

Strategies for Wellness

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Pillars of Wellness

- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Sleep
- Social Connection
- Mental and Emotional Health

General Wellness Strategies

- If something is easier or more interesting for you than other things, start there!
- Focus on building routines, habits, and support systems
- Find ways to turn tasks into enjoyable routines
- Share your goals—others can give you tips and help hold you accountable
- Involve your whole family
 - Doing things as a group or family helps with accountability and makes it more fun
 - Instilling good habits and values early will set kids up for success
- Take the time wherever you can find it (break things into pieces, prioritize)
- Build motivation as well as discipline (discipline is a muscle; the more you flex it, the stronger it gets)
- Enjoy the process and journey

Activities/Homework

- As an individual, think about:
 - What's one thing you'd like to add to/change about your routine?
 - What are some tangible steps you can implement right now in each of the wellness areas?
- Set a concrete goal and think about:
 - What are some ways you can create support for yourself?
 - What routines can you create to make the process easier?
 - Who can help you?
 - How can you remove temptations and pitfalls?
- Sit down as a family and talk about each of the wellness pillars together. What goals would you like to set to work on as a family?

Easy Ways to Get Moving

You don't need a gym membership or fancy equipment to get your exercise in. Here are some great suggestions for ways to get your family moving! What other activities can you think of?

- Walks and hikes
 - Go on walks with family, friends, pets, or by yourself
 - Walk to do errands, to the coffee shop, to spend time in nature
 - Governor's Mansion, Burnett's Mound, Lake Shawnee, Shunga Trail, Landon Nature Trail, Iliff Commons...
- Go to the park and play together
 - Tag
 - Kickball
 - Frisbee
 - Catch
 - Hopscotch
 - Jump rope
 - Play in the snow in the winter
- Sports/games
 - Golf/Frisbee golf
 - Tennis/pickleball
 - Join an adult sports league—basketball, soccer, softball...
 - Go dancing
- Classes and videos
 - Sweat Equity Topeka has in-person classes and fitness videos on YouTube
 - Take a dance class or dance to music at home
- At-home strength and stretches
 - Sit-ups, push-ups, squats
- Biking, jogging, rollerskating

Easy Healthy Eating

Eating healthily doesn't have to be complicated, doesn't have to be expensive, and doesn't have to mean giving up your favorite things. It's about making small, sustainable changes and building systems and habits that help you eat healthily without even thinking about it.

General Tips

- Find the healthy foods that you love, and eat those often!
- Identify substitutions, additions, and subtractions that are easy for you to make (swap Greek yogurt for sour cream, trade soda for seltzer water, etc.).
- Add foods to your diet that make you feel fuller for longer (fiber, protein, healthy fats).
- "Bulk up" your meals with veggies and lean protein (like beans).
- Find the healthy foods that fit into your budget and are easy for you to use.
 - Canned and frozen veggies are great! Produce doesn't always have to be fresh.
 - Baby carrots sometimes cost the same as whole carrots. If you'll be more likely to eat baby carrots, buy those!
 - You don't need to buy packaged foods labeled as healthy (low-fat, low-sugar, etc.). Instead, focus on eating a variety of whole foods.

Snacks	Meal Prep Notes
Raw veggies (carrots, celery, bell peppers, radishes, cucumbers, snap peas, zucchini...)	Slice veggies and put in containers in the fridge
Healthy dips (hummus, homemade or low-fat/sodium bean dip, peanut butter)	Portion out into 2-ounce or ¼ cup containers
Boiled eggs	Boil a dozen eggs to have as snacks, breakfasts, or protein with salads
Whole fruit	Wash or peel ahead of time so they're ready in the fridge when you want them
Cottage cheese	Great source of protein; good snack with veggies and fruits or as an addition to salads
Toast/bread (Whole-grain or sourdough if you like those)	Top with peanut butter and banana; mashed avocado and salt; butter, cucumber, and salt
Yogurt	Blend fruit into yogurt for lower-sugar version
Salsa	Get fresh (low-sodium) versions; if you pre-portion the chips, this can be a low-calorie snack
Refried beans	Works well as a dip for veggies as well as with chips and salsa
Guacamole	Can be as simple as mashed avocado with salt, but spice it up with garlic powder, lime juice, red onion, and diced tomato

Simple Meals	Instructions
Tuna salad, egg salad, chicken salad	Add celery, pickles, boiled eggs; use yogurt in place of some mayonnaise; use salt, pepper, and vinegar, pickle juice, or mustard for more flavor; can add apples or grapes as well
Sandwiches	Use mustard, salt, and pepper for flavor instead of cheese
Canned or boxed soups (low sodium)	Great weeknight meal; serve with a salad or with veggies and dips
Simple homemade soups	Potato soup and winter squash soups can be super easy. Chop and roast veggies (can be potatoes, carrots, any sort of squash, rutabaga, turnips, parsnips, etc.) in the oven with salt and pepper, then blend with broth in a food processor or using an immersion blender
Salad kits	Add boiled eggs or cottage cheese for protein; use salt, pepper, and vinegar-based dressings
Egg scrambles	Just throw in some veggies (spinach, tomatoes, bell peppers, zucchini) to cook, then add eggs at the end. Serve with oven-roasted potatoes.
Frozen frittata cups/egg muffins	You can make or buy these and are a good microwaveable snack or breakfast
Stir fry	Get a package of frozen mixed veggies, and cook this with soy sauce or another pre-packaged Asian sauce. Can add peanut butter or roasted peanuts, chopped orange or pineapple, water chestnuts, etc., for additional flavors and textures. Serve with rice (can make up a big batch or use individual microwaveable packets) or quinoa (super easy...cooks for just 15 minutes).
Beans and rice/"Chipotle bowl"	Mix rice, salsa, black beans, corn, and microwave to warm. Incredibly easy and delicious. Spice it up with anything else you'd put on a Chipotle bowl (limiting cheese and sour cream). Serve with salad greens and tortilla chips.