.
- Pasta or couscous are great with your leftover veggies and some vinaigrette
- Try whole grain lawash, pita, or flat-bread as a change up from regular bread
- Pack two pieces of fruit, one for lunch and one for a mid-afternoon snack
- Make a pot of soup or chili on the week-end and store in small containers or a thermos. These freeze well too!

Stay away from prepared box lunches in the freezer section at your grocery store. They are usually very high in sodium. Most importantly, be creative and make a lunch that you'll look forward to.