



Guide to
**HEALTHY
EATING**
& **ACTIVE
LIVING**
in NYC





**You have the power
to improve your health.**

Healthy eating and active living can help you lose weight, manage stress, have more energy and set a good example for your children. This guide provides simple steps for creating healthy habits, including time- and money-saving tips.



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Take it one day at a time—simple changes will be easier to maintain in the long run. Even one small change can make a big difference. Let's get started!



HEALTHY EATING

In today's world of fast food and huge portions, it's not always easy to find balance. Most adults need around 2,000 calories or fewer each day. Young children need between 1,000 and 2,000 depending on age and activity levels.

Eating more calories than you burn off from physical activity can lead to excess weight and health problems like high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and some cancers. This section will help you manage calories and portion sizes.



Meals

Build a Healthy Plate

Start with the right-sized plate or bowl. An adult plate should be 9 inches across, and a child's plate should be 7 inches across.

- Fill $\frac{1}{2}$ with fruits and vegetables.
- Fill $\frac{1}{4}$ with lean protein.
- Fill $\frac{1}{4}$ with whole grains or starches.

Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables contain plenty of fiber, which helps you feel full on fewer calories. Eating fruits and vegetables every day can lower your risk of heart disease, obesity, diabetes and some cancers.

What to Choose

- A variety of colorful fruits and vegetables
- Fresh, frozen and canned: Look for canned fruit in its own juice instead of syrup. Choose canned vegetables with low sodium or no salt added.
- Whole fruit instead of juice: Whole fruit has more fiber and helps you feel full.



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



GRAINS



PROTEIN



Tips for Parents:

- Eat vegetables and your kids will, too.
- Patience works better than pressure. Offer children fruits and vegetables many times and in different ways.

How to Save Money

- Fruits and vegetables taste better and are less expensive when in season. Check out your local farmers' market.
 - Spend \$5 using EBT at a farmers' market and get \$2 extra in Health Bucks to spend on fruits and vegetables. Health Bucks are available July through November.
- Buy fruits and vegetables whole instead of cut up.
- Look for store brands and sales when buying frozen or canned fruits and vegetables.
- Some fruits and vegetables, like leafy greens and berries, go bad quicker—use those first. Root vegetables like winter squash, carrots and potatoes keep longer.
- Start your own garden if possible. You can grow herbs and vegetables in a pot on your windowsill.

How New Yorkers add more fruits and vegetables to their diets

Kari — I add fresh or frozen broccoli, peppers and spinach to my scrambled eggs. My two-year-old even loves it!

Lonnie — Buying based on what is in season saves a lot of money if you want to eat more fresh produce. There are tons of recipes on YouTube!

Elizabeth — I pack fruit for myself and my son as snacks during the week. My favorites are oranges, bananas and plums.



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



GRAINS



PROTEIN



Eat Lean Proteins

Foods rich in proteins (such as lean meat, poultry, fish or beans) provide nutrients and can help keep you full. Lean (low-fat) proteins are better for your heart and waistline. They have less saturated fats, which raise your LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and increase your risk of heart disease.

What to Choose

- Plant-based proteins such as dry beans, dry lentils and nuts, and soy products like tofu
- Canned beans: Look for low sodium or no salt added and remember to rinse before using.
- Eggs
- Chicken and turkey breasts without the skin, or lean cuts of red meat
- Fish or shellfish



How to Save Money

- Choose more affordable proteins like beans, lentils, eggs and canned fish.
- Try dried beans. They are even cheaper than canned beans, and they taste delicious.
- Buy healthy cuts of meat in bulk when on sale. Freeze portions in sealed bags.



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



GRAINS



PROTEIN



Go for Whole Grains

The dietary fiber in whole grains can make you feel full longer and can lower your risk of heart disease. Whole grains should have the word “whole” as part of the first ingredient on the ingredients list.

What to Choose

- 100% whole grain bread, with at least 2 grams of fiber per slice
- Brown rice and whole wheat pasta
- Whole wheat or corn tortillas
- Oatmeal: Choose unsweetened and flavor with fresh fruit.
- Less common whole grains such as quinoa and barley: They make great alternatives to rice and pasta.
- Plain, lightly salted popcorn

How to Save Money

- Buy store brand whole grains.
- Buy whole grains in bulk. Keep them in the freezer for a longer shelf-life.

Tips for Parents:

- Mix up the types of cereals, bread and sandwich fillings you buy each week for variety.
- Allow children to serve themselves. Teach children to take small amounts at first. Tell them they can get more if they are still hungry.

How New Yorkers add lean proteins to their salads

Andrea — I add chickpeas or black beans to my salads. Sometimes grilled chicken or tuna.

Kodak — To prepare for the work week, I pack containers of salad topped with seasoned black beans, boiled eggs, shrimp, tomato, onion, garlic and cucumber. Each day I grab one from the refrigerator on my way out the door.

How New Yorkers make healthy drinks

Michelle — I use strawberry, blueberry, raspberry, orange slices, apple slices and fresh mint in my water.

Sha-Nee — I use lemon, lime and mint in my water... so tasty!

Grace — Brew fresh tea, then cool it, no sweetener and add fresh herbs. Add fresh citrus or use frozen chunks of fruit as ice cubes!



Drinks

Choose Water and Other Healthy Drinks

Americans are consuming more calories now than ever before, and nearly half of these extra calories come from sugary drinks such as soda, sports drinks, juice, sweetened coffee and teas. Just one 20-ounce bottle of soda has 250 calories and more than 16 teaspoons of sugar. Sugary drinks also cause cavities in kids and adults.

Rethink your drink and choose from the list of healthy beverages below.

What to Choose

- New York City tap water: It's safe, tastes good and is free. Add slices of lemons, limes, oranges, watermelon, cucumber or mint to tap water for a refreshing drink.
- Unsweetened teas: Add a slice of lemon or a teaspoon of honey.
- Seltzer or club soda: Drink plain or with a splash of 100% fruit juice.
- Coffee: Drink plain or with fat-free or low-fat milk.
- Plain, fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk

How to Save Money

- Use a reusable water bottle when you're on the go.
- Mix 100% fruit juice with seltzer or plain water. It will cut calories and make juice last longer.
- Avoid fancy coffee and drinks. They are expensive and have added sugar and calories.

Tips for Parents:

- The only fluids that should ever be served in a bottle are breast milk, formula and water.
- Serve water and plain, low-fat or skim milk to children. Avoid milk with artificial flavorings, such as chocolate or strawberry.
- Children between 1 and 2 years old should only drink whole milk.
- If serving juice, look for 100% fruit juice in 4-ounce juice boxes. Avoid fruit-flavored drinks, which often have added sugar and few nutrients.



Snacks

Pack Delicious Snacks

Snacks can provide nutrients needed to stay healthy and prevent chronic disease. Make sure you are really hungry and not just thirsty, bored or anxious. Choose snacks from more than one food group for variety and satisfaction.

What to Choose

- Fresh vegetables with dip such as hummus or guacamole
- Whole fruit and low-fat, plain yogurt
- Apple or banana slices and a spoonful of peanut butter or other nut butter
- Whole grain crackers and a hard-boiled egg or low-fat string cheese
- A handful of dried fruits and unsalted nuts
- Plain, lightly-salted popcorn and a piece of fruit

Tips for Parents:

- Schedule meals and snack time so that children come to the table hungry.
- Make snacks fun. Let children help prepare simple snacks like fruit kabobs, yogurt parfaits and mini bagel pizzas.

