

# WIN

*Weight-control Information Network*



Take  
**CHARGE**  
of Your  
health!

**A Teenager's Guide to Better Health**

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# Take **CHARGE** of Your health!

A Teenager's  
Guide to Better  
Health

As a teenager, you are going through a lot of changes. Your body is changing and growing. Have you noticed that every year, you can't seem to fit into your old shoes anymore? Or that your favorite jeans are now tighter or 3 inches too short? Your body is on its way to becoming its adult size.

Along with your physical changes, you are also becoming more independent.

You are starting to **make more choices** about your life. You are relying less on your parents and more on yourself and your friends when making decisions. Some of the biggest choices that you face are those about your **health**.





Skating with a friend

Why should you care about your health? Well, there are lots of reasons—like feeling good, looking good, and getting stronger. Doing well in school, work, or other activities (like sports) is another reason. **Believe it or not, these can all be affected by your health!**

Healthy eating and being active now may also help prevent diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, osteoporosis, stroke, and some forms of cancer when you are older.

Some teenagers are not very physically active and some do not get the foods that their growing bodies need. Now is the time to **take charge of your health** by eating better and being more physically active. Even **small changes** will help you look and feel your best!

To learn more about your health, start by looking at your **family**.

## Family Matters

Are your parents, brothers, or sisters overweight? Do any of them have health

***Even if health problems run in your family, it doesn't mean that you will have the same***

***problems.***

problems related to their weight? Your family's gene pool, eating habits, and activities can all play a role in your health and the way you look. Even if your family has health problems, it doesn't mean that you will have the same problems—you can take steps to prevent or decrease the chance of having them. You need to work with what you've got to become the healthiest that you can.

**By taking charge of your health, you could even help your family take steps to improve theirs!**



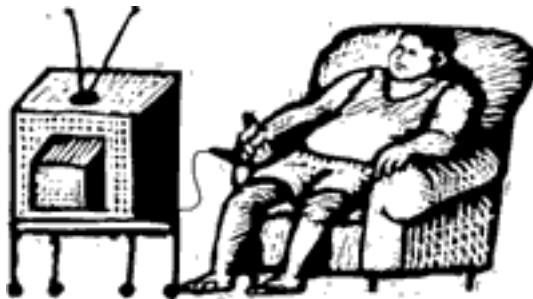
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## So Where Do I Start?

The road to better health starts with good eating and physical activity habits. Being aware of your habits will help you learn where you need to make changes.

Do you normally watch a lot of TV or play a lot of video games? These activities can be relaxing, but you don't need to move much to do them. Spending too much time not moving around can make you feel tired and lazy, and lead to poor muscle tone. You can be active every day and still have time to do other things you enjoy, like playing video games!





## Physical Activity —It Doesn't Have to be a Chore!

Being active means moving more every day. You can choose activities that are fun and do them on your own or with your friends.

Being more active will make you feel better and give you more energy. It can also help you think and concentrate better, which will help you in school or at work. Activity can help you feel less bored and depressed, and help you handle stress.

So don't wait—start today. Begin slowly and make small changes in your daily routine, like

- spending less time in front of the TV
- taking the stairs instead of the elevator
- walking to school instead of taking the bus (or if you drive, parking further away on the school parking lot).

What you choose to do is up to you. Just pick something that you like to do and keep it up. Have fun while being active each day to stay healthy and fit. Remember, you don't have to give up the video games—just make sure that you also fit activity into your day. [Click here.](#)