

# News Notes to Parents

May 2023

## ***Increase Your Children's Nutrition Know-How***

Helping your kids understand how to read food labels prepares them for making smart food choices their whole lives. Whether in the supermarket, at home or at school, there are many opportunities to teach your child about healthy nutrition.

For younger children, focusing on MyPlate food groups and eating mindfully is a great place to start. Older children and teens can learn about individual nutrients on the Nutrition Facts label and how to decipher food label claims.

Teaching children the basics of nutrition and label-reading can be done easily at home, with many examples of foods they like to eat with the nutritional information on hand. Try some of these tips to teach them about healthful eating.

- Enlist your child to help plan a meal based on MyPlate. Discuss themes such as varying protein sources, choosing whole grains and selecting colorful fruits and vegetables.
- When snacking, have your teen take a look at the Nutrition Facts label and serving size to discover what is in the food they're eating.

Label-reading in the supermarket is important because that's where most of the food in the home comes from. Send your child on a scavenger hunt to find nutritious options:

- Canned fruit packed in water or their own juices.
- Frozen vegetables with no salt added.
- Whole-grain cereal that is low in sugar and high in fiber.

It might be hard to monitor what foods children eat in the lunchroom, so it is best to encourage them to make healthy choices.

- Challenge your child to pack a lunch modeling MyPlate.
- Encourage your child to read the labels of cafeteria items, and choose items low in added fats, sugars and salt.
- Review cafeteria menu offerings and discuss with your child what options they might choose that would provide each of the food groups in MyPlate that together create a balanced, healthful meal. (For example, ask your child what they will take for a vegetable, fruit, whole grain and protein food.)
- Leave a friendly note for your child about the healthy options in their lunch and why they are included.

Source: [eatright.org](http://eatright.org)



# Even a Little Extra Weight Can Raise Kids' Odds for High Blood Pressure

By Cara Murez HealthDay Reporter

"Hypertension during youth tracks into adulthood and is associated with cardiac and vascular organ damage," said lead study author Corinna Koebnick of Kaiser Permanente Southern California. "Since the organ damage can be irreversible, preventing hypertension in our young people is critically important."

Koebnick said the new study findings show the effects of even a few extra pounds.

The researchers studied electronic health records of more than 800,000 Southern California children who were 3 to 17 years of age between 2008 and 2015.

The investigators compared body mass index (BMI) at the outset and at a five-year follow-up. They also determined who had high blood pressure. Compared to youths in the medium range of average weight, the risk of developing high blood pressure within five years was 26% higher for youths at the high end of the average weight range. Every BMI unit gained per year added 4% to their risk, the study authors noted.

The rate of high blood pressure was higher among boys than girls and among youth on government-subsidized health plans, the findings showed.



"This study underscores the need for medical professionals to reevaluate how we correlate and educate about health risks across the spectrum of weight in growing children. Obesity may be the most important risk factor for hypertension during childhood," said senior study author Dr. Poornima Kunani. She is a pediatrician and researcher at the Kaiser Permanente Manhattan Beach Medical Office, in California.

Kunani urges parents to talk to their pediatrician to see if their child is at risk for high blood pressure and other preventable medical conditions related to obesity.

*SOURCE: Kaiser Permanente, news release, March 14, 2023*

## Yogurt and Fruit Parfaits

Making sure that your little ones are full and fueled is no small task but that doesn't mean you have to rely on cold cereal, toaster pastries, and frozen waffles every morning! Wondering where to start? It doesn't get any easier than this recipe. Simply layer wholesome fruit, yogurt, and granola together for a fun, kid-friendly morning meal. It takes just 5 minutes to make. *This recipe makes 4 servings.*

### Ingredients:

- 3 cups nonfat vanilla yogurt
- 1 cup fresh strawberries
- 1 pint of fresh blueberries, raspberries, and blackberries
- 1 cup granola

**Directions:** Layer 1/3 cup vanilla yogurt into the bottom of the four glasses. Alternate layers of fruit and granola with yogurt until your glass is filled to the top. Serve parfaits immediately to keep the granola crunchy!



*Source: Food Network*

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