



Family and Community Health "Connections" in Runnels County



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Get the Facts about Vitamin D

Did you know that vitamin D isn't really a vitamin. It is a hormone made by your kidneys. And it helps keep your bones strong by boosting your body's ability to absorb calcium, the mineral that makes up bones.

You get vitamin D in a chemical reaction that happens when sunlight hits your skin. That is why it is sometimes called the sunshine vitamin. You can also get it from foods such as fatty fish (salmon, tuna and mackerel), milk, some orange juice, yogurt, breakfast cereals-fortified with vitamin D.

When vitamin D is lacking in a person, one can have brittle bones. In children it is called rickets and adults called osteomalacia. Your muscles also need vitamin D to move. Your nerves need it to carry messages between your brain and other parts of your body and your immune system needs it to function properly.

- ⇒ Babies from birth to 12 months need 400 international units (IU) per day.
- ⇒ Everyone ages 1 through 70 years need 600 IU.
- ⇒ Adults 71 years and older need 800 IU.

If you believe that you are not getting enough vitamin D, talk to your doctor. Together you can come up with ways, including taking a supplement, for you to get the vitamin D your body needs.

Source: Shannon Health Beat-Journal of Wellness and Good Health Care: Summer 2021

Staying Healthy by the Numbers: 5-2-1-Almost None

Everyday:

Eat **5** or more servings of fruits and vegetables. Try a new fruit or veggie each week. How about veggie toppings on pizza?

Spend less than **2** hours on the computer or watching TV. Go outside and play instead. Or dance to music inside.

Be active for at least **1** hour. Playing games like tag and hide-and-seek help keep you healthy. Sports like basketball, soccer, and swimming can, too. Running, ballet, and riding bikes are great ways to be fit.

Skip sugary drinks. Most soda, juice drinks, and sports drinks are sugary drinks. Water and milk are better for your body.

Source: classroom.kidshealth.org

Fueling Your Young Athlete

Summer is here, and your young athlete is likely showing no signs of slowing down. While their natural inclination for physical activity is a slam dunk for long-term health, the potential lack of structure brought on by summer means parents and caregivers will want to stay tuned-in to how their children are fueling their bodies.

According to Nutrition for Kids, a website dedicated to children's health and nutrition education, you'll want to keep the following in mind:

Good Hydration

The nutrient of most immediate concern is water. Drink it before, during and after participating in physical activity for best hydration, rather than waiting until thirsty. Sports drinks are only helpful when excessive amounts of sweat are lost by being out in the heat or participating in vigorous activity for longer than 90 minutes. Stick with water to keep those sneaky added sugars at bay.



Snack Smart

Make time for snacks that will keep your child energized. Yogurt with a banana, baby carrots with hummus dip, or peanut butter with crackers and apple slices are all examples of smart snacks that require minimal time and effort to prepare. However, if these do not fit into your schedule, or you are needing an option that does not require refrigeration, look for quick, easy, non-perishable bars at the grocery store. They can be a great solution for an on-the-go family. Be sure to check the label for whole ingredients such as oats, whole grains, nuts, seeds and fruit for best nutrition. And prioritize protein content, while limiting added sugar. Compare labels to make the best selection.

Fuel and Replenish

An eating pattern high in saturated fat and added sugar will only serve to hinder your young athlete, especially right before participating in physical activity. Avoid things like fried foods and candy bars before practices or games. Be sure your child replenishes their body after being physically active, with plenty of fluids (preferably water) and a nutrient-rich meal or snack with a healthy combination of fats, lean protein and whole grains—think bean burrito or a slice of pizza loaded with vegetables. For breakfast—think fruit and yogurt smoothies or an omelet with cheese and vegetables.

Balanced Nutrition

The more active your child is, the more carbohydrate they'll need to fuel their muscles. Fatigue, weight loss and lack of endurance are signs the body's carbohydrate stores need replenishing. Nutrient-rich foods like starchy vegetables, whole grains, beans and legumes will do the trick to get them back on track. The best way to ensure your child is getting all the nutrients their body needs to grow and develop is by encouraging them to eat foods from each of the five food groups: fruits, vegetables, grains, protein and dairy.

ChooseMyPlate.gov has a wealth of information on incorporating a variety of healthy choices from each food group. Following these recommendations is good for everyone—athlete or not—so your whole family will reap the benefits all summer long.



Source: <https://food.unl.edu>

Beat the Heat: Staying Safe in the Summertime

After a long winter cooped up, the arrival of sunny days can make you eager to be outside. Getting outdoors can be good for you in many ways. It provides opportunities for exercise. It can also boost your mental health.

But as the heat rises, some health risks also increase. Intense heat can put strain on both your body and brain. Too much heat can cause a heat-related illness called hyperthermia. Mild hyperthermia can cause discomfort, like muscle cramps or swelling in the ankles and feet.

Heat exhaustion is more serious. It occurs when your body can no longer keep itself cool. You may start to feel dizzy or nauseated. Other symptoms include feeling thirsty, weak, or uncoordinated.

The most extreme form of hyperthermia is heat stroke. Heat stroke is life-threatening, so seek medical help right away. Symptoms include fainting or having trouble walking. You may start feeling confused or agitated. You can also feel very hot but not sweat or have dry, flushed skin.

Some people are more at risk for heat-related illness than others. That includes infants

and young children, and those with certain health conditions, such as heart, lung, or kidney disease. Older adults are the most heat sensitive. That's because the body's ability to cool itself changes as we get older.

There are two main ways your body regulates its temperature, explains Dr. Craig Crandall, who studies heat effects on the body at UT Southwestern Medical Center. "One is increasing how much blood flows to the skin. The other is how much we sweat."

Neither of these works as well in older adults, Crandall says. That makes it more difficult for them to cool off. His research has shown that sitting in front of a fan increased older adults' body temperature in extreme heat. That's because they weren't sufficiently sweating when the hot air was blowing over their skin. This suggests that older adults may need to use other ways to keep cool, such as going to an air-conditioned place.

Too much heat is not safe for anyone. If you're outside in the heat, drink lots of water. Don't try to exercise or do a lot of activities outdoors when it's hot.

If you start to feel sick in the heat, rest in a cool place and drink plenty of fluids. If you

think someone has heat stroke, get them to a cool place and call 911.

"Shade is your friend," Crandall says. "If you're going out to exercise or mow the lawn, take breaks in the shade."

If possible, go into an air-conditioned room for a while. "That time you're inside, your core temperature is going to be cooled," Crandall explains. "If you stay outside, it may just go up and up and up."

If you want to exercise outside in the summer, start slow. "It takes about 10 days to two weeks to get acclimated to hotter temperatures," Crandall says.

Heat isn't the only hazard during the summer. It's also important to protect your skin and your eyes from the sun. See the Wise Choices box for tips to keep safe in the heat.



Source: [newsinhealth.nih.gov](https://www.newshealth.nih.gov)

Banana Smoothie

Ingredients:

4 very ripe, medium bananas, sliced

1 Tablespoon sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 1/3 cup instant non-fat dry milk

1 cup crushed ice

Directions:

Wash your hands and clean your cooking area. Wash, peel, and slice bananas. Put all ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth. Serve immediately or store in the refrigerator. If stored in the refrigerator use within 24 hours. Stir before serving.

Serving Suggestion: If very ripe bananas are not available, you may substitute 1-16 ounce bag of frozen fruit or 1-16 ounce can of fruit (package in its own juice/no sugar added). If using frozen or canned fruit, a blender will be required.



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Child Care Providers Conference
Saturday, August 28, 2021
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REGISTER HERE!

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