

# Fact Sheet

## Weight Management Tips for Parents: Helping your adolescent to lose weight



- Try not to nag adolescents about what they are eating! Nagging tends to put their defenses up and can sometimes even lead them to do the opposite of what you want them to. Your role is to support them in making healthy changes to lifestyle, not to force them to make the changes.
- Keep tempting foods such as soft drink, chocolate, biscuits and cakes away from the house. If they are there, your adolescent will eat them.
- Encourage water as the drink of choice. Soft drinks, fruit juice and cordials all contain a lot of sugar and are not appropriate for everyday consumption.
- Try and make sure that your adolescent always eats breakfast. Liquid meal drinks such as Up & Go™ are good options for poor breakfast eaters.
- Where possible, keep grain based breads and breakfast cereals at home. Wholegrain products are more filling than more processed white varieties. Some examples of wholegrain breads and cereals include multigrain breads, Weetbix™, Mini Wheats™ and Just Right™.
- Keep only low fat milks, yoghurts and cheese at home.
- Eat meals together at the table, with the television switched off
- Have rules at home about the amount of television and screen time your teenager can watch. On average, 2 hours each day is more than enough.
- Increase the amount of vegetables or salad you serve with each meat. Aim for ½ plate of vegetables or salad, ¼ meats and ¼ potato, rice or pasta. If your teenager claims to not like vegetables, do not substitute with other foods.
- Encourage your teenager to cook for the family once each week. Make clear guidelines such as the meal including vegetables. Teenagers will be more interested in what they are eating if they have some say in the content of the meals.
- Try to keep a range of nutritionally balanced snack foods in the house. Good options include nut based muesli bars, crackers and light cheese, low fat ice creams and flat bread wraps.

### Remember

- When making lifestyle change, adolescents need support so try not to nag them to make dietary and lifestyle changes.
- One way to support your adolescent is to provide the right types of food at home. Choose wholegrain breads and low fat dairy products, remove all soft drinks, avoid keeping junk food in the house and always encourage water as the drink of choice at home.

This fact sheet is for education purposes only.  
Please consult with your doctor or other health professional  
to make sure this information is right for your child.

This document was reviewed on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

the  
children's  
hospital at Westmead

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