



**KAISER  
PERMANENTE.**

## MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES FOR WEIGHT LOSS AND MAINTENANCE FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

Parents are responsible for what is given to eat and the manner in which it is presented. They are also responsible to make sure that everyone in the family is treated equally.

The child is responsible for how much he eats and whether he eats. Older children must be ready to lose weight and accept changes in eating habits and exercise.

### Behavior Changes

1. Do not treat your child differently because he/she is overweight. Try to allow normal eating. Think through feeding problems in the same way you would for an average weight child.
2. Provide 3 meals and 1-2 snacks at regular times each day. Do not allow food at other times.
  - Do not snack after dinner on a regular basis.
  - Do not offer food as a reward.
  - Offer water for thirst. Even nutritious fruit juice can give too many calories.
  - Avoid very strict diets. Underfeeding can cause the child to be preoccupied with food and prone to overeat when unsupervised.
3. Cut down on feeding cues.
  - Keep cookies and high calorie treats out of sight.
  - Place less emphasis on desserts.
  - Encourage eating at the table only.
  - Avoid snacking in front of the television or in the bedroom.
4. Offer low-fat and low-sugar foods for meals and snacks.
  - Offer desserts in moderation.
  - Choose low-fat desserts when possible.
  - Avoid desserts and high calorie snacks between meals.
  - Do not use too many low-calorie substitutions.
5. Teach good eating habits.
  - Make meal times happy and not too stressful.
  - Eat slowly. Put down the fork, spoon or food while chewing or swallowing. Wait until you swallow to pick up the next bite.
  - Take a 1-2 minute break before second helpings.
6. Encourage exercise.
  - Allow the child to choose activities he enjoys.
  - Make the time to exercise available, but do not force your child.
  - Exercise more often as a family.
  - Some ideas are bike riding, rollerblading, basketball, swimming and walking.
7. Be aware of things that cannot be changed.
  - Realize each child has his own genetic potential for weight.
  - Encourage the child to eat only until full and then stop.
  - Do not overly restrict foods because it only makes them more important to the child.