

Grocery Shopping School for Teens

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

As your children become teens and young adults, they will soon live away from home. One of the greatest skills you can impart is helping them navigate a grocery store to make smart food choices while sticking to a budget.

Empower your teen by teaching them how to:

① Shop with a list. Teach teens to choose recipes and write a grocery list based on necessary ingredients. They can check what they have at home to avoid unnecessary duplication and reduce waste. **TEEN TIP:** Suggest they use a grocery shopping app to track what they need.

② Compare prices. Show teens how to compare unit prices to get the best value. Teach them to look for sales, use coupons and join store loyalty programs. **TEEN TIP:** Use your smartphone calculator to compare costs.

③ Try store brands. Your kids may recognize brand names due to marketing campaigns. Explain that store brands cost less and are just as good as name brands. **TEEN TIP:** Explain that companies with name brands often make the store brand; the former just have a different label and cost more.

④ Stick to a budget. Give your teen a set amount of money and have them shop for a week's worth of meals. This helps them understand food costs and the importance of prioritizing needs over wants. **TEEN TIP:** If they are under budget, let them keep the change.

⑤ Avoid impulse buys.

Grocery stores are designed to tempt shoppers into buying extras, especially gum and candy, at the checkout. Teach your teen to stick to their list. **TEEN TIP:** Eat before you head to the store, so you are less likely to be tempted by impulse purchases.



Exercise with a Splash

Looking for a cool, low-impact way to stay fit and ease pain? Try aquatic exercise. Water workouts are gentle on joints, bones and muscles while providing natural resistance to build strength. They can boost heart health, reduce stress, relieve osteoarthritis pain and improve endurance. Water workouts are ideal for all ages, including older adults, and are accessible even to non-swimmers.

Here are a few ways you can exercise with a splash:

Water walking is something almost anyone can do. Start by walking in water that is waist high, and walk as you normally do with your arms swinging front and back. Keep your back straight and tighten your abdominal muscles to prevent leaning. Once you feel confident, you can move to deeper water and repeat the same thing, using a pool noodle, flotation belt or life vest to help you stay above the water. **Tip:** Wear water shoes to prevent slipping.

Water aerobics makes fitness fun. Because it involves your upper, middle and lower body, you gain flexibility, increase your heart rate, build strength and increase endurance. **Tip:** Warm up first by water walking and gently moving your arms for five to ten minutes.

Swimming is a great whole-body exercise, since it uses all of your muscles. It has many health benefits, such as increasing lung capacity, toning and strengthening muscles, reducing body fat, burning calories, and promoting quality sleep, as well as improving mental health and heart health. Swimming is low impact, which means even those with joint or muscle pain can get a good workout. **Tip:** Use a pool noodle or kickboard to help you float while kicking with your legs.

Wearable Fitness Tech: Pros and Cons

Fitness trackers have become a staple in today's fitness-conscious world, changing how we approach health and wellness. But do their benefits outweigh their limitations? Contemplate these pros and cons:

PROS:

Motivating: Wearing a fitness tracker can provide constant motivation to finish your steps goal, burn calories and move every hour.

Monitoring: Tracking vital signs can give you a better snapshot of your overall health. Some trackers can not only track your heart rate but also your oxygen levels, temperature and perspiration.

Analysis: Most trackers can provide valuable insights into your sleep quality. Using sensors, trackers can estimate sleep duration, quality and different sleep stages (light, deep, REM) based on heart rate and movement. This can help you determine if you have any sleep issues and adjust your habits for better sleep.

Syncing: Most trackers can share with other devices, allowing you to store and analyze data. This information can also be shared with your health care provider, offering them useful information. In some cases, data can be transmitted directly to your provider in real time for immediate review and assessment.



CONS:

Privacy: Since trackers collect personal data, there is a risk of it being compromised or exploited. Monitor your data's security.

Accuracy: The reliability of fitness trackers can vary depending on the device and the person wearing it. Activities, such as strength training, swimming or high-intensity interval training, can skew movement tracking and calorie estimates.

Cost: Fitness trackers range from \$50 to \$1,000. Higher-priced models typically include more features.

Over-reliance: Some people can become obsessed with the data and reaching their goals, leading to anxiety and excessive exercising.

Q: Anxiety about medical tests?

A: It's common to worry about the unknown, such as an unfamiliar medical procedure or pending test results that might bring bad news. For some people, such worries are just passing thoughts, but when they persist, they can trigger other anxiety symptoms, such as racing pulse, shallow breathing, stomach upset, muscle tension or difficulty sleeping.

To keep worries in check, try these approaches:

- **Stay informed.** Explain your concerns to your health care provider, and try to get a better understanding of your situation, such as what the test entails, when you can expect results or how to interpret the results. If you do online research, stick to reputable sources and focus on facts, not worst-case scenarios.
- **Reach out.** Confide in trusted friends, family members or patient support groups.
- **Distract yourself.** Get involved in engaging activities, whether reading, music, exercise or hobbies.
- **Relax your body.** Learn technique, such as deep breathing, mindfulness or guided imagery. — Eric Endlich, PhD



Attention, Grill Masters

There are approximately 9,500 grill-related burns annually, with more than 22,000 ER visits from grill injuries between 2017 and 2021, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Stay safe while firing up the grill these steps.

Before grilling:

- Check gas lines for leaks, cracks, sharp bends or brittleness. **Tip:** Rub soapy water on lines and look for bubbling.
- Inspect the grill for rust.
- Clean grates and grease pans.
- Place the grill on a flat, non-wood surface at least ten feet from buildings. If it's on a wood deck, use a heat- or fire-resistant mat.
- Open the grill lid before turning on the gas. If you smell gas but see no flame, shut off the gas and turn off the grill. Call the fire department if the smell persists.

While grilling:

- Wear fitted clothing, roll up your sleeves and tie back long hair.
- Grill in a well-ventilated area — never indoors, in a tent or camper.
- Keep a fire extinguisher nearby and know how to use it.
- Store combustibles a safe distance from the grill, and use only charcoal-specific lighter fluid. Never add starter fluid to an active fire or hot coals.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away while grilling.
- Never leave a hot grill unattended.
- Cook food to a safe internal temperature. Check [foodsafety.gov](https://www.foodsafety.gov) for a grilling temperature chart.
- After use, close the gas valve, turn off propane and keep flammable materials away — charcoal stays hot for hours.