What New Yorkers are packing for their snacks

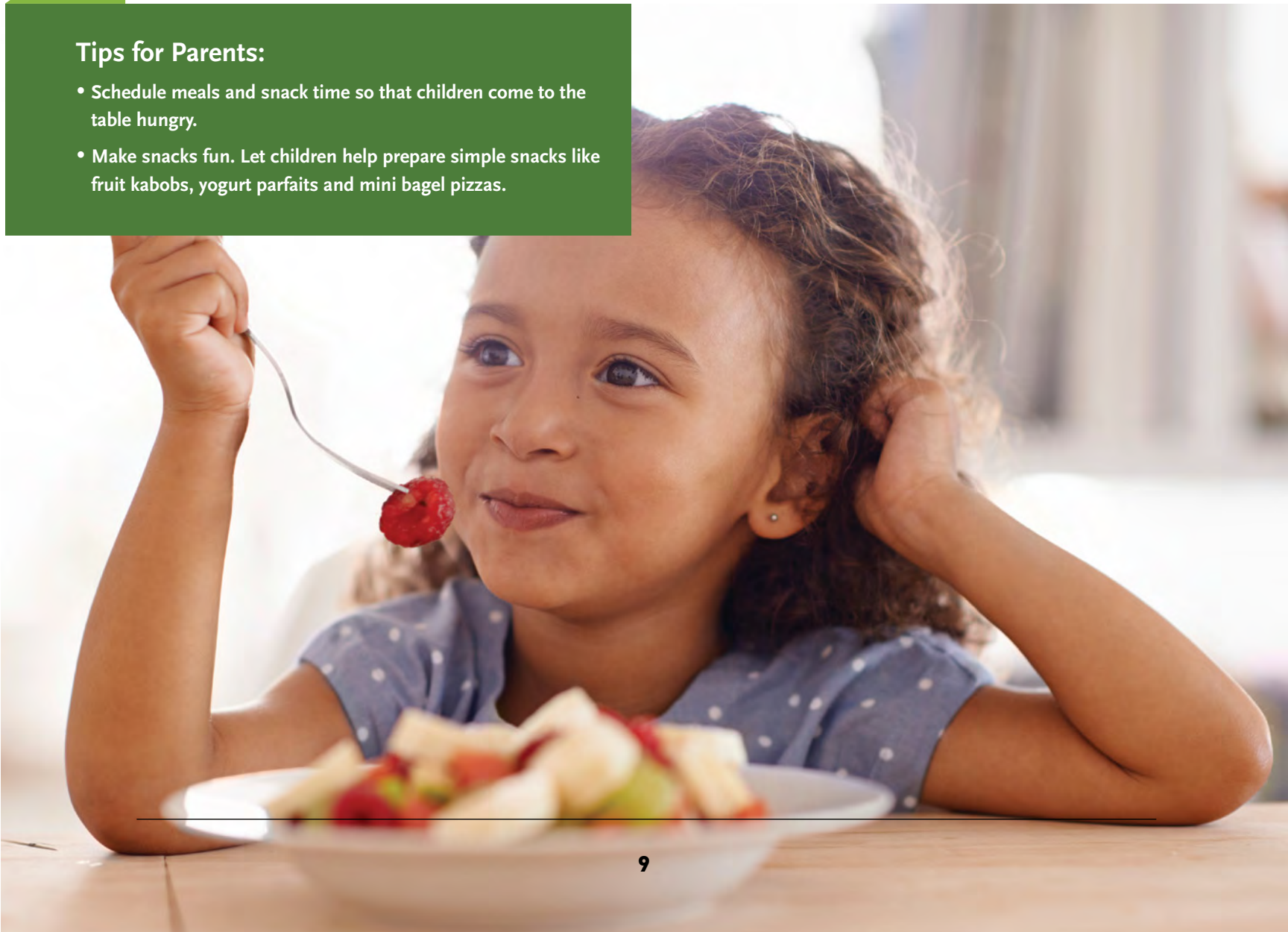
Michelle — I sauté green leafy vegetables like kale and spinach in garlic and oil. It keeps me full until I get home from work!

Beth — I whip up almond milk and a frozen banana in a blender for a quick and filling snack.

