

Six Fun Ways to Make Your Family Healthier

1. Junior chefs. Let the kids make dinner tonight and challenge them to see how healthy they can make it. Let them turn the tables – the deal is, they make it and you have to eat it.

2. Form a family league. Take up a new family activity you can all do together to get you up off the couch. Form a family soccer, basketball or badminton league with your family, neighbors or friends. Make sure it's something that everyone can participate in and keep it fun and light.

3. Plant a family health "tree". At your next family gathering, put a big poster on the wall with a tree and fill it in together with family names and health conditions. What used to be ignored will start conversations and become a part of your family history. Ask family members to do some detective work to fill in missing info and promise everyone a copy when it's done.

4. Take a food challenge. Everyone write down what they eat for three days (include everything). Have a family meeting to share your logs. Challenge each family member to give up one unhealthy food from their diet for a month. Keep track of who makes their goal every day and let the winner pick a fun activity for the whole family at the end of the month.

5. Make a "Changes Jar". Each family member writes down 5 changes they'd like to make in their health (use a different color paper for each person). Put the slips in a jar and let each family member draw a slip for someone else. You each pledge to change that habit for a month. To up the ante, let family members suggest a habit change for you! You'll get a good insight into how others see your health habits.

6. Hold a family talent night. Have a family talent night to let each family member showcase a talent – singing, dancing, telling jokes or magic tricks. Set up a small stage in your home with chairs and pillows on the floor for the audience. Give family members a week or two to prepare their "act." Let go of work, homework, troubles and stress and just live, laugh and love together.

How's Your Family's Health?			
How do your family's healthstyle habits measure up?		Circle the closest answer	
1. How often do you eat meals at home together as a family?	0-2 days a week	3-5 days a week	6-7 days a week
2. Do all family members wear seatbelts or use carseats properly?	rarely	mostly	always
3. How much television does your family watch each week?	15+ hours	8-14 hours	7 or less hours
4. Do you have up-to-date health records for family members?	none to few records	some records	complete records
5. How often does your family do fun physical activities together?	once a month	twice a month	once a week
6. Is everyone in your family covered by health insurance?	no members	some members	all members
7. How many members of your family have a primary care doctor?	none	some	all
8. How much time each week do you spend together as a family having fun or relaxing?	less than 3 hours	4-7 hours	8 or more hours
9. How often do family members have a check-up with their doctor?	more than 2 years	every other year	every year
10. You have family meetings where you openly talk about and resolve conflicts and feelings.	rarely or never	once in a while	regularly
POINT VALUE	1	2	3
TOTAL FOR EACH COLUMN	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL SCORE	_____		
Your family's health score			
24 – 30	YOU ROCK! Your family's health habits are out-of-sight.		
17 – 23	GOOD GOING. Your family's on the way to good health habits. Take a look at where you circled 1's and 2's for ways you can raise the bar and shoot for the top.		
10 – 16	UH-OH. Your family's health habits could use some pumping up. Start with 1-2 areas where you can make changes. Set some goals and a reward that will get everyone in the family involved and motivated.		