"Courage is a muscle—we strengthen it with use."

—Ruth Gordon, writer and actress

Staying Fit

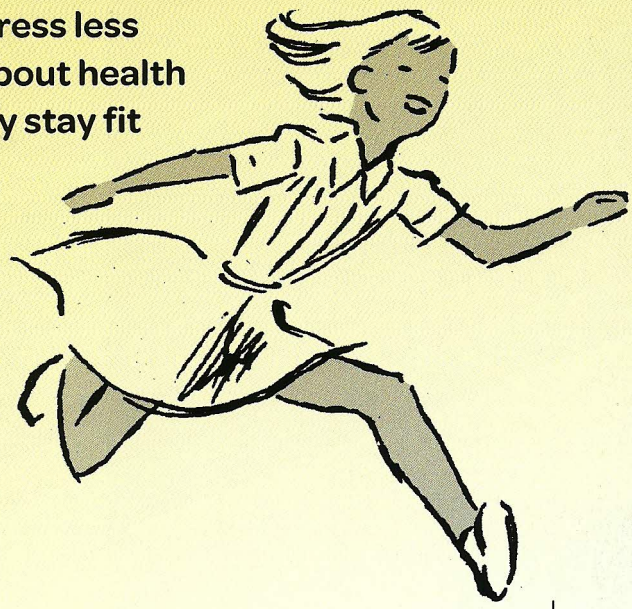
You need a fit body and mind to do all your favorite things, from roller skating to writing in your diary to sharing advice with friends. Jump into this badge to figure out what fitness, food, and fun you need to stay strong for life.

Steps

1. Start moving!
2. Keep your fit body fueled
3. Know how to stress less
4. Get the truth about health
5. Help your family stay fit

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know what I need to get strong and stay that way.

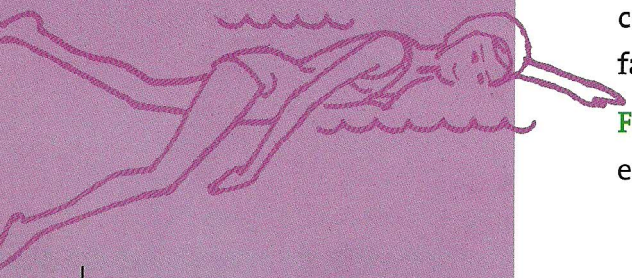


Our muscles and joints should be bent and stretched every day to take the kinks out, and keep them strong and flexible.

—Scouting for Girls, 1925

More to Explore

Keep a health diary. Write down something you did and how it made you feel, so you can look back and remember what made you feel good.



Every step has three choices. Do ONE choice to complete each step. Inspired? Do more!

STEP 1 Start moving!

The most important part of healthy living is staying active. And to stay active, you have to find your favorite ways to move, so you'll want to keep going! Use this step to find the fun—and practice your choice for two weeks.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

☐ **Try 30 minutes of aerobic activity three times each week.** Aerobic activities are things that make your heart beat fast. Some fun ones are jump-roping, jogging, biking, and dancing. Mix and match any kind!

FOR MORE FUN: Make an activity chart listing friends' names down the side and five activities everyone wants to try along the top, creating a grid. When anyone does one of the activities, put a footprint in the correct square on the chart. Who can cross the "finish line" first?

OR

☐ **Find a way to make your day more active.** Doctors recommend walking 10,000 steps a day, so step up! For example, if you live in an apartment and usually take an elevator, take the stairs instead. Or if you ride the bus, march in place at the bus stop.

FOR MORE FUN: Track your steps with a friend to see who can take the most in a week.

OR

☐ **Forget being a couch potato.** Instead of just lying around, make an hour of TV time active at least three times a week. You might do leg lifts, sit-ups, or jumping jacks during commercial breaks. Or make up a game to jog in place really fast when your favorite characters speak.

FOR MORE FUN: Create a No Couch Potatoes Pledge for your entire family to sign.

STEP

2 Keep your fit body fueled

You can't stay fit without the fuel to move! Learn what your body needs to stay strong and fit. Before you start this step, review the USDA Food Pyramid with your Junior friends. Then put that information into action.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

☐ **Be a food-label detective.** Learn the basics of food labels—what information is there and what is important to know about each category. Then do a label hunt in your kitchen to find the most healthful snack. Compare at least three labels.

FOR MORE FUN: Make a food-label poster with your friends. Label what's good and not so good for you and hang it where your information can help others.

OR

☐ **Play a brainstorm game.** Brainstorm a list of healthful food categories, like foods high in vitamin C or leafy green veggies. Write each category on a separate piece of paper and fold it up. One at a time, each player draws a paper and reads the category aloud. Everyone then gets one minute to write down every food they can think of in that category.

FOR MORE FUN: Make it an alphabet challenge—list only foods that start with a particular letter. (You might find this one easier in the grocery store!)

OR

☐ **Nutrient scavenger hunt.** Choose five nutrients, like calcium, zinc, vitamin C, protein, and carbohydrates, and talk about why they're important. Then go on a hunt at the store or in a kitchen for foods that provide the highest percentages of those nutrients.

