



kids quest health

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What does it mean if a food is... organic? Whole grain? Natural? Low fat?

There are many health claims on food packaging and it can be difficult to navigate what the claims mean and if they are true. Products can put the following on their packages: nutrient content claims, health claims, and structure or function claims. A nutrient claim must reference the amount of a nutrient in the product. This is where the terms fat-free, reduced sodium, and high fiber all come from. The nutrient claims must meet the standards of the Food and Drug Administration's definition of nutrient amounts.

Health claims can make a connection between a nutrient and a disease or health condition. An example of this is when a product high in fiber claims to help reduce cholesterol and better your heart health. Structure and function claims are product descriptions that a nutrient behaves a certain way in the body that can affect health. A good example of a structure and function claim is how calcium can build strong bones.

A product can claim to be organic or natural. Only products that have the USDA Organic seal are considered true organic products. Other products can claim to be made with organic ingredients or use the term organic, but can still be composed of organic and conventional ingredients. On the other hand, products claiming to be natural can be considered minimally processed and without artificial ingredients.

The world of food packaging can be confusing and at times misleading. Beyond what a food claims to be or ingredients it claims to have, eating a diet full of variety, balance, and moderation is the best way to maintain your health.



HEART STRENGTH

The heart is the strongest and most important muscle. The exercises below will strengthen the heart and can be performed in a small space right in your living room.

Have your youngster complete the following exercises in order for 30 seconds, rest for 30 seconds, then complete the next exercise. Depending on their fitness level, consider adding a couple of exercises or doing multiple rounds.

- ◆ Jumping Jacks ◆ Body Squats
- ◆ Burpees ◆ Jog in Place
- ◆ Pretend Jump Rope ◆ High Knees ◆ Hamstring Kicks



Kids In The Kitchen

Frozen Fruit Popsicles

1 can Pineapple (No Added Sugar)

6-8 Whole Strawberries

1 Banana

In a blender or food processor, puree pineapple, strawberries, and banana (add water to loosen as needed). Pour pureed fruit into popsicle containers, ice cube tray, or ice block mold. Add toothpick or popsicle stick to each popsicle. Freeze and enjoy.



ABCs of Health

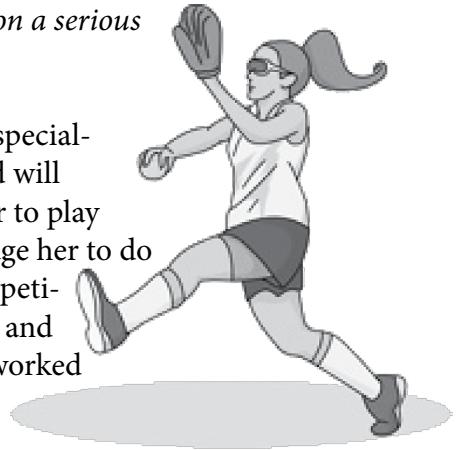
This month have your child create their own ABCs of health poster. For example: **A**-Always look both ways before crossing the road. **B**-Brake gradually when riding your bike down a hill. **C**-Choose foods that are nutritious and healthy. Decorate and hang the poster somewhere in your house and review regularly.

ATTENTION ON ATHLETICS

Q My ten year old daughter is a good softball player and has been asked to play on a serious tournament team that plays all year long. What should I do?

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A If your daughter loves softball allow her to play often, but be careful about “specializing” in any one sport. Often times children who play a sport all year round will develop a muscle imbalance and suffer from overuse injuries. Encourage her to play other sports as well and to have periods of no softball. If she insists, encourage her to do physical training that will help her softball playing but doesn’t involve the repetitive motion of throwing or swinging a bat. Exercises like core strengthening and sprint training will improve her softball but allow for the muscles typically worked while playing to be worked in a different manner reducing the risk of overuse injuries.



If we could give every individual the right amount of nourishment and exercise, not too little and not too much, we would have found the safest way to health. -Hippocrates

CHILDHOOD OBESITY BY THE NUMBERS

Did you know that because of obesity and the numerous diseases that are associated with it, many health experts predict that this generation of children will have a shorter life expectancy than their parents. This is the first time in American history that the life expectancy age has decreased.

It's scary but...

Childhood obesity rates have more than doubled in the last thirty years and tripled in the last 40 years.

- ⇒ One-third of children living in the U.S. are currently overweight or obese
- ⇒ One-third of our children can expect to be diagnosed with type 2 diabetes
- ⇒ Two out of three children are not getting vigorous exercise at least three days per week

Encourage your child to eat healthy and be active at a young age so those habits stay with them throughout their life. By doing so you may increase their life expectancy as well as their quality of life.

For more information on the effects of childhood obesity go to <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/index.html>

Helpful Hints

- ⇒ Look at the ingredients list on the cereal in your house. Is sugar one of the first three ingredients? If so, the next time you're shopping only purchase cereals that list sugar fourth or lower on the ingredients list.
- ⇒ Make sure that your child has daily time to free play. During typical play time on the playground children will chase each other, improving cardiovascular endurance; go across monkey bars or climb, improving muscle strength; and move their body in abstract ways; increasing flexibility. Make trips to the playground a regular routine.



Fitness Fun: Pinky Tag

Play a simple game of tag, inside or outside the house. In Pinky Tag players may only speed walk and only tag using their pinky fingers. When one player is tagged they must count to twenty to let their opponent get away or hide.

Fit Fact

For the first 15 minutes of exercise your body is primarily burning sugars and carbohydrates. At around 30 minutes your body transfers its energy source, using and burning fat.