

January 2025

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Blank Children's Hospital
UnityPoint Health

A department of UnityPoint Health - Des Moines - Iowa Methodist Medical Center

Explore!

Let's start 2025 off with getting outside! The [First Day Hike](#) is an initiative of the American State Parks organization encouraging everyone to get outside and take a hike in a park to launch the New Year. Hundreds of guided hikes are offered in all 50 states. Check out the Iowa DNR website for a list of First Day Hikes near you or create your own!

Snack Attack

- Greek Yogurt & Apple Slices/Berries
 - Sting Cheese & Grapes
 - Hard Boiled Egg & a Banana
- Vegetable Roll-Up (spread hummus or cream cheese on a whole wheat tortilla and add veggies)
 - Celery with Nut Butter and Raisins
 - Sliced Pairs with Ricotta Cheese
 - Popcorn
 - Bake Sweet Potato Fries
- Mini Pizzas (1/2 of whole wheat English muffin with tomato sauce, cheese and veggies)

Family Fitness

Make January Family Fitness month! Research has shown that when families exercise together, all family members are more likely to stay active over the course of their lifetimes and have overall healthier habits compared to families who each do activity on their own or expect the children to exercise without parent participation.

Take a walk together

Participate in a fitness challenge

Play basketball at a park

Start creating healthy habits for the New Year together! Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity. (An hour is even better!)

Try a new family recipe:

Check out the Family Dinner Project at:

<https://thefamilydinnerproject.org>

They have sections under food for budget friendly, dairy-free, gluten-free, quick and vegetarian meals.

Did you know that experts have found that kids who eat regularly with their families are more likely to eat fruits, vegetables, and whole grains?

So, no matter how busy life may seem, it's important to make family meals a priority.



Kid-Friendly Meals for Cold Days

Soups – When it comes to soups, the options are endless. Spice up kid-favorite chicken noodle soup by adding carrots, celery and even broccoli or red pepper. Encourage kids to try other soup varieties like vegetable, minestrone, lentil, potato, broccoli cheese, tortilla or tomato. Soups are a great (and warm) way to encourage kids to eat their vegetables and get a healthy portion of protein. If buying canned soup, check the food label and be mindful to limit the amount of sodium.

Hot sandwiches – Swap out your child's typical sandwich for a hot "panini" style deli sandwich. Toast two slices of whole-grain bread before adding a lean protein. Add a piece of cheese and some color with tomato or leafy greens.

Oatmeal – Instead of cold breakfast cereal, start kids' mornings off with a bowl of warm oatmeal. Add fruit, cinnamon, applesauce or a small amount of honey to add a tasty burst of flavor.

Brenton Skating Plaza (DSM)

Jan. 18th: Sensory Skate: a time for those with sensory processing challenges to enjoy a time to ice skate. **9:30-11:30am (\$5.00)**

Jan. 20th: Donate a non-perishable food item or adult-sized pair of new socks for free admission and skate rental from **12:00pm-9:00pm**

Move Jar

Create a "Move Jar" by filling a jar (or any container) with slips of paper with words, phrases or drawings that call for movement. For example, animals or movements like a "monster walk". Have each person pick a movement for you to do together. Add new ones each week!

Paper Plate Fitness

Want an easy way to get in some physical activity indoors? This is it! Paper plates can be used to do various strength exercises while on carpet. The plates slide on the floor and require you to stabilize yourself to do each exercise. Depending on the exercise, you put your feet or hands on the plates and move them in whatever the required direction is by sliding on the floor. You may need to start slowly to get the hang of it. For the circuit below, start with 10 repetitions, or 30 seconds, of each exercise. If you are able to hold your form without wobbling, add in a second set of 5 repetitions or 15 more seconds.

Side Skaters	Shoulder Extensions
Alternating Leg Extensions	Front Snow Angels
Mountain Climbers	Seated Bicycles
Runners Lunge	In, Out, Open, Close
Sliding Jumping Jacks	

This [video](#) shows you how to do all of the exercises.



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For an electronic version with clickable links, go to: <https://www.unitypoint.org/blankchildrens/fitness-and-nutrition-calendar.aspx>