Susan — I pack a 4-ounce cup of hummus and broccoli. Fun to dip!

How to Save Money

- Snack on a mini-portion of leftovers from dinner the night before.
- Chop your own fruits and vegetables instead of buying pre-cut produce.
- Buy in bulk and portion snacks out for the week.
- Pack snacks at home and take them with you on the go.





Shop Smart

Supermarket shelves with hundreds of competing products can make you feel overwhelmed. Use the tips below to help buy the healthiest foods for you and your family.

What to Choose

- Start with the outside aisles. These are usually the produce, dairy and eggs, and meats sections and normally have the freshest products.
- Think beyond the supermarket. You can find reasonably priced fresh fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods at farmers' markets, green carts and participating Shop Healthy grocery stores and bodegas.
- Check the ingredient list on all packaged foods. Choose products with ingredient lists that:
 - Are easy to understand
 - Sound like food
 - Do not have a lot of sugar (such as corn syrup, dextrose, molasses, honey and fruit-juice concentrate)
 - Do not include partially-hydrogenated oils or trans fats
- Check the Nutrition Facts Label. Pay attention to the serving size and the number of servings in a package. Then compare calories, fiber and sodium.

Choose less sodium.

Too much sodium (salt) can increase blood pressure and your risk of heart attack and stroke. Most people get more sodium than the recommended limit of 2,300 mg per day—about one teaspoon of salt.

How to Save Money

- Stick to a plan. Make a shopping list before you go, and avoid shopping while hungry.
- Look out for the best deal. Check weekly grocery store ads or circulars for sales and coupons for healthy options.
- Make the most of what you buy. Pick ingredients you can use in multiple recipes and use as many parts of each vegetable as you can.
 - Make black bean tacos for dinner. Add the leftover beans to a soup.
 - Roast beets and chicken for a salad. Use leftover chicken and beet greens in a stir-fry.
- To find the best value when products are in different-sized containers, compare unit price. The food with the lower unit price is the better value.

Tips for Parents:

- Use your time at the store to teach children about healthy food options. Read food labels together and compare foods.
- Let your kids be “produce pickers.” Have them help pick out fruits and vegetables at the store or farmers' market.

Need help buying healthy food for you or your family? You may be eligible for financial assistance.

New York State Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

Visit www.health.ny.gov and search “WIC” or call 800-522-5006 (TTY access at 800-655-1789).

New York City Human Resources Administration Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps

Visit nyc.gov/hra and search “How to apply for SNAP” or call the HRA Infoline at 718-557-1399.



Outside Aisles:

Shop here most of the time for fresh, whole foods.

Dairy/Eggs

Meat/Poultry/Seafood

Deli

Frozen Fruits and Veggies

Center Aisles:
 Shop here for things such as high-fiber cereal, nut butters, whole grains, nuts, dried fruit and canned beans.

Fresh Fruits and Veggies

Fresh Breads

Cash Registers





Cook Nutritious Meals

Home-cooked meals are usually more nutritious and less expensive than meals eaten out. Cooking at home lets you use fresher ingredients and less salt, saves you money, and lets you control your portions. Use these tips to make cooking healthy, easy and affordable.

- Plan meals for the week using the healthy plate planner.
 - Save more complex meals for days you know you'll have more time to prep and cook.
 - Cook extra and use the leftovers on a night when you have less time. Freeze or refrigerate leftovers right away.
- Use whole foods (fresh fruit and vegetables, lean proteins and whole grains) as much as possible.
 - Chop vegetables ahead of time, when possible. Save some for quick snacks.
 - Add vegetables to soups, stews and sauces.

