



ADOLESCENT CARE FOR GIRLS FROM 15 TO 17 YEARS

www.northfultonpediatrics.com

770-442-1050

DIET/NUTRITION

Continue to have choices from the basic food groups at all meals and snacks and fill ½ your plate with fruits and veggies. It is not necessary to totally eliminate higher fat foods from your diet, rather eat them in moderation and balance them with more frequent servings of lower fat choices.

Milk & Dairy Products: At the peak of your growth spurt, both boys and girls need a daily calcium intake of 1,300 milligrams. In order to meet this calcium requirement, you should eat 4-6 servings of dairy products each day. 1% or skim milk is recommended. Other milk products include low fat yogurt, cottage cheese, ice cream & frozen yogurt. Calcium fortified orange juice is one good alternative for those who won't drink much milk. Other foods high in calcium include collards, spinach, broccoli, salmon and almonds. There are also calcium supplements such as Viactiv or antacids like Tums, which contain calcium carbonate. These products are absorbed well by most individuals.

Meat/Protein: Most adolescents require at least 50 grams of protein/day. Protein can be found in meat, fish, eggs, beans, nuts, soy products and dairy products.

Fruits & Vegetables: Fill ½ your plate with fruits and veggies at all meals and snacks.

Breads & Cereals: 5-6 servings per day. A serving size is 1 slice of bread, 1 ounce of cereal, or ½ cup pasta or rice.

- Limit "empty" calorie snacks such as soda, chips, candy and cookies. Instead try and eat fresh fruit, vegetables, nuts, cheese, popcorn & yogurt.
- Choose your fast foods carefully. Most of these items are high in calories and fat. Select items like grilled chicken or salads with lower fat dressing.
- Drink more water and limit sugar drinks. Limit soda intake since it can lower the level of calcium and phosphorus that your body absorbs.
- Since your body is rapidly growing during your teenage years, you require about 1,800 to 2,400 calories per day depending on your activity level.
- Avoid extreme or "fad" diets. Repeated dieting and over-exercising can lead to serious health problems, including anorexia or bulimia, as well as weak bones and irregular menstrual periods.
- A more sensible approach is to increase activity and gradually decrease calorie and fat intake. The weight is much more likely to stay off this way.
- Discuss your interest in special diets (for example, vegetarian) with us.
- Most sports nutritionists feel it is better for you to get the extra energy you need through food itself (calories & protein), rather than from expensive supplements (powders or pills). Drink plenty of water during practice and competition. Increase your protein intake (from food) if you are working out hard.

SLEEP

Most teenagers require approximately 9 hours of sleep per night. With the combination of homework, sports, social activities, TV and computer time, it is easy to become sleep deprived. Try and maintain a regular bedtime, especially during the school year.

ACTIVITY – A WAY OF LIFE – *Be active for at least 60 minutes per day.*

- Physical activity should become as routine a part of your life as eating and sleeping.
- Exercise increases energy and helps build stronger heart, lungs, bones, and muscles, and also promotes a positive attitude and alertness.
- You can choose to participate in team sports, or exercise with your friends, or exercise on your own. Choose a form of exercise that fits your lifestyle and do it regularly. Be sure to warm up and cool down properly to keep from injuring yourself.
- Weight training with reps is excellent conditioning. See how much you can lift at once (power lifting) can be harmful until your bones have fully matured (usually around age 18).
- Don't let the TV or computer become a major past time for you. Take the time to interact with your friends and family, and keep active. Limit all screen time to 1 hour per day.

MENSTRUATION

- Although menstruation is a monthly cycle, many times your period may be irregular for the first couple of years. Most cycles are 28 days, but everyone is different and cycles vary widely. Periods can last anywhere from 3 to 8 days. You can use a calendar to note the day when your periods begin and how long they last. After about a year or two, you'll probably begin to notice a pattern.
- Both pads and tampons may be safely used. Avoid using deodorant tampons.
- Some teenagers have cramps during their periods, usually in the lower abdomen. This is caused by the uterus contracting to shed the lining of the uterus. To relieve cramps you can exercise, take a warm bath, or use a heating pad. Medications such as Advil or Motrin, 2 tablets every 6-8 hours, or Aleve, 1-2 tablets every 12 hours, can often provide relief from cramps. It is best to start using this medication regularly from the onset of cramps until they subside.

