

Make Fitness Fun



Education

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

- Does your child spend more time inside the house watching television or playing computer games than playing outside?
- Do you know that encouraging your child to be active not only improves his health and well-being now, but may also benefit his health later in life?

How does exercise benefit your child and your family?

- **Healthy Weight**

Physical activity is necessary to help your child keep or get to a healthy weight. Children today are less active than they were just a few years ago because of the amount of time spent watching TV, on computers, and taking part less in daily PE classes in school. Limit sedentary time to no more than 1 hour per day.

- **Strong Bones**

Exercise can strengthen your child's bones. Building strong bones in childhood helps to keep bone health later in life.

- **Develop Lifelong Habits**

Children who enjoy exercise may develop a lifelong, healthy habit of being physically active. If they stay active as adults, they will enjoy better health and may live longer than their less active peers. Exercise can decrease the risk of obesity, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, and heart disease in adults.

How can I motivate my child to exercise?

The key word to encourage kids to be active is "fun". Children participate in exercise for enjoyment. Take small steps. Encourage your child to swim, bike, or play ball with friends. Encourage your child to participate in organized sports, PE classes, or other activities that help to keep him physically active.

How can I be a role model for my child?

Get the whole family involved in games, bicycling, or other active play. If you are involved, your child is more likely to get involved. Participate in physical activities together, this may also increase the amount of quality time you spend with your child.

Does a healthy diet help keep my child fit?

Food provides your child with the energy and nutrients he needs to grow and the energy he needs for active play. Active children also need to drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after exercise.

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In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

This is general information and is not specific medical advice for your child. Always consult your child's doctor or other healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about the care or health of your child. A Children's Healthcare of Atlanta pediatric advice nurse is available 24 hours a day at 404.250.kids.

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CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE OF ATLANTA www.choa.org | 404.250.kids

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What should my goal be for my child?

It is recommended that children, adolescents and adults participate in 1 hour or more of moderate-intensity physical activity on most (if not all) days of the week.

Examples of Fun Activities For Children	
Kickball	Running
Volleyball or Water volleyball	Basketball or shooting baskets
Hide-and-seek or Tag	Bicycling
Playing on playground	Dancing
Wheeling self in wheelchair	Raking leaves or Gardening
Walking	Swimming
Jumping rope	Shoveling snow
Walking up stairs	