

## **Lesson: Fitness is Fun**

### **Supplies Needed:**

- 4.5\_LV\_Fitness-Is-Fun-Visual

### **Goals:**

- Students will understand how physical activity can help them feel good.
- Students will understand that physical activity is fun.
- Students will know fun ways to be more physically active.

### **Background:**

The USDA recommends that children between the ages of 6-17 should get total of 60 minutes of activity each day. Children today are spending more time in front of the screen (computer, television, and video games) and as a result are less active. Physical activity strengthens the heart, helps decrease anxiety, helps you feel better about yourself and helps to prevent certain diseases. Physical activity also helps in weight management.

People with Type II diabetes have low insulin sensitivity. Insulin is a hormone in the blood that is responsible for taking the sugar in your blood and delivering it to the cells to use as energy or to store. Insulin works best when the person is at a healthy weight

Studies have shown that people spending more time in parks with trees and plants experience an increase in their white blood cell count which increases their immune function. This is due to chemicals that plants emit into the air called phytoncides. These chemicals prevent the plants from rotting and pesky insects. It is thought that this chemical helps to increase our immunities.

Hormones are chemical messengers that are made in one part of the body and then go to other parts of the body to help the cells and organs function. For instance, insulin is a hormone that is made by the pancreas and travels through the blood to help cells use glucose for energy.

### **Lesson:**

Who can remind the class why it is important to eat less sugar?

*(Excessive sugar may cause type 2 diabetes, weight gain and tooth decay.)*

The body processes natural sugars the same way it processes added sugars. Does anyone remember why it is better to eat foods with natural sugars?

*(These foods are usually Go Foods because they have fiber and other vitamins and minerals that our bodies need.)*

Today we are going to talk about something we should be doing for 60 minutes every day, in addition to eating Go Foods, in order to stay healthy. Any guesses?  
*(Moving, physical activity, exercise)*

**(Show slide 1.)** Have any of you ever been in a bad mood? When you are in a bad mood do you know why? It is important to take a moment and think about why you are feeling the way you are. Sometimes you are tired, other times you are hungry. Take a moment and ask yourself; have I been getting 10-11 hours of sleep? Am I hungry? Am I thirsty? Am I sick? Am I worried about something?

Lack of sleep can make you cranky. Children your age need 10-11 hours of sleep every night in order for your body to grow, learn and feel good.

If you have to get up at 7 am for school, what time do you need to go to bed at night to get 10 hours of sleep?  
*(9 pm)*

How many of you go to bed by 9 pm on school nights? Sleep is just as important as eating go foods for a healthy body!

What does it feel like to be hungry?  
*(Tired, gurgling in stomach, empty feeling, weak)*

What does it feel like to be thirsty?  
*(Dry throat, tired).*

Who remembers what to do if you cannot decide if you are hungry or thirsty? *(Drink a glass of water and wait a few minutes. If not satisfied, prepare a great tasting Go Food snack).*

If you are not hungry, tired, thirsty, or sick then maybe there is another reason you are in a bad mood. Can anyone think about something else you can do to help with these feelings?  
*(Movement or exercise)*

**(Show slide 2.)** When moving fast enough to get your heart rate up for 20 minutes or more, your body releases hormones called endorphins/feel good hormones. People often say how refreshed they feel after physical activity. This may have something to do with the feel good hormones.

**(Show slide 3.)** In addition to making you feel good, studies suggest that participating in physical activity before learning may help you remember new things. Maybe it is a good idea to go to the park, walk, ride your bike or play some games outside before sitting down to study for a test.

Being more active also reduces the risk of certain diseases like heart disease and Type II diabetes. For example, physical activity strengthens the heart and lowers the chance of having a stroke or heart attack. Did you know that your heart is really a muscle? When our heart rate is increased during physical activity, we are making our heart muscle stronger and healthier.

Physical activity can reduce the risk of Type II Diabetes by helping people lose weight or maintain a healthy weight. The hormone that helps control blood sugar levels works best when the person is at a healthy weight. Did you know that people that take a brisk walk for 60 minutes a day can reduce their chance of getting Type II diabetes by 34%?

Moving around can also help you forget about a disagreement you had with a friend or how much you are worried about a test coming up. Moving decreases your stress. It is a mental escape. A time to rest your mind, laugh and have fun. With computers, games and television becoming so much a part of our lives we are sitting more and more and moving less and less.

**(Show slide 4.)** Make sure you limit your screen time to two hours each day at the most. This includes all computer time, video games and movies. This will give you more time to be active. Moving is just as important to your health as eating Go Foods, drinking water and getting enough sleep.

When we say you need to move more we are not asking you to run a marathon or work out in a gym, even though this is fun for some people. We are talking about moving your body. Enjoy activities that get you moving! Play with your family and friends. Try a sport you think you may enjoy.

**(Show slide 5.)** If the weather allows, take your games outside. Studies have shown that people spending more time in parks with trees and plants experience an increase in their white blood cell count which increases their immune function. Spending time in nature also lowers stress levels so you feel better than if you were cooped up inside all day.

When you move more your body uses the energy and water it has stored. What might you want to remember after running around outside or going for a bike ride?  
*(Drink water and have a good tasting go food snack)*

We need to remember to drink water throughout the day to keep our bodies hydrated. Why should we drink water rather than sports drinks or sodas?  
*(Sports drinks and sodas have added sugar and little or no nutrients. They are once in a while drinks.)*

What about 100% juice? Can we drink that?  
*(Yes, but only 1 cup per day. It has vitamins, minerals and sugar but is lacking the fiber of whole fruits.)*

What about milk?

*(Low-fat milk is a Go drink and will help your thirst and hunger. Milk has calcium and protein.)*

What are some ways to remember to drink your water?

*(Carry around a water bottle, drink water at meals)*

Physical activity should be fun. Can you all think of ways to move that would be fun for you? What games do you like to play? Maybe a game you play during recess?

**(Show slide 6.)** Let's look at some other ideas:

- Make plans with a friend to meet at a park once a week.
- Play hopscotch.
- Ride bikes, scooters, pogo sticks or use stilts.
- Jump rope.
- Make a fort.
- Go sledding.
- Go ice skating.
- Wash a parent's car and play with the hose.
- Rake leaves and jump in the pile.
- Go to the beach and dig in the sand.
- Play with your pets.

**(Show slide 7.)** Remember, moving is something you want to do for at least 60 minutes every day. It is not something you can do one time and not have to do it again. Your body is made to move. So let's get moving!

**Optional Activity if time allows:**

Everybody stand up and push in your chairs. I am going to make a small movement, like clapping my hands. Next I want you to copy me by clapping your hands. I will then clap my hands and then add a new movement. You will repeat clapping hands and the new movement. I will keep adding movements asking you to repeat them until we can't remember the order or the movements. The point is to see how many movements we can tie together without forgetting them.

Ready? **(Clap hands and have the students repeat.)**

**References:**

<http://abcnews.go.com/WN/exercise-school-leads-learning/story?id=10371315>

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