

# Help! You're the Doctor

1. Members of the Lee family have been told by a doctor that they should eat more foods that contain lots of vitamins and minerals. The family eats a lot of foods from the grain, dairy, and protein food groups. Popular family dinners are spaghetti with meatballs, Italian bread, and chocolate milk, as well as steak, mashed potatoes, and white rolls with butter. The family members need a greater variety of foods in their daily diet.

List some foods that would help the Lee family improve its diet. List five foods that contain lots of vitamins and minerals.

**Answer:** The Lee family needs to eat more fruits and vegetables. Colorful fruits and vegetables are a wonderful source of vitamins and minerals, and so eating at least five servings of these each day would be a great improvement to the Lee family diet. Eating even more servings would be better. Lee family members should include dark-green and orange vegetables for vitamin A, and citrus fruits are a great way to get vitamin C. Instead of refined grains such as white rolls and pasta, they should choose 100% whole-wheat spaghetti, whole-grain breads, and whole-grain side dishes (brown rice, barley, bulgur, millet, quinoa) for more nutrients as well as fiber. Because they like dairy, they should switch to unflavored milk, or drink water and choose other healthy sources of dairy, such as a small amount of cheese on their spaghetti or plain yogurt in a side dish. Finally, they could limit or replace foods that provide high amounts of unhealthy fat (such as meatballs, butter, and steak) with healthy protein and foods that provide healthy fat (e.g., making meatballs out of ground chicken or turkey, dipping whole-grain bread in olive oil, eating sautéed vegetables and fish instead of steak).

2. James, a fifth-grade student, eats toast for breakfast and a roast beef sandwich for lunch. He eats an apple or orange each day, and he always has one type of vegetable for his evening meal along with chicken or fish. He goes to the park or beach with his family on weekends, but during the week his only exercise is walking 150 yards (137 m) from his home to his school.

Which food group (or groups) is/are missing from James's diet? Why is this food group (or these food groups) important? What else could James do to improve his health? (Use the Eat Well & Keep Moving Fortune Teller for ideas.)

**Answer:** James is missing foods from the dairy group. He can add unsweetened dairy foods such as plain yogurt and unflavored milk to his diet. Dairy products provide the calcium his body needs to build and maintain strong bones and teeth. If James cannot drink milk, nondairy calcium-fortified milks (such as unflavored rice milk or soy milk) are a good substitute. James should also eat more varieties of fruit and vegetables to benefit from the many vitamins and minerals they provide. He also needs to find ways to exercise during the week.

3. Maria plays basketball for two hours each afternoon at the school gym. Recently, she noticed that she has no energy after the first hour, which is something that never used to happen. She has been watching a lot of television and staying up late at night, and

she wakes up at 6:00 each morning to go to school. Sometimes she skips breakfast because she has slept through her alarm.

List two reasons Maria may not have enough energy. How can she improve her energy level?

**Answer:** The reason Maria doesn't have enough energy to play basketball for more than an hour is likely a combination of factors. By staying up late and waking early, Maria is not getting enough sleep, which makes her feel tired and less energetic throughout the day. This may be especially true on the days that she skips breakfast. In addition, she may not be eating foods that provide her body with energy, such as healthy carbohydrate foods. Carbohydrate is the fuel for the muscles. Foods that are excellent sources of carbohydrate can be found in all food groups, but Maria should focus on foods with many vitamins and minerals, such as whole grains and many fruits and vegetables. Turning off the TV at night to get more sleep and start the day refreshed, eating a balanced breakfast, and choosing some healthy carbohydrate snacks can all give her the energy she needs to play basketball all afternoon. Unhealthy sources of carbohydrate, including foods made with refined grains and foods and drinks with added sugar such as cookies, candy bars, and soda, may give her a quick boost, but they won't keep her energy levels high for an entire afternoon of play.

From L.W.Y. Cheung, H. Dart, S. Kalin, B. Otis, and S.L. Gortmaker, 2016, *Eat Well & Keep Moving*, 3rd ed. (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics).