

## 2015 KACO Posts

**January 19, 2015**

### **Resistance training and kids: When is the right time to start?**

As pediatricians, we generally agree that kids should not do heavy duty lifting until their growth plates are completely sealed. However, in an age of increased weight training in many sports, kids are often started on resistance training before growth is finished. What is some easily remembered evidence-based advice for parents with weight training in kids?

- 1) Do not start resistance exercises until at least age 11.
- 2) Use body weight exercises- If the resistance involves using your own body weight, you are usually pretty safe. Some common examples of this kind of resistance exercise are push-ups, pull-ups and sit-ups.
- 3) Only do exercises where you can do 15 repetitions with good form.
- 4) Exercise only with adult supervision.
- 5) Consider working with a certified athletic trainer.
- 6) Do not “max out”. Seeing how much you can lift only once can set you up for injury or slow down growth.
- 7) Resistance training might be especially helpful for patients with obesity. Kids with obesity will generally be better at resistance training than strictly aerobic exercise, and resistance training can increase metabolic rate and accentuate weight loss.

**February 2, 2015**

### **Protein Supplements: Are they ever OK?**

As with resistance training, young athletes are often under pressure to use protein supplements. Can your patients do this safely? Whole lean protein sources from “real” food are best, but if your patients insist on using supplements, here are some guidelines:

- 1) Use only 100% whey
- 2) Do not exceed 30gm total protein (this includes any milk or yogurt in the supplement) per serving and use only once per day
- 3) Use after working out
- 4) Avoid “pre-workout” drinks. These often contain creatine which is not good for young kidneys and is not effective anyway for long term strength building.
- 5) Drink water and lots of it!

**February 17, 2015**

### **Healthy Breakfast Ideas**

Encourage your patients to eat breakfast. While the evidence is still not overwhelming, most studies indicate that people who eat breakfast, eat healthier at lunch and dinner and are more physically active. Because breakfast can be the land of waffles, PopTarts, bacon and other less than healthy choices, some useful parameters to share include 1) making sure that calories do not go over 250 and 2) encouraging protein content to be at least 7 gm. A good choice that fills the bill? A piece of fruit and a cheese stick or a hard-boiled egg with a piece of toast can make a great choice. Watch out for the empty calories of juice as well. Also be sure to explore what might be holding back your patients from eating a healthy breakfast before you start solving the problem for them.

**March 4, 2015**

### **Don't forget HALF (*Healthy Active Living for Families*)**

HALF is great for families looking for nutrition advice. Some office will give out a card directing patients to this interactive and informative website. It is at <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/growing-healthy/Pages/default.aspx>. Be sure to check it out yourself!

**March 16, 2015**

### **Breastfeeding: Eat Like a Child From the Start**

Experts continue to debate why it seems that breastfed kids have lower rates of obesity even after controlling for socioeconomic status, parental weight, etc... The latest feeling is that breastfeeding is the

ultimate in “on demand” feeding. Breastfed kids take wildly differing volumes from one feed to the next. They just eat how much they want. As pediatricians, we should help parents recognize satiety in all children regardless of age. It is not helpful to enforce the Clean Plate Rule or to say “oh, this is a 5 oz. feeding and baby should take 5 oz every feeding.” Breastfed kids stop eating when full. Helping parents understand satiety will go a long way to prevent overfeeding.

## **April**

### **Step Into Spring!**

Got a Fitbit? Going to buy an Apple Watch? Have an old pedometer? Use it!!!! And encourage your families to, also. Walking 10,000 steps/day is an evidence based way to increase your fitness and maintain a healthy weight. The messages to kids are strong: you don't have to be a world class athlete to be active, the majority of activity does not need to be all that high intensity, participating with family members (including the dog) makes it more fun, entry fees and uniforms are not needed in order to be active (and neither are post-game snacks!). And if you have a device to count steps, wear it proudly. It is a great conversation starter and it sets a good example that you are taking steps, literally, to be fit.

## **May**

### **The Children and Nature Connection**

The power of nature is real. Not only does playing outside help keep kids fit, exposure to nature improves problem-solving, enhances interactions with peers, reduces stress, reduces behavior problems and improves school performance. Also, it is a myth that it's more dangerous for kids outside. Current rates of violent crime against children are at levels where they were in the '50's and '60's, down from a peak in the '80's. Additionally, kids today are much savvier about staying safe around strangers. Looking for ways to increase nature exposure and activity? Check out this great website from the Children and Nature Network: [www.childrenandnature.org](http://www.childrenandnature.org)

## **June**

### **Pool Snacks For Health**

It's pool time. And that doesn't mean kids need to counteract the health benefit of all that good activity with junk food. Skip the chips! Consider serving frozen and de-stemmed grapes, clementine oranges, carrot sticks, portion-sized pretzel packs, flavored rice cakes, popped chips or other healthy alternatives. Who doesn't love the classic frozen banana? A Kentucky classic, introduced to me by my Marion County in-laws is the banana croquette: A fresh half banana rolled in a skim coating of Miracle Whip salad dressing, then rolled in chopped peanuts and served on a skewer. A central KY classic! Don't forget the healthy drinks, too. Kids need extra water during the hot Kentucky summer and the diuretic effect of caffeine can counteract the hydration of many drinks. For more good ideas, visit [www.chopchopmag.org](http://www.chopchopmag.org)

