

# WHO IS AT RISK?

## Children are at risk for type 2 diabetes if:

- They have overweight problems
- Diabetes runs in the family
- Their family is African-American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, Asian or Pacific Islander
- A heavy child has darker skin that feels thicker or velvety on the neck or armpits



Your doctor can tell if your child weighs more than what is considered healthy for his/her age and height.

Texas Diabetes Council / Texas Department of State Health Services

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GIVE YOUR  
**CHILD**  
A HEALTHY HEADSTART



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# Your Child's Good Health Depends on You

Good health starts early. Children who learn to eat nutritious foods when they are young and who discover that exercise can be a fun part of everyday life are more likely to stick with these good habits as they grow up. Eating healthy and being active will help them keep a healthy weight. That can help prevent type 2 diabetes.



It is important to teach children healthy habits when they are three to five years old.

## Young Children Need Small Portions

Children need the right kind of foods in the right amount. Young children need small portions. Offer one tablespoon of each food for each year of age. For a preschooler, one serving size of solid food ranges from 3 tablespoons (slightly more than 1/8 cup) to 5 tablespoons (about 1/3 cup) and 4 to 6 ounces (1/2 to 3/4 cup) of liquid.



# Healthy Choices for Meals and Snacks

**W**hen fixing breakfast, lunch or supper for your preschooler, select from foods that also are good for you, like whole grain breads and crackers, brown rice, oatmeal, pasta, low-fat cottage cheese or yogurt, and low-fat or fat-free milk. Healthy protein choices are eggs, chicken, lean meats, tuna in water, and refried beans (without fat or lard). Include cut, bite-sized pieces of fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, too, but just remember that hard, uncooked pieces are a choking risk for kids under four.



**SHOPPING CART TIP**  
Some parents buy frozen bags of fruits or vegetables, so they can fix only what they need for a meal.

**For easy-to-fix, kid-friendly healthy snacks, try these:**

**Peanut butter** on whole grain toast

**Broccoli** cut into “trees” and served with low-fat dip

**Low-fat cheese cubes**

**Apple or banana slices** spread with peanut butter or low-fat yogurt dip

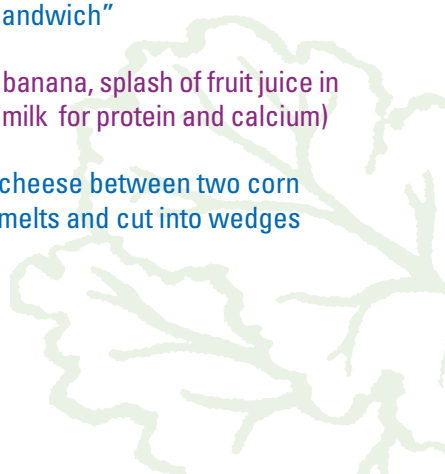
**Fresh fruit** cut into pieces and mixed with cottage cheese

**Fruit-flavored yogurt** spread between two graham crackers and frozen to make a yogurt “sandwich”

**Fruit shake** made with a frozen banana, splash of fruit juice in a blender (add frozen yogurt or milk for protein and calcium)

**Quesadilla** made with low-fat cheese between two corn tortillas, warmed until cheese melts and cut into wedges

**Hard-cooked eggs**



# HEALTHY EATING TIPS

- **BE A GOOD EXAMPLE** If your child sees you eating fruits, vegetables, low-fat milk, and lean meats, he/she is more likely to want them, too.
- **THREE MEALS + TWO SNACKS** Small children need to eat small, frequent meals. Three meals and two healthy snacks a day will keep your child fueled up and ready to play.
- **SKIP UNHEALTHY SNACKS** Children are less likely to try new things and eat their meals if they get soda or salty snacks between meals.
- **FORGET THE “CLEAN PLATE CLUB”** Don’t worry if your child doesn’t finish everything on his/her plate.
- **“PICKY” EATERS** It’s normal for children to go through a “picky” phase or to like certain foods more than others.
- **OFFER NEW FOODS 10 TIMES** Kids don’t always like new things right away. It may take 10 or more tries before your child likes a new food.
- **MAKE SPECIAL TIME A REWARD** Instead of a cookie or sweets for good behavior, give your child special time together for reading, playing a game, or snuggling. YOU are your child’s best reward.



Cut out sodas.  
A cup of regular  
soda has about 100  
empty calories.





Limit family  
TV watching to  
less than two  
hours a day.

# PLAY FUN AND

**B**y encouraging your child to move and play, you can teach him or her that exercise can be a fun part of everyday life. Daily exercise for a preschooler can be as simple as running, climbing, marching, skipping, and jumping until the child is tired. Experts say it's best for children between three and five years not to sit in one place or lie down for more than an hour at a time unless they are sleeping.

## Daily physical activity helps your child:

- Build strong bones and muscles
- Practice basic motor skills like jumping, running, and stopping
- Learn to play with others and follow directions
- Feel good about themselves
- Sleep better at night
- Burn excess calories





# ING IS HEALTHY!



Preschoolers  
need at least one  
hour of active play  
every day.

## Play Time: On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!

There are many physical activities you and your preschooler can do together. The long-term benefits will help you both live longer and stay healthy.

- Go to the park or take a walk
- Play a game of pretend – be animals, cowboys, anything!
- Have your preschooler walk with you when shopping – don't let him always ride in a cart
- Walk your dog
- Practice skipping and hopping
- Make up a funny dance
- Play "follow the leader"
- Run through the sprinkler
- Teach your child to swim
- Walk along as your child pedals her tricycle
- Play catch with a big beach ball



# HEAVY KIDS CAN HAVE BIG HEALTH PROBLEMS



**A child who is overweight at age 6 has a one in four chance of being overweight as an adult.**

More children than ever weigh too much. In Texas, one in three school-age children is overweight, which means they could be at risk for serious health problems, including type 2 diabetes. If your child is heavy and suffers from breathing problems and knee pain, the extra weight may be the cause.

## **Type 2 Diabetes and Children**

In the past few years, type 2 diabetes is increasing among younger people. Experts believe it is directly tied to the growing number of children who are overweight. Diabetes hurts the body's ability to produce and use insulin, the hormone that moves glucose (sugar) from food into the body's cells for energy. The younger someone is when he or she has diabetes, the more likely they are to have serious problems with their kidneys and eyes.

