



KEEPING

FIT

ASA

FAMILY



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Keeping fit should be a family affair. According to studies, children who not only have active parents but actually participate in physical activity with their parents are much more likely to be healthy and active adults. It's not enough for a child to understand that mom or dad goes to the gym three days per week to work out. Although it may be simpler for a parent to arrange childcare and go to the gym on their own for some well-deserved alone time, some fitness should be built around family activities. As we continue to face a childhood obesity epidemic, it becomes increasingly important for parents to be good role models for their children.

For those of you with visions of finding miniature treadmills for your children, remember, kids do best with unstructured play that keeps them active. So what can you do to keep your family fit? Find one outing a month that includes physical activity. It can be a hike in the park in the fall, going to a water park in the summer, a scavenger hunt in the nature preserve in the spring, or tobogganing in the winter. It doesn't have to be expensive either; there are many things you can do together for free or that cost very little. Check local web sites or your town's parks and recreation web site for ideas. Many communities offer programs for families. These outings can also be great to offer as rewards or incentives for your kids' accomplishments or good behavior – far better than the promise of junk food or sweets.

Don't have time to get out with the kids? There are plenty of active things to do in your own home. Here's a fun idea: Build a circuit in the backyard or in the basement and include jump rope, a ball, mountain climbers, jumping jacks, push ups, crunches, walking lunges, and a band. The family can either compete for challenges, or just have fun doing fitness in the same room. Most important is the message you're sending to your kids: Exercise is fun and important, and it should be part of everyone's weekly routine.

By: Heather Nettle, MA



Back to School

To reduce anxiety, ease kids into the new school year by adjusting their daily routine before the first day of school.

Throwing your kids into a new schedule can leave them feeling anxious and unsettled. Ease first-day jitters by preparing them for their new school-year schedule ahead of time. It can take a little while to get used to a new bedtime and wake-up time, so get them into the habit as early as possible. That goes for you too. If you're rushing around frantically, trying to get them out the door in time for the bus, they will pick up on your emotions and feel stressed too.

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors

MEALTIME

MAGIC: 3 strategies for a healthy, happy dinnertime (yes, really!).

Just when family mealtime starts to take a backseat in the media to silly topics like the latest Kardashian drama, out comes a new report touting the importance of shared meals. A new study shows eating with your whole brood may protect teenagers from weight gain into adulthood. Whether you're a family of two or twelve, here's how to make dining together "a thing."

1. Plan ahead. Nutritious meals take planning, but nourishing and delicious doesn't mean elaborate or complicated. Try our simple and satisfying dishes to get dinner (or any meal) done with little fuss.
2. Think family fun, not family feud. Cultivate harmony and fun, and leave heated discussions (why your teen absolutely may not get a tattoo) for another time.
3. Be mindful. Savor fresh, delicious foods and your family without distractions. That means electronics go off when the dinner bell rings. You can laugh at those crazy cat videos later.

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors



Healthy Recipe Seasoned Popcorn



Loaded with fiber and heart-healthy polyphenols, popcorn is one of the healthiest snacks around, according to research from the University of Scranton — provided it's not drowned in butter or cooked in an unhealthy fat like coconut oil.

Try popping your own in an air popper--this popper can be used with or without oil — or on the stove with a bit of canola or olive oil, then top with disease-fighting seasonings: rosemary, cinnamon, black pepper, garlic powder, thyme and smoked paprika all add antioxidant power for just a trace of calories.

Ingredients:

1/2 cup popcorn kernels

Instructions:

1. Place kernels in popcorn popper
2. Cover with lid
3. When popcorn is done popping, remove, top with seasoning, and serve!

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors

