

**Eating Smart & Moving More
Celebrating Healthy Families**

Moving More

Moving Away From Diets: The Joy of Movement

Moving your body means returning to the joy of childhood play. It means forgetting the 'shoulds' and rules about exercise. It means moving from a hard workout to fun playtime. Moving your body joyfully is also one of the best ways to lift sagging spirits.

Change the 'E' word from exercise to enjoyment.

Like diets, exercise fads come and go (remember mini trampolines!). When you think about a new activity, ask yourself: Is this something I really enjoy doing? Choose fitness activities that you love, like dancing or swimming. Then, you'll never have to exercise and you'll be enthusiastic about making fitness a priority.

Maximize your safety and comfort.

Search out the right stuff. Look for equipment that works for your body, clothes that move with you and locations that feel safe. Pay special attention to your feet. With a pair of comfortable shoes, you can easily take a fitness break instead of a coffee break or walk around the neighborhood after school or work.

Start slowly and stick with it.

Making drastic changes can be a recipe for failure. Small changes make a big difference, if they last. Research says that it takes about 21 days for a behavior to become habit. Pick one change, like family bike rides, and start with an easy 15-minute ride. Over the next three to four weeks, take longer rides to fun places.

Be flexible and creative.

Life is full of surprises, and plans often change. If you can't get to the gym or your yoga class, fit a 30-minute walk into a lunch break or walk a bit before you have dinner. It's always good to have options, like indoor ideas when it's cold. Make a list of all the ways you like to move, so you'll always have a fun option.

Forgive and congratulate yourself.

If you miss a day of activity, it's no big deal. Just put on your shoes and get your walk in today! The goal is at least 30 minutes of activity, at least 5 days a week. Getting active and fit can be challenging. Just think how long you've been sitting around. Give yourself a big pat on the back for any increases in physical activity.



National Nutrition Month® - March 2008

Adapted by the NC NET Program from Eat Right Montana materials