

# Words on Wellness

YOUR EXTENSION CONNECTION TO NUTRITION AND FITNESS

## How to Include Children in the Kitchen

Crumbs and spills aside, cooking with children is a great way to spend quality time and teach important skills like measuring, counting, and following directions. Here are ideas for cooking with children:

- Teach them to wash their hands. Provide a step stool or chair that children can stand on to reach the counter where you are working.
- Choose tasks that are appropriate for their age. Explain clearly, in simple instructions, what you would like them to do and show them. For tips on what children can do, watch *How to Include Children in the Kitchen* at [spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/video/include-children-in-the-kitchen/](https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/video/include-children-in-the-kitchen/).
- Children can help plan menus and suggest foods they like. They can check the pantry or refrigerator for foods on hand.
- Children can help at the grocery store by looking for certain foods, shapes, and colors. Children can help put groceries away when you get home.

There are benefits when you involve children with meals and snacks!

- Children are more likely to eat foods they have helped plan and prepare.
- Children develop fine motor skills, self-confidence, and independence.
- Working with your children in the kitchen provides quality time together. You can teach them why nutritious foods are important.
- Food preparation is a great way to help them use their senses—look, touch, taste, smell, and listen.

Try child-friendly recipes such as Crunchy Apple Roll-up, Scrambled Egg Muffin, Fruit Pizza, and Pizza on a Potato at [blogs.extension.iastate.edu/spendsmart/2017/02/20/recipes-for-little-hands/](https://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/spendsmart/2017/02/20/recipes-for-little-hands/).

## Facts about Food Safety

**Myth #1:** Food poisoning isn't that big of a deal. I just have to tough it out until it's over. **Fact:** Some foodborne illnesses can lead to long-term health conditions, and 3,000 Americans a year die from foodborne illness. Get the facts on long-term effects of food poisoning at [www.foodsafety.gov/poisoning/effects](http://www.foodsafety.gov/poisoning/effects).

**Myth #2:** It's OK to thaw meat on the counter. Since it starts out frozen, bacteria isn't really a problem. **Fact:** Bacteria grows surprisingly rapidly at room temperatures, so the counter is never a place you should thaw foods. Instead, thaw foods the right way. Learn more at [www.foodsafety.gov/keep/basics/chill](http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/basics/chill).

**Myth #3:** To get rid of bacteria on my meat, poultry, or seafood, I should rinse them off with water first. **Fact:** Rinsing meat, poultry, or seafood with water can increase chances of food poisoning by splashing juices with any bacteria they might contain onto your sink and counters. Cooking food to the safe minimum internal temperature is the recommended way to reduce bacteria. Learn more at [www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/mintemp.html](http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/mintemp.html).

safe food



## Crunchy Apple Roll-up

Serving Size: 1/2 roll-up | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1/2 medium apple
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 1 (8 inch) whole wheat tortilla
- 2 to 3 tablespoons crispy rice cereal

### Instructions

1. Chop apple into small pieces, slice thinly, or shred with grater.
2. Spread peanut butter in a thin layer over tortilla.
3. Spread apple pieces in an even layer over peanut butter.
4. Sprinkle with cereal.
5. Roll up tightly and cut in half.

Nutrition information per serving: 150 calories, 6g total fat, 1g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 210mg sodium, 21g total carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 5g sugar, 4g protein.

Recipe courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach's Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website. For more information, recipes, and videos, visit [spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu](https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu).

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## Sedentary? Get Up and Move!

We're often told, "Just get up and move. Get the blood flowing." Sound advice, but how much movement will counteract the effects of prolonged sitting? What types of movements are best? How often should I get up from my chair?

Researchers investigated the health benefits of reducing the amount of time spent sedentary to improve cardio-metabolic health in middle aged and older adults. Thirteen participants who were active middle-aged and older adults with six or more hours a day of sedentary behavior and had one or more cardio-metabolic disorders (high cholesterol, high fasting blood glucose, and elevated blood pressure) participated in the study.

Researchers had participants stand up every one to two hours and do low- to moderate-intensity activities for five to ten minutes. They wanted to determine how often and how long participants needed to be active in order to see changes in cholesterol and blood glucose levels. Results showed that HDL ("good") cholesterol increased while triglycerides and blood glucose concentration decreased most favorably when participants stood up every hour and were active for five minutes. The benefits of these short activity bouts were reversed after participants returned to normal sedentary behavior habits for one week. With behavior change, consistency is essential. Even small repeated behaviors make a huge difference over time.



Bottom line: low-intensity movement interruptions are an effective means of combatting sedentary behavior. If a person is capable and willing to get up and move once per hour, five minutes of activities such as washing dishes, folding laundry, or taking out the trash is sufficient to improve HDL, triglycerides, and blood glucose.

What's more striking is the fact that regular exercise programs don't always lead to positive results to the extent seen in this research. These study results do not mean that regular, structured exercise is unimportant for better health. Rather, focus on both regular exercise and reduced sitting time.

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Source: American Council on Exercise, [www.acefitness.org/education-and-resources/professional/certified/december-2017/6825/ace-sponsored-research-what-is-the-optimal-fit-to-reduce-sedentary-behavior-to-improve](http://www.acefitness.org/education-and-resources/professional/certified/december-2017/6825/ace-sponsored-research-what-is-the-optimal-fit-to-reduce-sedentary-behavior-to-improve)