

## Teen nutrition: Healthy foods needed

**T**eens have many special health needs. They grow quickly, and need nutrition that will support their growth. As young adults, the habits teens form will shape their health when they are grown. Parents and health care providers can help teens start to make good nutrition choices now. That way they will have a good, healthy start in adulthood.



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### Quick facts on teen nutrition:

**1** As teens grow, they have greater energy needs. So they need more nutrients than younger children do in order to meet those needs. Nutrients include iron, folic acid, calcium and protein.



**2** Teens can get the nutrients they need in lean meats, whole grains, low-fat dairy foods, fruits and vegetables.

**3** Iron is especially important. Teen girls need even more of it because they can lose iron during their periods. Good sources of iron are meat, fish, poultry, green leafy vegetables, nuts and seeds. Calcium is found in milk and green veggies.



**4** Portable healthy foods make on-the-go breakfast and snacks easy for teens. Try string cheese, yogurt, low-fat granola bars, pre-washed carrots and sliced apples.

**5** Experts say building a healthy diet in the teen years can keep kids healthy as adults. It can lower their risk for heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis and being overweight.

>> For more information on teen nutrition, visit [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)