

Get Ready, Get Set, Get Healthy

Small changes that make you more active at home, at work, or with your children-along with better nutrition-can have a big impact on the quality of your life. According to the experts at the American Council For Fitness and Nutrition, achieving a healthy balance between daily activity and calorie intake plays a major role in how we look, think and feel. We all need to incorporate enough activity into our daily routine to utilize the calories we consume.

Here are some examples of how small changes can make a big difference.

- Try drinking water instead of soda.
- Go out and take a brisk 10-minute walk before breakfast, after dinner or both. One brisk 10-minute walk = 50 calories burned.
- Consider trying the reduced fat version of your favorite milk or cheese product.
- Do a few sets of leg lifts or crunches while watching television. Instead of using the remote control, get up to change the channel.
- Replace mayonnaise with mustard on your next sandwich. It will save 100 calories!
- Mowing the lawn for half an hour = 150 calories burned.
- Gardening for 30 to 45 minutes = 150 calories burned.
- Vacuuming for half an hour = 100 calories burned.
- Choose leisure activities that get you moving. Walk the dog, play catch, or plan trips with family and friends that involve activities, such as biking, hiking, swimming or skiing.
- Add fruits, vegetables and whole grains to your diet.
- Pour and measure your snacks so you know the amount you're consuming.

Setting a good example for your children will help them live healthy, active lives. Start by limiting time in front of the television or video games. As a rule, sedentary activities should be limited to two hours a day, according to the American Heart Association. Other tips are available from the American Council for Fitness and Nutrition. ACFN is working to improve the health of all Americans-particularly youth-by encouraging a healthy balance between fitness and nutrition.

To learn more, visit the Web site at www.acfn.org. Experts believe that being inactive can contribute to poor health regardless of diet.

