

Choices to make

Healthy Living

Fit as a fiddle

Genesis 1:26-29

Standard

Setting the scene

Food glorious food!

Eating is something we all have to do and most of us enjoy it. Food gives us energy which allows us to do all the things we like. Some foods are good for us and some not so good.

Exercise is also very important in helping to keep us healthy. Let us consider how we can have a healthy lifestyle.

Healthy eating

God has given us everything we need to keep healthy. In Genesis 1:29 we read that God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food."

In order for your body to work properly it needs a balanced diet. There are four main food groups - protein, carbohydrate, fat and dietary fibre. Can you list some of the foods which fall into each group?

- Protein - chicken, eggs, milk
- Carbohydrates - pasta, bread, potatoes
- Dietary Fibre - rice, bananas, peas
- Fat - crisps, chips, cakes

To have a balanced diet you need to take different amounts of food from these groups e.g. plenty of carbohydrates and fibre, less protein and little fat.

Not so healthy eating

If we eat the foods which are not so good for our bodies all the time, our bodies will not be able to do all the things we want to do.

Foods that are considered unhealthy are those which contain too much salt, sugar and fat. The way food is cooked is also important. If it is cooked in fat (such as potatoes when made into chips or crisps) it is not so healthy. If it is grilled or casseroled, it is much healthier.

Make a list of foods you will try to cut down on.

Eating a little of fatty and sugary food is all right; however, some people like diabetics require a special diet. A healthy, balanced diet doesn't have to be a boring, tasteless one.

Exercise

Exercise is important in helping to keep you healthy. Ask the group to call out the sports they take part in, then grade the answers with the most effective exercise at the top and the least at the bottom.

Do you know what happens to your heart when you exercise? - It beats faster.

What happens if you never exercise? - You'll be unfit and may become ill.

You can monitor your heart beats by taking your pulse before and after some exercise.

Do you know how to take your pulse? - Put your first two fingers of one hand on the inside of the other wrist, just below the thumb and you should be able to feel your pulse and count the beats per minute.

Find out for yourself what happens to your heart when you exercise.

Take your pulse. Run up some stairs or around the room three times and take your pulse again. Has it gone up? The pulse rate for a healthy adult when resting is about 60 to 80 beats per minute and for a child about 100 beats a minute. Now compare your measurements. If you are aiming to be fit, you should have three twenty minute periods of exercise each week.

Summing up

God wants us to be fit and healthy so that we can live life to the full and enjoy it. Therefore, He wants us to eat the right foods and keep ourselves fit through exercise. Perhaps you could list certain unhealthy foods which you will not eat too often and write a plan for a week which shows the exercise you are going to take.

Teaching aim

To encourage the group to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Activities

- Activity Sheet "Choices to make - 1".

Resources

Music

- MP 624 Take my life and let it be
- MP 732 We plough the fields and scatter

Discussion points

- How do we know that God wants us to eat healthy food?
- Read Daniel 1:3-16 and discuss in groups the choice that Daniel and his friends made about the king's food and drink.
- What do young people think about the effects on their bodies of the food they eat and exercise or lack of it?

Prayer points

Thank God for:

- All the healthy food He provides.
- His love for us.

Pray for:

- Those who have health problems.
- Young people who may have allergies to certain food.

Healthy Living

1. List the foods below in the food group to which they mainly belong.

chicken, potatoes, cakes, milk, bread, eggs, rice, bananas, chips, crisps, pasta, peas

| Protein | Carbohydrate | Fat | Dietary Fibre |
|---------|--------------|-----|---------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

2. What happens to your heart when you exercise?

3. What happens if you never exercise?

4. Explain how to take your pulse?

5. Fill in the missing words.

Foods that are considered unhealthy are those which contain too much _____, _____ and _____.

7. How much exercise should you aim for each week?

8. God has given us everything we need to keep healthy. Fill in the missing words, from the list below, from what God said in Genesis 1:29:

"I give you every _____ plant on the face of the _____ earth and every _____ that has _____ with seed in it. They will be yours for _____."

fruit whole tree food seed-bearing

9. Why do Christians believe that they have a responsibility to look after their bodies. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
