

---

---

# Good Eating for The Teen Years

---

---

## EATING WELL

Going into the teen years is an exciting, busy and confusing time in your life. Your body is going through lots of changes and to help make it through, eating good foods is very important!! Food is the fuel that keeps you going and growing.

Although it may not seem that important to you at the moment you will soon find that what you eat has a very strong impact on your body. If you eat the wrong foods; too much; or not enough, your body will respond. You can (and we do) see high blood pressure; obesity; diabetes and heart disease result from an improper diet. The biggest tricks to staying healthy and avoiding disease is to eat wholesome foods, exercise regularly and avoid drug use (and this includes alcohol).

Each food group offers your body specific nutrients. Remember that the food that you put in your tank should be premium like gas you put in your car. The higher the

quality the better the performance.

As a teen, your body has very high needs for good nutrition. This is the biggest growth and development period of your life. Since this is such a busy time with friends and social activities, you want to ensure yourself of lots of energy and good health. To do that you need to eat regular meals that consist of a wide variety of foods like fruits, grains and starches, meat, fish and poultry, veggies and dairy products. Don't get stuck in the burger and fries syndrome that will not give your body enough nutrients necessary for proper growth and development. Be smart and eat for your health.

## Note To Parents

Since Mom and/or Dad usually purchase and cook a lot of the foods in the house, we need to discuss healthy choices and preparation. By keeping healthy snacks and foods in the house, your teen can become familiar with good eating habits. School, social events and parties give teens ample exposure to junk foods. Your job is to provide a good example for them to follow.

Preparation of foods is very important to the overall nutritional value of the food. Foods should be microwaved, baked, grilled, broiled, boiled, steamed or poached. Frying does nothing but provide excess calories and increase our chances of heart disease. Adding extra fat in the form of seasoning or bacon fat is another way that adds extra calories and more saturated fat (the bad guys) than necessary to the diet.

We all get far more fat in our daily diet than needed as shown by the high prevalence of heart disease and obesity in our country.

# Good Eating for The Teen Years