

# 5 - 2 - 1 Jump Up & Go!

5 Daily Fruits & Vegetables / Less Than 2 Hours Daily TV & Computer Time / At Least 1 Hour Daily Physical Activity

## Health Behaviors of U.S. Youth

- Among 6-19 year olds, 16% (over 9 million) are overweight - triple the proportion in 1980. Another 15% are at risk of becoming overweight. The primary reasons for the increase are sedentary behaviors and diet.
- The incidence of type 2 diabetes in adolescents has increased almost 1000% in the past 20 years.
- 61% of overweight children ages 5-15 have 1 or more cardiovascular risk factors (27% have 2 or more).
- 80% of obese children become obese adults, significantly increasing their risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes, cancer, and gall bladder disease. However, healthcare providers recognize and initiate treatment for less than 20% of obese children.
- Having one obese parent nearly doubles a child's risk of obesity. Children with two obese parents are 6 times more likely to become obese than are children with non-obese parents.
- Childhood obesity increases the likelihood of emotional and social problems in children and adults.
- Half of American youth do not engage in physical activity to promote long-term health. Children are more active when a parent is involved in their activity – by playing with them, encouraging or transporting them.
- Regular moderate physical activity promotes healthy development of bones, joints, and muscles.

## 2003 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- 77% of students sampled tried to lose weight through dieting and exercise within the 3 weeks prior to the survey, while only 24% were actually either at-risk of becoming overweight or were already overweight.
- Only 11% of students ate the daily recommendation of 5 servings of fruits and vegetables. The average daily consumption was only 2.5 servings – *half* the daily recommendation.
- 42% of students did not attend physical education class at least once per week. At all grade levels, girls were less active than boys.
- Students reporting regular physical activity were *less likely* to have:
  - Used unhealthy weight control practices – fasting, diet pills, laxatives, or forced vomiting
  - Engaged in heavy television watching
  - Smoked cigarettes or used drugs
  - Had sexual intercourse
  - Felt sad or hopeless, or considered or attempted self-injury or suicide.
- 31% of students reported watching 3 or more hours of television on an average school day. These children were significantly more likely to be overweight or to perceive themselves as overweight.

## Body Mass Index (BMI)

*At Risk:* BMI = 85<sup>th</sup> to 95<sup>th</sup> percentile

*Overweight:* BMI ≥ 95<sup>th</sup> percentile

## Actions To Take

Use the enclosed materials to help your patients to:

- Consume at least 5 fruits and vegetables each day.
- Spend no more than 2 hours per day watching TV, videos, or playing computer games.
- Get at least 1 hour of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity each day.

*Sources:* New England Journal of Medicine; JAMA; Annals of Internal Medicine; American Journal of Clinical Nutrition; Preventive Medicine; US Center for Disease Control; US Government Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health; NHANES III; Institute of Medicine: Preventing Childhood Obesity: *Health in the Balance*, 2005. Pediatric Obesity in the Clinical Setting: Epidemiology of Childhood Obesity; <http://www.priory.com/childobesity.htm>, Accessed 2-27-2005.