



Many Canadian children are gaining too much weight too fast. Cree children also have this problem.

Children who are overweight may develop:

- Diabetes
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Other health problems

It is important to eat well (healthy low fat, low sugar, and high fibre foods) and to be physically active to prevent weight gain and obesity even in young children. **A healthy lifestyle starts at a young age.**

Golden rule:

Your job is to provide healthy foods and pleasant mealtimes. Your child's job is to decide how much to eat and whether to eat.

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Version française disponible



Weight Gain and Your Child



Conseil Cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie James
 Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

If your child is gaining too much weight try the following tips:

▶ **Limit foods with a lot of sugar or fat** (French fries, poutine, hamburgers, hot dogs, fried chicken, chips, doughnuts, cakes, cookies, candies).

▶ **Offer healthy snacks** like whole grain cereals, fruits, vegetables, milk, cheese and yogurt. A healthy snack is made of 2 different foods from the 4 food groups; an example is an apple and a piece of cheese.

▶ **Offer three healthy meals every day.** Eating schedules are important so your child will not nibble or drink all the time in between meals.

▶ **Offer water or milk to drink** instead of juice, soda pop, iced tea or sports drinks.

▶ **Eating at the restaurant should be for special days only.** Healthy homemade foods are best.

▶ **TV watching, playing video or computer games,** should be limited to one hour a day.

Get your whole family moving!!!

▶ **Add 30 minutes of activity to the day.**

Ten of these minutes should be energetic exercise that makes the heart beat stronger and the breathing become fast.

▶ **Be a positive role model.** Eat well and get the whole family to move with you!

- Ride a bike.
- Skate, walk, snowshoe or canoe.
- Run or walk on a family treasure hunt.
- Build an obstacle course outside or in the basement.
- Put on some music and have a dance contest.

Eat well, be active
and have fun!



Think about your child's feelings.

It is important to be positive and be gentle. If your child feels that you are controlling the amount she eats, or not letting her eat certain foods, she may start thinking about that food all the time and asking for more for fear of not being able to eat her favourite foods.

Treat all your children the same, even if some are not overweight at all.

Do not forbid one child from eating foods that the rest of the family is allowed to eat.

Do not pressure only one child to become more physically active. Negative comments made to the child can lead to poor self-image and cause more harm than good.