## **July**

### **The Joy of Farmer's Markets**

Anybody else love a good farmer's market? Kentucky has some great ones. And they are a fantastic place to take the kids. Finding fresh plants and finding things to grow in your own yard has an amazing effect on getting kids to eat. Watch what happens when they participate in the growing and/or shopping! Sam Kass, White House chef, relates a story of a ten year old girl who was raving about how delicious the cauliflower she grew herself in the White House garden was. And she was eating it raw and plain. Not my favorite, but the lesson is real. And many kids don't even realize where food comes from. “You mean french fries come from the ground?!?!?” Get the kids in on the act! Have a list of local farmer's markets posted or available in your office. These can be found, along with lots of other resources on the state cooperative extension website at <http://extension.ca.uky.edu/>

## **August**

### **Kentucky's Bounty: Eat Local and Be Healthy**

If you are like me, you are often bemused, and sometimes defensive about Kentucky's big agricultural products, racehorses, bourbon and tobacco. Well, we are about way more than gambling, drinking and smoking. Last month, we reminded everyone about our terrific farmer's markets. Now, let's drill down a little bit on what our state has to offer that is grown locally and is extremely healthy. Focus on the classics:

fresh tomatoes, green beans (half-runners, Kentuckians know what I mean), squash, zucchini, eggplant, cucumbers. And get outside to fish. August may not be the most productive fishing time, but it's a great way to get outside, learn about nature and eat high protein tasty foods.

## **September**

### **Speak Up for School Lunches (and breakfast too!)**

We have all heard the complaints. And honestly, when have kids not complained about and wasted school lunches. Now, at least since the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act, kids have an opportunity to eat healthy foods. Gone are the days of government cheese and a choice between tater tots and macaroni & cheese. Unlimited fruits and vegetables are also available for those ravenous teens. Check out for yourself what the guidelines really say and do not hesitate to help your local school make it practical.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp>

And take advantage of expanding breakfast options at schools around Kentucky through the School Breakfast Challenge from Action for Healthy Kids: <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/in-your-state/kentucky/welcome> and [http://education.ky.gov/federal/SCN/Pages/School-Breakfast-Resource-Page-\(Update\).aspx](http://education.ky.gov/federal/SCN/Pages/School-Breakfast-Resource-Page-(Update).aspx)

For certain families, packing lunch is still the best option. Help your families come up with strategies for a balanced meal. A great resource for helping families plan meals is at <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/supertracker-tools/daily-food-plans.html>. It houses the Super Tracker which is a really fun tool for families to track progress.

## **October**

### **Healthy Halloween**

So, let's get real. Holidays are really tough on a healthy eating plan and healthy snacks can only go so far. Fresh fruit does make a great Halloween treat, but sometimes you just want that fun size Snickers bar that has been calling your name. Don't think it isn't calling our patients' names, too. Halloween is a great day for kids, just don't let it become a disastrous week. First Lady Michelle Obama handled a media "gotcha" question beautifully a few years back. When a reporter snarked about their girls eating candy for Halloween, her response was good advice in my opinion. She said, "They will eat candy, they will eat too much and then tomorrow, we return to reality." Remember what the research says on food habits, the biggest risk environments are the ones that are too restrictive (the Forbidden Fruit Syndrome) or permissive (food always out). Moderation is the key; now that's a surprise, eh?

## **November**

### **CDC, The Prescription to Move and YOU!**

Physical activity is about way more than just obesity. Physical activity has positive impacts on cardiovascular health, diabetes prevention, bone strength and mental wellness to name a few. Sometimes it is difficult to know how we, as medical providers can promote physical activity. Last month, the Centers for Disease Control embarked on a campaign to help us promote physical activity. There are several concrete ways we can help patients be more physically active and healthy. Consider:

- 1) Treating physical activity as a vital sign. Ask your patient about activity. Record and encourage it on visits.
- 2) Set a good example. Hold walking meetings and be physically active yourself. Let your patients see you out there!
- 3) Encourage your local hospital and community to promote activity. It may be as simple as signs to promote stair climbing or as comprehensive as lending your support to a local bike/walking trail initiative.

Follow this link <http://www.kpihp.org/rx2move/#sthash.Zw6DGAZP.dpbs> for more information!

## **November 24, 2015**

### **News from the AAP National Conference & Exhibition**

What was the big news at AAP NCE in DC this year? The Section on Obesity (be sure to sign up if you haven't already) hosted the Section program on starting an obesity treatment program in your office. Along with some very innovative poster presentations, Tennessee and Georgia AAP chapters presented their programs which are completely useable here in Kentucky. Along with Maine's Let's Go, now is the perfect time to start treating obesity in your office. Check out the following if you are thinking about diving into the world of office obesity treatment:

HEALED from Tennessee: <http://www.tnaap.org/Healed/guidelines.htm>

Strong4Life from Georgia AAP and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta: <http://www.choa.org/Strong4Life>

Next Steps from Let's Go and Maine AAP: <http://www.letsgo.org/>

## **December**

### **Still Time to Hit the Trail**

Winter is coming and the excuses will not be far behind on not being able to be outside. Fight the power! We all know that cold temperature does not trigger illness. Kentucky winters are notoriously mild in December and the trails are empty and beautiful. Remind your patients about using our amazing park system in the off season when the views are unblocked by foliage. And set a good example by getting into them yourself. Really motivated? Contact us about starting a Walk With a Doc program in your hometown. <http://www.walkwithadoc.org/>