

Back-to-school can be healthy, too

The beginning of a new school year is an exciting time for both kids and their parents. It can be tough to make the change from the late nights and later mornings of summer back to a school schedule. Parents can help kids get back on a healthy plan before classes begin. It just takes a few very simple steps.



Photos courtesy iStockphoto: lunch kids by SolStock, teen by Imanjoe

Quick facts on school prep:

1 Kids might feel nervous about going back to school. There are new classes, friends and teachers to deal with. Nervous kids might have headaches or stomach pain. Talking with kids can help ease their fears.



2 Summer diets can be unhealthy. Start planning with kids about different healthy lunch options. Kids can help make food choices so they feel involved in making lunch healthy and tasty.

3 Some healthy lunch choices include whole grain bread, wraps or pita for sandwiches, lean meats or nut butters for protein, cut-up vegetables and fresh fruits in season.

4 Kids should be well-rested for class. Preschool-age kids should get 11 to 12 hours of sleep each night and elementary school kids should get at least 10 hours. Teens should aim for at least nine hours.

5 You can help prevent illness by making sure kids get their vaccines on time. Talk to your doctor about what your child might need, and when.



>> For more information on back-to-school preparation for kids, visit www.cdc.gov