

Preventive Cardiology Program

HEALTHY HEART SERIES



Boston Children's Hospital

Heart Center

Until every child is well™

Energy balance and weight management

The basics:

- Our body takes in energy through calories in food.
- Our body burns energy through physical activity.
- When there is too little or too much of either, energy is no longer balanced.

1. Portion sizes

- 3 ounces of meat = a deck of cards
- ½ cup of cereal, rice, pasta or ice cream = half baseball
- 1 tablespoon of salad dressing or peanut butter = half ping-pong ball
- 1½ ounces of natural cheese = three dominoes
- 1 ounce nuts = one handful
- 1 teaspoon butter, margarine, mayonnaise or oil = a thumb tip



2. Choose food with fewer calories per serving

- The more fruits and veggies, the better
- Whole grains help you to feel full
- Aim for lean protein sources: fish, skinless chicken, legumes, lean meats



3. Aim for 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week

- Take a family walk, learn a new talent, turn on music and dance, take a bike ride, go for a hike, play tag, climb the stairs at home, go to the playground.
- Keep screen time to less than two hours per day.



For specific questions about nutrition or exercise, please contact Skylar Griggs, MS, RD, LDN, clinical nutrition specialist, at 617-355-4329
For more general information about our Preventive Cardiology Program, call Boston Children's Heart Center at 617-355-0955
or go to bostonchildrens.org/hearthealth