- Skip pre-made pasta sauce and make your own: Low-sodium canned tomatoes + onions + fresh veggies of your choice = a delicious garden inspired sauce.
- Add fruit to hot or cold cereal, yogurt or salads.
- Start your day with oatmeal (with no sugar) instead of sugary cereal. Try adding cinnamon and whole fruit for sweetness.
- When baking, substitute all or some of the white flour for whole-wheat flour.
- Seasonings like adobo, garlic salt and lemon pepper often have salt. For added flavor without salt, use oregano, basil, celery seed, curry powder, cayenne pepper or fresh herbs.
- Baking, broiling, grilling, poaching, stir-frying and steaming are healthy ways to cook.
- Use recipes that you can cook in one pot to save time on preparation and dishes.
- Look for simple recipes: Visit a cooking demonstration and nutrition workshop at participating farmers' markets from July to November.
- Cook with friends or families. Make it a tradition and take turns cooking for one another.
- Turn off the TV during mealtime to avoid overeating.
- Remove serving bowls or platters (except vegetables) from the table after everyone has had the first helping.

Tips for Parents:

- Make mealtime family time. Cook and eat with your children.
- Create a fun and relaxed mealtime environment. Turn off the TV and sit together as a family.
- Let children serve themselves.





Eat Right When Eating Out

Food servings are bigger today. Some restaurant entrees or fast-food meals have more than 1,500 calories—almost as many calories as you should have for the whole day. And almost 80% of the salt we consume comes from packaged food and restaurants, not from the salt shaker.

Follow these tips when you eat out:

- When available, check calories on menu boards and ask for nutrition information.
 - To see the nutritional content of food sold at the nation's largest restaurant chains, visit menustat.org.
- Ask for dressings, sauces or other toppings on the side so that you can control how much you add.
- Ask for your food to be prepared with no salt added.
- Pick healthier sides like salads or steamed vegetables.
- Share your meal with a friend, or take half home for later.
- Look for items on the menu that are steamed, grilled or broiled instead of fried or sautéed.
- Skip the bread basket, chips or fries.

Easy tips for a healthy weight:

- Eat breakfast, lunch and dinner. Skipping meals will make you hungrier and less likely to choose healthy options the next time you eat.
- Eat slowly to avoid overeating. It takes about 20 minutes for your stomach to tell your brain that you are full.
- Drink water with every meal. It fills you up.
- Have a broth-based soup or green salad at the start of a meal.
- Get seven to eight hours of sleep a night. Lack of sleep is associated with weight gain.
- Choose high-fiber foods like fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains to feel full for longer and on fewer calories.





ACTIVE LIVING

Regular physical activity can help you:

- Prevent many chronic diseases
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Improve your mood
- Strengthen and protect bones, muscles and joints
- Sleep better

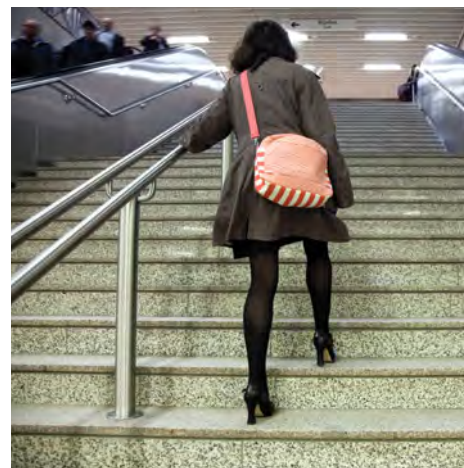
Adults should get at least 30 minutes of physical activity, five days a week. Youth need at least 60 minutes every day.

You don't have to go to the gym to be active.



Everyday Activities

- Walking, cleaning, pushing a stroller, gardening, taking the stairs
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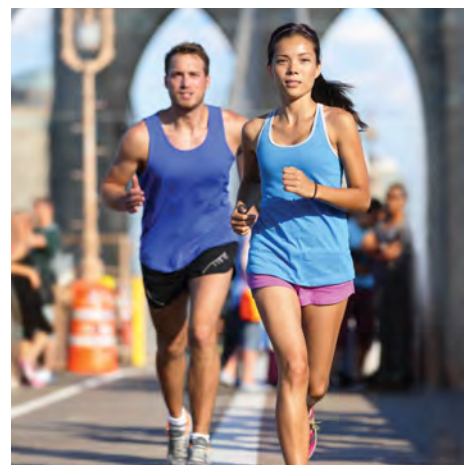


Sports and Exercise

- Brisk walking, running, swimming, biking, lifting weights, playing basketball, taking an aerobics or Zumba class

Talk to your doctor to find out which activities are safe for you.

