Preventing Childhood Obesity

How is Childhood Overweight and Obesity Defined?

Body mass index (BMI) is a measure used to determine childhood overweight & obesity. It is calculated using a child’s weight & height. Overweight is defined as a BMI at or above the 85th percentile & lower than the 95th percentile for children of the same age & sex. Obesity is defined as a BMI at or above the 95th percentile for children of the same age & sex.

What Can Parents Do?

Promote a healthy lifestyle!
⇒ Provide healthy meals & snacks, daily physical activity & nutrition education
⇒ Healthy Start offers a “Healthy Lifestyle Group” at LHS on Mondays. Call 984-8089 for info
⇒ Visit the Long Valley Health Center for diet & lifestyle recommendations for your child
⇒ Focus on good health for your child, not a certain weight goal
⇒ Establish daily meal & snack times, & eat together as frequently as possible
⇒ Participate in family physical activity time on a regular basis (such as walks, bike rides, & hikes)

Consequences of Childhood Obesity: obese children are more likely to have...
- High blood pressure & high cholesterol
- Increased risk of Type 2 Diabetes & insulin resistance
- Breathing problems, such as sleep apnea & asthma
- Fatty liver disease, gallstones, & heart burn

What Counts as One Serving?
- Grain Group: 1 slice of bread, 1/2 cup cooked rice or pasta, 1/2 oatmeal
- Vegetable Group: 1/2 cup of chopped raw or cooked vegetables, 1 cup of raw leafy vegetables
- Fruit Group: 1 piece of fruit, 3/4 cup of juice, 1/2 cup of canned fruit, 1/4 cup of dried fruit
- Milk Group: 1 cup of low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt, 2 ounces of cheese
- Meat/Bean Group: 2-3 ounces of cooked lean meat, poultry or fish, 1/2 cup of cooked beans, 1 egg, 2 tablespoons of peanut or almond butter
- Fats & Sweets: limit calories from these foods