



HEALTHYTIPSNEWSLETTER

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TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR SCOUT'S DIET

Are you tired of battles and bargaining with your kids to eat “just two more bites” of their veggies? If they prefer soda to milk, or would rather snack on cookies than an apple, all hope is not lost. The following tips can help get your Scout's diet back on track.



DIET AT HOME

- **Favorite + Healthy.**
Add healthy ingredients to foods your kids already like. For instance, add blueberries to pancakes or fruit to their favorite cereal.
- **Limit Junk.**
Steer clear of the potato chip aisle. Your kids can't eat unhealthy foods if you don't buy them. Without the cookies and chips to tempt them, they'll be more likely to pick up a carrot stick or an orange when they get hungry. Also, keep 100 percent fruit juice on hand and avoid buying colas and sugary drinks.
- **No Clean Plate.**
Don't force your kids to clean their plates. Children should be encouraged to stop eating when they're full. Otherwise, they may overeat and take in too many calories.
- **Serving Size.**
Help your Scouts learn what an appropriate serving size is for the food groups. Check to see what the recommended portion sizes of foods you like to eat look like in the bowls, plates, and glasses you use at home. When dining out, avoid “supersizing” your meal or buying “combo” meal deals that often include large-size menu items.
- **At the Table.**
Keep dinner at the dinner table and not in front of the TV. Eating while watching TV distracts most people from realizing how much they're actually eating. Meal time is also an opportunity for busy families to catch up.

The SCOUTStrong™ Healthy Living Initiative is the incorporation of active lifestyles, healthy eating, and emotional fitness into the foundation of what the BSA is ultimately about—a place for youth to get outdoors, have fun, and have the adventure of a lifetime.

The purpose of the Healthy Tips Newsletter is to present interesting and relevant health-related information and resources that can better prepare Scouts and those around them to meet the increasing challenges facing youth in modern life.

Have a question, comment, and/or concern? We'd love to hear from you! Send us an email at SCOUTStrong.Admin@scouting.org.





DIET AT MEETINGS

- **Healthy Finger Foods.**
Keep healthy finger foods available. String cheese, carrot sticks, and sliced fruit all make great finger foods. This is a great option for blue and gold banquets, courts of honor, or even camping.
- **Treats Are OK ... in Moderation.**
Don't cut out treats altogether. If your kids are deprived of a scoop of ice cream or slice of cake once in a while, they'll be more likely to overeat when they do get them. Moderation is the key.



DIET OUTSIDE

- **Plan by Scouts.**
Let your kids help you plan the menu, shop for food, and prepare meals. This is especially important for the grubmaster (e.g. the Scout who purchases the food, or grub, for the patrol outing). Before the grubmaster shops, he should be able to make sure that the outing's menu is reasonable, appropriate, and healthy.
- **Patrol Games.**
Have games between patrols during outings. Who had the most nutritious meal? Who had the most veggies?
- **Have a Snack Schedule.**
Kids like routine and will know when it's time to eat. They'll also be hungry enough to eat what you offer them. Try separating snacks into two food groups. Offer cheese with whole-grain crackers, apple slices with low-fat yogurt, or peanut butter on whole-wheat bread. This strategy can be used during "cracker barrels," which are informal evening social events at Scout camps, where light snack fare is typically provided.

- **Eat Your Colors.**
Make it as game for your kids to "eat their colors." The more colorful you make their plate, the more likely they are to get the vitamins, minerals, and fiber their bodies need to be healthy. The benefits of the colors are below.
 - **Green.** These foods contain cancer-protecting phytochemicals, like isothiocyanates. They also have lutein and zeaxanthin, two antioxidants that may reduce the risk of macular degeneration, a leading cause of blindness.
 - **Yellow.** Sun-colored produce is full of vitamin C, which helps heal wounds and also blocks some skin damage caused by free radicals.
 - **Orange.** These have beta-carotene, which may help boost immune function and protect against free-radical damage. Nutrients in citrus fruits also improve oral health.



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