

## April Showers Bring...

THIS SPRING, TAKE THE  
#EATTHE RAINBOW CHALLENGE!



The American Heart Association recommends eating eight or more fruit and vegetable servings every day. An average adult consuming 2,000 calories daily should aim for 4.5 cups of fruits and vegetables a day. Also, variety matters, so try a wide range of fruits and veggies!



For more recommendations visit <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/add-color>

### 5 Quick Tips to boost fruits & vegetables in your diet:

**Keep it colorful.** Challenge yourself to try fruits and vegetables of different colors.

**Add it on.** Add fruit and vegetables to foods you love. Try adding frozen peas to mac'n'cheese, veggies on top of pizza and slices of fruit on top of breakfast cereals or low-fat ice cream.

**Mix them up.** Add fruits and vegetables to food that's cooked or baked, or mix vegetables in with pasta sauces, lasagnas, casseroles, soups and omelets. Mixing fresh or frozen berries into pancakes, waffles or muffins is another great way to make fruits and veggies a part of every meal.

**Roast away.** Try roasting vegetables like cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, onions, carrots, tomatoes or eggplant. Long exposure to high heat will cause these foods to caramelize, which enhances their natural sweetness and reduces bitterness.

**Sip smoothies.** Smoothies are a great way to increase the amount of fruit you eat and they're really easy to make. A basic smoothie is just frozen fruit, some low-fat or non-fat milk and/or yogurt, and 100% fruit juice all processed together in a blender until smooth.

## Bike Safety

Riding a bike is a great way to enjoy the weather and get your heart pumping! KidsHealth recommends wearing a bike helmet every time you ride, even if you're going for a short ride, and following these rules for you and your family:

1. Make sure your bike helmet fits you well.
2. Always wear your helmet the right way so it will protect you. Make sure it covers your forehead and don't let it tip back. Always fasten the straps.
3. Don't wear a hat under your helmet.
4. Take care of your helmet and don't throw it around. If it's damaged, it won't protect you as well when you need it.
5. Get a new helmet if you fall while you're on your bike and hit your head.
6. Put reflective stickers on your helmet so drivers can see you better.

# Spring Back into Activity Without Injury



By Rueben Nair, MD

Spring is here and many of us are heading outdoors to exercise. But before you jump into exercise and activities, it's important to take some simple steps to avoid strains and sprains – some of the most common sports injuries.

**Warm Up** – A simple 10-minute warm up gets your body ready for exercise by raising your core temperature, getting blood flowing to your muscles and focusing your mind on your performance.

**Hydrate** – Keeping hydrated during exercise and activity is a necessity. Sweating causes your body to lose water content, especially in the warmer weather, which increases risk for injury and heat-related illness. For most outdoor activities, water is fine. If your activity lasts for more than an hour, you may want to drink

something that will replace lost electrolytes. Also be sure to hydrate before, during and after your activity.

**Pace Yourself** – Don't dive in head first; build up to your planned activity. You may want to think about some initial activity that lightly works out your muscle groups to start conditioning your body to some of the rigors of your outdoor exercise routine.

**Know When to Stop** – Are your muscles feeling tired? Then stop. There's no benefit to pushing beyond your limit and risking a strain, sprain or worse – taking you longer to get back in the game.

**Change It Up** – If you tend to do the same exercise routine, try switching gears. You can work different muscles by trying different activities – which can help you avoid plateaus and reduces risk of injury from overuse.

Continue reading: <https://www.dupagemedicalgroup.com/health-topics/post/spring-back-into-activity-without-injury/>

## 12 Ways to Enhance Children's Activity This Spring

Start with small steps to get your family to move more. Making little changes can help everyone maintain a healthy weight.

For more tips on how to help your family live a healthier lifestyle, visit [We Can!](#)

1. Enjoy a family picnic in the park
2. Go for a hike
3. Ride a bike on a local trail
4. Start a family garden
5. Open the windows & listen to the rain



6. Take a run together
7. Go on an evening walk with the family- stop for yogurt ice cream
8. Get your family together for a round of miniature golf
9. Play a game of tag instead of watching television
10. Go old school. Help your children draw hopscotch or four square courts on the sidewalk
11. Plan a nature scavenger hunt. Pick up small nets and mason jars for kids to use to catch butterflies or interesting insects, and collect flowers in the neighborhood or at a local park.
12. Help your children organize a neighborhood softball or kickball game.