

Building a Healthier Family...

Making changes that will last a lifetime



Well, it's mid-January...diets are underway and the gyms are full! After all, THIS new diet fad or exercise trend is revolutionary! Right?

Unfortunately, for most people, in just a few weeks they will be pondering what they intended to resolve in the first place. I think this is because the majority of us can commit to any radical change for a short-period of time, but is an unrealistic expectation to carry out for an extended length of time.

So, I would like to challenge you to incorporate changes that will last a lifetime for you and your family! I understand none of this information is new, but repetition is a great learning tool!

Where to start?

1. Take an inventory of your family's lifestyle. What do y'all typically eat in a week? Are your treats truly a "treat" or have they become part of your everyday (or every meal)? How many fruits and vegetables can your child name in the produce aisle?
2. Know your body mass index (BMI), including your children's:
The CDC has a great tool to calculate the BMI of adults, as well as a separate tool for children and teens. (see resources)



Now what?

- ★ Be a role model for your children. Are you asking them to do something that you are not willing to change for yourself?
- ★ Eat meals together, away from distractions... "unplug" for a few minutes and request that your children do the same.
- ★ Incorporate your children into the meal planning and preparation. Remember, it is one of our roles as a parent to instruct our children, including healthy eating habits.
 - ✓ Increase fiber
 - ✓ Drink more water
 - ✓ Bake & broil instead of fry
 - ✓ Eat lean chicken, fish and beans
 - ✓ Add more fruits & vegetables
- ★ Decrease screen time...how many hours do you and your children spend on the phone, in front of the computer, watching television or playing video games?
- ★ Increase physical activity (take a walk together, try a new sport, play a game...make it fun!)

Resources:

[Eating Well](#)

[BMI tool for children and teens](#)

[BMI tool for adults](#)

[National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute](#)

[United States Dept of Agriculture](#)