

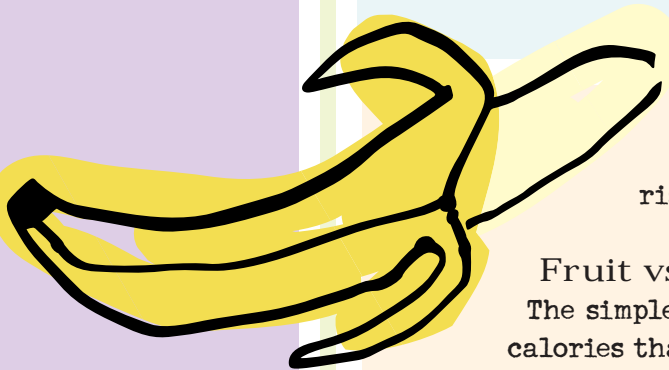


... It's not always what you're eating ...
sometimes it's what's eating you ...

Food for Thought

The "Food" Fight: Recognizing the Problem

More and more of us are becoming overweight every day, and the extra pounds "weigh us down," both physically and emotionally. Extra weight makes it difficult to keep up with friends during normal physical activities and can lead to teasing or being left out, which hurts and can make us feel very anxious or depressed. But what is even more troubling is that the heavier we become, the greater the danger that we will have diabetes, heart problems, difficulties sleeping, joint pain, and many other medical problems that traditionally occurred only in adults. Some studies even link high cholesterol with a later risk of Alzheimer's Disease.



Fruit vs. Fruit Cake: Nutrition Is Key

The simple fact is that we gain unnecessary weight when we take in more calories than we use up during the day. Although it seems obvious then that if we want to stay healthy and fit, we should avoid eating too much or too much of the "wrong" food, this is easier said than done. With images of fast, greasy food advertisements bombarding us every day, it is difficult to stick to a healthy diet. It can be especially hard when you don't know enough about nutrition to make healthy choices about food. In our high-paced world, it's tempting to grab some fast food outside of home when we are in a rush, and our increasingly sedentary lifestyles (which include TVs, DVDs, and video games) rub off and reinforce tendencies to eat more and exercise less.

The trick is to make sure you exercise more, eat healthily, and make sure to work out the everyday problems and stresses that might be eating YOU. Depression, loss of a friend or family member, or other stress can lead to reaching for the cookie jar and overeating, or, in some cases, undereating.

To help, you can exercise more, look at some of the healthy eating tips on this site, and use our completely anonymous website to work out the stresses and problems in your life. We also suggest that families eat more healthy, home-cooked meals together. Not only can we KNOW that what we're eating is good for us...parents can often help with everyday stresses by listening and talking – the family table is actually a great place to do this. In some cases, it's not just what goes into your mouth, but what's coming out – or not coming out – of it. Talking about problems can be the first step to solving them. So use this site, its information, and especially your mouth to lose weight, by eating right and letting those around you know what's eating you.

The healthy eating guide reference on the last page of this brochure provides the information parents and children need to make healthy eating choices for life.

"Comfort Food": the Emotional Triggers of Overeating

Something else you need to be conscious of is not just what you are eating...but also what's eating you. With the complexity of our modern world, we face constant pressures from every direction and many find themselves overwhelmed. Bullying at school, academic stress, problems with friends, loss of a loved one, divorce, dating woes, war, and terrorism can create tremendous stress. Roughly one in every five American kids (ages of 9 and 17) suffers from emotional distress. Many kids turn to "comfort food" when they are depressed, anxious, frightened, or lonely. If you're overeating on a regular basis, this may signal emotional distress. You should keep in mind that the opposite can also occur -under tremendous pressure to fit in, some might under-eat or starve to achieve what they consider a "desirable" body image. Eating disorders are increasingly common with the pressures of modern life.



