



## **Raising a Healthy Family**

Raising a family isn't easy, especially a healthy one. But, if you eat right and exercise you'll be well on your way. Here are some tips you can follow:

**Eat Right.** Eat 3 or more servings of whole-grain foods a day (whole-wheat bread, oatmeal, brown rice, low-fat popcorn). Eat more dark green and orange veggies (spinach, broccoli, carrots, sweet potatoes). Eat fruits for meals and snacks. Choose fresh, frozen, canned, or dried, and limit fruit juice to 1 cup per day.

Choose low-fat or fat-free milk and other dairy products 3 times a day. Eat lean or low-fat meat (chicken, turkey, fish). Eat more dry beans and peas. Choose healthy fats (fish, nuts, liquid oils, such as canola or olive oil). Choose foods and beverages that are low in sugar. Sugars contribute calories and little nutrients.

**Be Active.** Get your family active, too. Have fun together. Play with the kids or pets. Go for a walk, tumble in the leaves, or play catch. Track your individual physical activities together and earn awards for active lifestyles at [www.presidentschallenge.org](http://www.presidentschallenge.org).

Set aside time each day for activity time-walk, jog, skate, cycle, or swim. Adults need at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week children need twice that!

Use household items for exercising (canned foods for weights and stairs for stair machines). Instead of sitting through TV commercials, get up and move. When you talk on the phone, lift weights or walk around. Remember to limit TV watching and computer time.

Make the next birthday party centered on physical activity. Try backyard Olympics, or relay races. Have a bowling or skating party. Give gifts that encourage physical activity-active games or sporting equipment.

The Northeast Iowa Food & Farm (NIFF) Coalition and the Food & Fitness Initiative are working together to create community environments that support access to fresh, locally grown, healthy, affordable food and safe environments for physical activity and play. More information about these programs can be found at [www.niffcoalition.org](http://www.niffcoalition.org).