Take a Healthy Splash into Summer

A healthy diet and the right fitness routine are essential to looking and feeling healthier.

Strategies for diet modification and fitness

- **Eat 5 meals per day** – It’s better to have 5 or 6 small meals a day rather than to skip meals and eat 2 or 3 larger portioned ones. Each meal should contain some source of protein and be low in carbohydrates. Eating small amounts frequently will help maintain energy and stabilize blood sugar levels, so typically you don’t tend to overeat or have that constant hunger feeling.

- **Make healthy menu choices** – A healthy diet is one that emphasizes fruits and non-starchy vegetables (broccoli, asparagus and greens). To help curb hunger, incorporate some protein into your diet including fish, chicken or other lean meats. Include some low-fat or non-fat dairy products into your daily routine such as skim milk or low-fat yogurt. Focus on healthy meal preparation methods such as grilling, baking or broiling foods rather than frying. Try your best to leave out choices that have empty calories such as soda, chips, cookies, etc.

- **Plan menus a week at a time** – It is much easier to follow a healthy diet when you have proper foods to cook with at home. If you tend to be busy throughout the week, prepare meals and snacks during the weekend and freeze weekday meals. This will also help control portion sizes and ensure that low-calorie foods are ready to take to work or utilize when you’re short on time.

- **Schedule aerobic exercise** – Beginners should start with at least 15-20 minutes of exercise, which could include walking, jogging, biking or swimming. As you build strength, you could increase to 30 minutes daily. Try to shoot for 3-4 times per week.

- **Find a Friend** – Partner with someone who is motivated

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**Outdoor Activities to Get Kids Outside this Summer**

- **Take a Hike** – Head outdoors for a local hike. This is a perfect way to teach children about the outdoors and view the scenery.

- **Turn your deck or driveway into art or a board game** – one bucket of sidewalk chalk will lend itself to hours of entertainment and learning opportunities.

- **Plan a treasure hunt or scavenger hunt** – pull out old pirate hats, an eye patch, make a treasure map and have a prize at the end of the journey. Put your little detectives to work with an interactive hunt!

- **Go swimming or learn to swim** – take your kids to the swimming pool, lake or river to promote an active lifestyle.

- **Ride a bike** – this can be a great way to enjoy mild temperatures while remaining active.
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to follow a diet and begin an exercise regimen. This will allow both of you to provide encouragement and motivation through the struggles, and you’ll tend to have better results by exercising with a friend.

- **Drink plenty of water** – Drinking 64 ounces (8 glasses) of water daily helps ensure hydration. Hydration is very important year round, but it is especially more important in the summer months. Drinking an adequate amount of water is also a great way to help curb hunger in between meals.

- **Get plenty of sleep** – It is much easier to overeat and snack when you are tired. Strive for 8 hours of sleep every night.

- **Set small goals with rewards** – Make sure to set small goals. Small goals are easier to meet, and achieving short-term goals will provide the reassurance you need to eventually meet your long-term goal. Also, make sure to reward yourself for the goals that are achieved.

*You should consult with your physician or other health care professional before starting an exercise or diet regimen to determine if it is right for your needs. This is particularly true if you have a history of high blood pressure, heart disease or if you have experienced chest pain.*


http://thestir.cafemom.com/big_kid/153293/20_Fun_Spring_Outdoor_Activities