

Preventing Childhood Obesity: Tips for Parents and Caregivers



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Childhood obesity is a global public health problem, and it has grown in recent years in Qatar. Obese children have a higher risk of developing chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension. It is important to promote a healthy lifestyle for children that includes physical activity and healthy eating habits in order to prevent obesity.

The following tips can guide parents and caregivers on how to help children and adolescents maintain a healthy weight.

When spending leisure time with family

Ensure that your child does not spend more than two hours per day watching TV, using iPad or playing video games.



Encourage your child to be physically active for at least 1 hour per day by involving the whole family in fun activities. A great outdoor activity can be going to Aspire Park, or other neighborhood parks to enjoy as a family.



You can help your child stay active by encouraging them to participate in sports such as swimming, walking, playing football, or basketball.



When shopping for groceries

Choose whole-grain products and avoid salty items such as canned food.



Avoid sugar-sweetened drinks.



Teach your child how to read food labels.



When preparing your child's school lunch box

Ensure that your child eats a healthy balanced breakfast that includes dairy products (milk, yogurt, or laban), protein (boiled eggs, cheese, or labneh) and whole-grain products (oatmeal or whole-wheat bread).



Add healthy snacks to your child's lunch box such as vegetable sticks, fruits, homemade popcorn, or plain crackers instead of unhealthy snacks like chips or chocolates.



When preparing food for your family

Choose fish or lean meats when you cook for your family.



Choose a healthy cooking method when you prepare meals (for example, grilling, steaming or baking).

Replace sugary and fatty desserts (for example, lugemat, sago, doughnuts or ice-cream) with colorful fruits or mixed nuts.



When eating out at restaurants

Help your child to choose healthy options from the menu.



Encourage your child to order water or unsweetened fresh juice instead of soft drinks which are very high in sugar.

Make sure that you order small portion size or share the meal with your child.

Make sure that your child's side dishes include healthy options such as salad or steamed vegetables.

