

If you climb a flight of stairs, are you out of breath when you're done? When you run with your friends, are you always behind? Are you tired after shooting a few baskets of basketball? If so, you may need to **TAKE CHARGE** and get fit.

You may become fit by eating well, getting a lot of physical activity or exercise, and maintaining a healthy weight. If you're fit, your body works well, feels good, and can do all the things you want it to do, like run around with your friends or pets (KidsHealth, 2009).

There will be days when you celebrate a birthday or another special event and you will eat cake, perhaps even ice-cream. That's okay! What you need to remember is that it's what you do "*most of the time*" that counts. Here are five things to keep in mind every day:

1. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. Be open to trying new foods as well. If you don't like a food, that's okay but try it again in a few months. "Some foods, such as green veggies, are more pleasing the older you get" (KidsHealth, 2009). You may have two vegetables and three fruit or another combination but try to eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Hint: Fruit can be eaten on cereal and a little bit of peanut butter tastes great on an apple.
2. Juices, fruit punch and soda may taste good but try to limit how much you have. "Drink water and milk most often" (KidsHealth, 2009). Cold water is great when you're really thirsty and good for your body. Milk provides calcium which is needed for strong bones. Water and milk do not contain added sugar which just adds calories to your diet.
3. Have you ever heard someone say, "I feel like I'm going to pop!" They've probably eaten something that tastes really good but they also ate too much. Sometimes we keep eating even when our stomach has said, "Hey! I'm full!" It's important to listen to your body. When you feel full, it's time to STOP.
4. How much time do you spend each day watching television or playing on the computer? "Try not to spend no more than 2 hours a day on screen time, not counting computer use related to school" (KidsHealth, 2009). Start moving! Ride your bike, walk the dog, go for a run, throw a football, or skate on the driveway (anything that gets you active!).
5. When we get really hungry, we often grab something that is quick and easy. We may choose cookies, a slice of cake, or a bag of chips. These are okay every now and then but not all the time. Reach for carrot sticks, an apple or yogurt instead. Even better, tag along to the grocery store and begin asking for healthier foods and snacks.



Resources: KidsHealth. "Be a Fit Kid." http://kidshealth.org/kids/stay_healthy/fit/fit_kid.html (accessed January, 2009).

Ideas to Help You TAKE CHARGE!

Read the sentences below.

The sentence will give you a clue as to what goes in the blank!

1. If you have a lot of sweets around the house, once they're gone it's smart to _____
2. If you are by yourself, _____ will get your heart rate going.
3. You should have 5 servings of _____ each day.
4. If you have kids in your neighborhood that you get along with, think of things you can do outside _____. Play tag, basketball, or ride bikes.
5. _____ is one of the most popular games kids play.
6. When it's really _____ outside, bundle up and take a walk or if there's snow on the ground, make snow creatures.
7. Your body gets calcium when you drink _____.
8. When it's hot outside, most kids love to _____.
9. Some kids always complain about _____.
10. If you're stuck inside the house, try _____. Enjoy the tunes!

H	milk or eat cheese	Hide-and-seek
I	jumping rope	swim
N	being bored	fruits and vegetables
T	together	dancing to music
S	keep them out!	cold



Need an added challenge? Write a story using the words you used to fill in each blank.