

# PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



Pinellas County Health Department

Steps to a HealthierFL-Pinellas County

## Type 2 Diabetes: How Can We Prevent It?

**Did you know that diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases among children in the United States?**

- ◆ About 151,000 young people under age 20 have it.
- ◆ More and more children are getting it.
- ◆ Usually occurs in overweight and obese children.
- ◆ Puts children at great risk for developing serious health complications over time such as heart disease, kidney disease, blindness and stroke.
- ◆ More commonly seen in minority populations.

### What is type 2 diabetes?

- ◆ Begins when the body develops a resistance to insulin and no longer uses insulin properly.
- ◆ Hard to detect and can go undiagnosed for a long time.
- ◆ Many children have no symptoms or mild symptoms.

### Why is this happening?

- ◆ Childhood overweight and obesity are increasing at an alarming rate in the United States.
- ◆ American children today are less physically active than previous generations.
- ◆ Decreased emphasis on physical education in the schools.
- ◆ Fast food is quick, easy and affordable.

### How can we prevent it?

- ◆ Increase daily physical activity and improve nutrition so that excess body weight does not occur.
- ◆ Ask for healthy snacks at school, social and church gatherings.
- ◆ Encourage your children to play outside everyday.
- ◆ Speak up for support of healthy behaviors at meetings where policies are made such as your local school board or community development planning boards.
- ◆ Sit down to family meals together and make a commitment to serve more fruits and veggies.

**Be an advocate for those you love!**



### Institute of Medicine *Progress in Preventing Childhood Obesity* report recommends:

- ◆ *Mandating daily physical education in schools*
- ◆ *Improving sidewalks and street crossings to allow children to walk to school*
- ◆ *Providing farmer's markets and farm stands in low income communities*
- ◆ *Establishing policies on the types of food and beverages that are advertised to children*
- ◆ *Emphasizing physical activity as a family priority*

[www.iom.edu](http://www.iom.edu)



## LOWER YOUR CHILD'S RISK OF TYPE 2 DIABETES

Research has shown that lifestyle changes, including healthy eating and regular physical activity, decrease insulin resistance and reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. Here are some tips to get started!

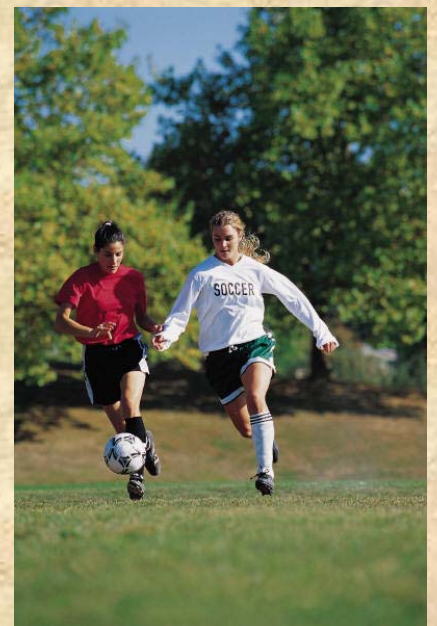


### TIPS FOR HEALTHY EATING

- ◆ Try to **keep track** of your children's meal/snack and physical activity patterns so you can help them balance the amount and types of food they eat with the amount of physical activity they perform.
- ◆ Encourage your family to eat at least **5 servings** of brightly colored vegetables and fruits a day. You can start the day with 100% fruit or vegetable juice. Slice fruit on top of cereal. Serve salad with lunch and an apple as an afternoon snack. Include vegetables with dinner.
- ◆ Leave the candy, soft drinks, chips and cookies at the store. Substitute them with **fruits, vegetables, nuts and low-fat or nonfat milk** products. Your child will soon learn to make smart food choices outside your home as well.
- ◆ Serve children **child-sized** portions, and let your child ask for more if still hungry. Don't force children to clean their plates.
- ◆ Choose a **variety** of foods. No single food or food group supplies all the nutrients in the amounts that you need for good health.

### TIPS FOR BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

- Be a physically active role model and have fun with your kids.
- Plan active weekends. Include biking, hiking, skating, walking or playing ball. Take a trip to the park, skating rink, zoo or swimming pool.
- Include children in active chores such as dog walking, house cleaning, car washing and yard work.
- Limit inactive behavior such as television watching and computer time. Get your kids up and moving during commercials. March in place or stretch with them. This helps reinforce the importance of movement in your child's life. Give your children gifts that encourage physical activity — active games, sporting equipment or a Frisbee.
- Talk with your schools about ways to incorporate noncompetitive physical activity during the day.



<http://www.webmd.com/content/article/101/106227>



For information about **Steps to a HealthierFL-Pinellas County**  
visit our website: [www.StepsFL.com](http://www.StepsFL.com) or call 727-820-4113

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