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Set Goals

- Set a goal you can meet and write it down. When you meet a goal, reward yourself.
- You are more likely to stick to your goals if you choose activities you enjoy.
- Vary your exercises to benefit your body in different ways and avoid getting bored.
 - Aerobic activities (like brisk walking, running)
 - Muscle-strengthening activities (like pushups, sit-ups, weight lifting)
 - Bone-strengthening activities (like jumping)
 - Balance and stretching activities (like yoga, stretching, martial arts)

Remember that any amount of exercise is better than none.

Tips for Parents:

- Involve kids in chores around the house such as vacuuming, sweeping and making beds.
- When celebrating as a family, do something active such as a trip to the park or zoo.
- Turn off the TV. Instead, dance to music, go for a walk or play an active game.





Build Activity into Your Day

- Swap your regular meetings for “walking meetings”—step outside with your coworkers and plan or brainstorm while you walk. The fresh air can inspire new ideas and increase your productivity.
- Spread multiple 10-minute workouts throughout your day. Take advantage of free or low-cost fitness classes online or in your neighborhood.
- Buy your own weights, fitness bands or yoga mat to use at home.
- Take a walk as a family after a meal.

Join a walking group in your neighborhood or find free and low-cost fitness ideas at [BeFitNYC.org](https://www.befitnyc.org).

- Shape Up NYC offers free fitness classes every week in many locations. To find a Shape Up class in your neighborhood, visit [nycgovparks.org](https://www.nycgovparks.org) and search “Shape Up NYC.”

Get a Day’s Workout a Little at a Time

- Get off the subway a stop early — 10 min.
- Walk briskly to and from lunch — 20 min.
- Bike to the farmers’ market — 15 min.
- Chase the kids around the playground — 15 min.

Adds up to a 60 min. workout!

- Walk briskly to run errands — 20 min.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator — 5 min.
- Park your car a few blocks from work — 5 min.

Adds up to a 30 min. workout!



Make NYC Your Gym


- Enjoy New York City’s walkable landmarks and thousands of miles of sidewalks, walkways and green spaces.
- More than a million New Yorkers bike to school, to work or for fun. Biking is a convenient and cheap way to get around the city. Remember to wear a helmet!

How New Yorkers stay active

Ingrid — My approach has been to walk to the park, then run as much as I can in between walking. After a few weeks, I could gradually do more, until finally I was able to do a loop around the Central Park reservoir without stopping. Also I found that doing hills helped make flat surfaces easier.

Beauregard — I walk to Manhattan from Brooklyn and vice versa all the time and I don’t even drink soda. Hooray for me! Oh and I love vegetables too!





Interested in biking? Visit nyc.gov/dot and search “Bicyclists” and “Bike maps”

Resources

- New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
 - Visit nyc.gov and search “Healthy Eating” for more information on healthy eating and active living.
 - Text SoGood to 877-877 or visit nyc.gov and search “farmers’ markets” to find a farmers’ market near you.
 - Learn or share health tips on social media.
 - Facebook: facebook.com/EatingHealthyNYC
 - Twitter: @nychealthy
 - Instagram: nychealthy
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Dietary guidelines
 - Visit health.gov/dietaryguidelines
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Tips and tools to maintain a healthy weight
 - Visit www.cdc.gov/healthyweight
- American Heart Association
 - Visit www.heart.org
- Choose My Plate
 - Visit www.choosemyplate.gov and search “Healthy Eating on a Budget” or “SuperTracker”

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Health