

Six tips to keep your family fit and healthy this summer

June 6 2016, by Lee Murphy



Summer is a great time to kick-start healthy habits but finding time to stay fit and make healthy choices as a family can seem overwhelming.

"Summer is a great time for families to be active and make nutrition a priority," said Lee Murphy, UT professor of nutrition. "These six steps can make a big difference for families who want to create or maintain a [healthy lifestyle](#)."

- Keep a healthy pantry. A healthy environment is one of the most important elements for creating a healthy family. Stock the kitchen and pantry with good choices for snacks and meals so hungry family members have nutritious options instead of junk food. Over time, a sweet tooth can be satisfied with fruits instead of sugary treats.
- Move together. Although movement every day is important, families should set aside at least one day a week to do something active—a trip to the local pool, playing in the sprinkler, fun at the park, or walking the dog. Children should be physically active at least sixty minutes every day. Adults should shoot for that goal as well.
- Eat more fruits and veggies. Whether it's watermelon, berries, peaches, or sweet peppers, make sure to have fruits and vegetables every day this summer. A healthy goal includes at least two fruit servings and three vegetable servings daily. Visit a local farmers market or grocery and stock up on fresh foods with lots of color.
- Limit screen time. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends a limit of fourteen hours of screen time per week. This includes sedentary time with television, movies, and nonactive videogames, which translates into less than two hours per day.

- Hydrate often. Drink water throughout the day. It can be easy to forget to drink water during busy play, but dehydration can occur quickly and result in headaches, lethargy, and crankiness.
- Don't forget to rest. With busy days come tired nights. Try to keep a regular bedtime schedule during the summer and recognize that active children (and adults) need plenty of rest to be at their best.

Provided by University of Tennessee at Knoxville

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