ACNE AND SKIN CARE

- Acne is caused both by the effects of hormones on the skin's oil producing glands and infection. This leads to the appearance of redness, blackheads and pustules.
- A diet of French fries and pizza won't worsen acne (but we don't recommend it).
- Wash your face daily with a mild soap/cleansing agent and use an over the counter cream containing benzoyl peroxide for small flare-ups. Avoid picking, excessive scrubbing, or harsh soaps, as they can irritate the skin and worsen the acne.

- Some forms of acne require prescription medications to improve this condition, so check with us if you think you need this.

SEXUALITY

- Puberty is your body's way of getting ready to have babies, preparing for the physical part of reproduction. However, mentally, socially, financially, or emotionally, you are NOT yet ready to become a parent.
- Plain and simple – sex is a risky business. Over one million teens become pregnant every year. Also, one third of teens get a sexually transmitted infection (STI) within six months of having sex for the first time. Although many STIs can be treated, some are incurable, some can affect your ability to have children later when you are ready, and some are fatal. STIs can happen to you or one of your friends.
- Some people might try to pressure you to do things that you don't want to do. Always remember that you are in charge of your body. Even in "the heat of the moment", try to think clearly about the consequences of your actions.
- At this time in your life, abstinence (choosing not to have sex at all) is always the healthiest choice. If you choose to have sex, ALWAYS make sure your partner uses a condom during any sexual activity. Condoms do fall off or leak. Please seek adult advice in handling this situation within 24 hours. If you do take birth control pills, remember to take them every day to prevent pregnancy. They will not, however, protect you against STIs.
- Remember, STIs can be transmitted through oral sex.
- If a person forcefully takes advantage of you sexually, tell an adult immediately.

RELATIONSHIPS

- The relationship you have had with your parents often change during your teenage years. As they see you making wise choices, they will respect your choices.
- Your reliability in meeting curfew today will give your parents confidence in extending that curfew as time goes on.
- Your choices in friends will give your parents more assurance about letting you handle social situations in the future.
- Remember if you abuse your parents' trust in you, it is very hard to earn it back.
- Never choose someone as a date that you wouldn't have as a friend, and always remember that you are responsible for your own body and what you do with it.
- If you have questions about a relationship or your sexuality, share it with someone who cares about you and can advise you.

SAFETY

- The biggest cause of death in adolescents is accidents...and most of them are preventable.
- Remember if you are learning to drive or already have your license, that driving is a privilege. Your actions affect everyone else on the road, so drive responsibly.
- If you take medicines to treat focusing and attention problems, you should continue to take them when you drive.
- Always wear your seat belt in the car.
- Although you will be faced with exposure to drugs, alcohol and tobacco, resist the temptation. Drugs and alcohol don't solve problems, nor do they improve relationships. Learn to make independent judgments, no matter what your friends are doing or saying.
- In addition to the physical risks of using drugs and alcohol, there are also legal consequences of getting caught taking them.

Your next well care visit should be in one year.

Books/Web Sites that you might find helpful

Visit our web site at www.northfultonpediatrics.com

What's Happening To My Body? Book for Girls, by L. Madaras and D. Saavedra

It's a Girls Thing: How to Stay Healthy, Safe and In Charge by Mavis Jukes

www.kidshealth.org/teen/index.html (covers many subjects on teen health and safety)

www.freevibe.com (how to say no to drugs)

<http://fyiowa.webpoint.com/fitness> (information on fitness and exercise for teens)

www.chop.edu/service/vaccine

www.aap.org/bookstore

(11/2015) girls 15-17 years