Tips for Spotting an Emotional Problem/ Eating Disorder

- Talk to your parents, especially if you're struggling with an emotional issue or problem. One of the easiest - and healthiest -- places to talk is over a good, wholesome home-cooked meal. You've got to eat anyway, and this way you know what you're eating is good. At the same time, you can let your parents know what's eating YOU and begin to work things out.
- Watch out for:
 - Binge eating (eating large quantities of food in short periods of time), often in secrecy, while feeling out of control
 - Eating frequently and consuming more food than is necessary to feel full
 - Sudden unexplained intense weight gain
 - Sudden unexplained abnormal weight loss
 - Feelings of shame, disgust or guilt after a binge
 - Purging (self-induced vomiting, laxative or diuretic abuse), fasting or compulsive exercise
 - Extreme concern with weight and body shape and intense fear of weight gain.
 - Slowed heart rate and low blood pressure
 - Muscle loss and weakness
 - Heart irregularity or failure due to electrolyte imbalances and dehydration; gastrointestinal problems, such as stomach rupture, esophageal inflammation or rupture, stomach ulcers; tooth decay and staining
- Don't be judgmental of yourself. If you think you have a problem, let your parents or someone you trust know.
- Use the resources here at www.TeenCentral.net to find out what's bugging you and work it out. **It's SAFE and free.**

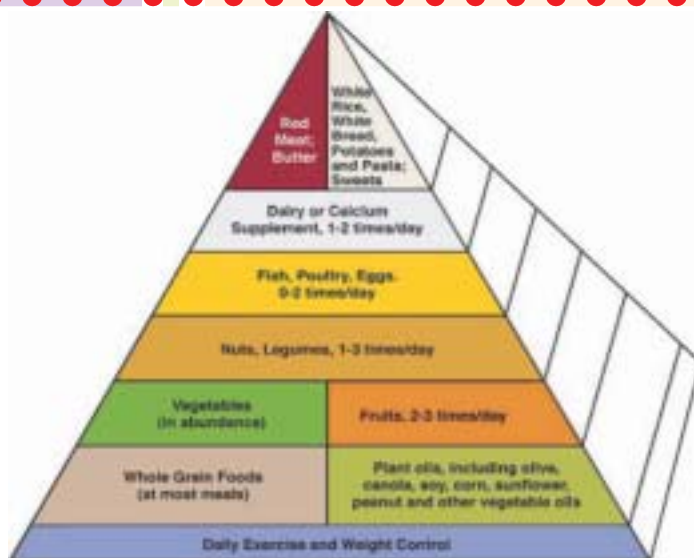
National Family Month™: A Recipe for Change

Not only is sitting down to dinner as a family a good way to keep an eye on what you're eating. It is also one of the most effective ways to let your family find out what's really going on in your life, so they can help and support you.

National Family Month™ is a great time to start a year-long commitment to spend more time eating home-cooked meals with your kids, for both their physical and emotional wellbeing. National Family Month™, which runs between Mother's Day and Father's Day, provides a great opportunity for parents to reconnect with their children and reclaim their place in kids' lives. Although it is not always possible to eat home-cooked meals together because families often have hectic daily routines and different schedules, you should resolve to do this as often as possible.

National Family Month™ was created by KidsPeace, a national children's charity with over 50 centers nationwide that has been working for over a century to help kids overcome crises such as depression, family issues, and the stresses of modern life. KidsPeace and Mass Connections have partnered on the year-long "Join the Fight to Help Kids Eat Right" campaign launched during National Family Month™ to help America's families. Mass Communications is the nation's leading consumer concept group in memorable and cause-related events.

Guide to Healthy Eating



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- 1,600 calories is about right for many sedentary women and some older adults.
- 2,200 calories is about right for most children, teenage girls, active women, and many sedentary men.
- 2,800 calories is about right for teenage boys, many active men, and some very active women.

Additional resources:

For more information on eating disorders for both adults and children please visit:

<http://www.kidspeace.org>

<http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org>

http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/food/food-pyramid/main.htm