Fun FACT

A calorie is a unit of measurement of energy. Calories tell you how much fuel a food supplies your body.

utrition
rving Size 1/6 package (60g)
rvings Per Container 6

Mount Per Serving	Mix	Prepared
Calories	260	360
Calories from Fat	80	150
	% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 9g*	14%	26%
Saturated Fat 3.5g	18%	30%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%	1
Sodium 360mg	15%	20
Total Carbohydrate 46g	15%	16
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%	4
Sugars 28g		
Protein 2g		
Vitamin A	0%	
Vitamin C	0%	
Calcium	15%	
Iron	6%	

STEP

3 Know how to stress less

When our bodies move enough, rest enough, and get the right fuel, we tend to get less upset and worry less often—we stress less! Still, there are times when we need other ideas for how to feel better.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

☐ **Dear self . . .** You almost always feel better when you get your feelings out, even if you just share them with your diary! For a week, write or draw how you feel each day. Then take a week off, then record your feelings for another week. Could you tell the difference?

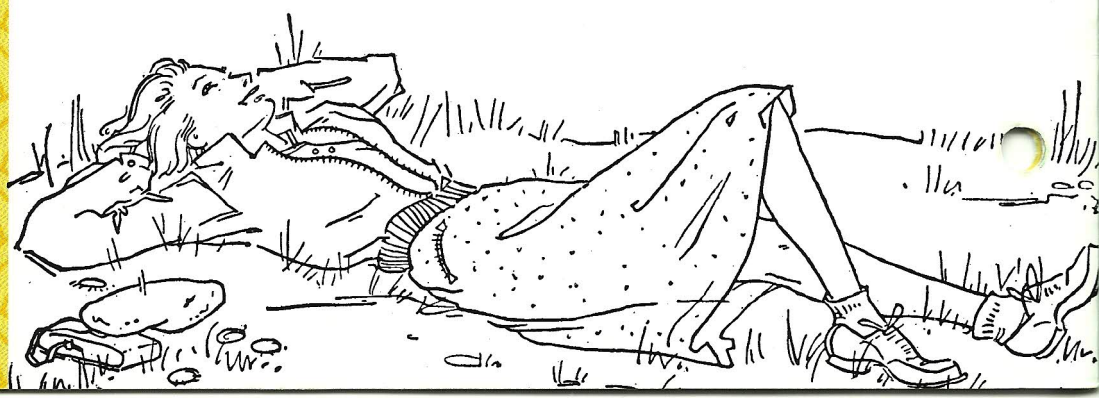
FOR MORE FUN: Write down something that makes you stressed. The next time it makes you feel that way, rip up the piece of paper and throw it away. Did it make you feel a little better?

OR

☐ **Helping others helps us.** Sometimes it helps your own stress if you can solve a problem for someone else. For the next two weeks, if you feel stressed, see if you can help a friend with a problem. Just having someone to talk to could make them feel better—and the same might be true for you!

OR

☐ **Create a stress-free zone.** Find a place in your home or outside that you can go when you feel stressed. Take a bag of your favorite things with you and spend 15 minutes there the next three times you need a break. Make it a quiet and relaxing place, or a loud dancing/jumping around area (so long as you're not stressing out someone else!).



RELAX YOUR MIND, BODY, AND SPIRIT WITH YOGA

Yoga is a type of exercise that began in India more than 5,000 years ago. It combines breathing, meditation, and stretching to help you relax your mind and body. (Some people say it relaxes their spirit, too.) Find a yoga book or website, or ask someone who knows yoga to help you try some poses. You can start with tree pose.

Breathing deeply (in yoga that's called *pranayama*) is a great way to relax—in a yoga pose or just on its own. Try it! Think of your chest as having three parts. When you breathe in, fill your belly, then your rib cage, then your upper chest. When you breathe out, reverse that. Think the words belly, ribs, chest as you're filling each part, so you go slowly.

Tree pose Stand up as straight and tall as you can. Lift your right leg by bending your knee and place your foot on the inside of your left leg. It can be above or below the knee, whichever is more comfortable. Now stretch your arms up like branches. Remember to breathe slowly in and out. Then try the pose with your other leg.

STEP

4 Get the truth about health

There are a lot of health ideas floating around—between friends, in the media, at school. Not all of these sources are accurate, so how do you separate fact from fiction? Use this step to help you.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

☐ **Review health websites.** In a group, search online for the answer to a health question. There are probably many! Review at least three answers. Then find an answer that has been reviewed by real medical professionals. Jot down the site so you can use it to find true and safe answers in the future.

OR

☐ **Talk to a health professional.** Visit a pediatrician, school nurse, pharmacist, or other trusted adult with health knowledge, or invite them to speak to your group. Ask for their top health tips for girls your age.

OR

☐ **Find truth in advertising.** Bring a health advertisement to the library. It might be for lotion, makeup, or shampoo. With the librarian's help, find out if the claims it makes are true.

FOR MORE FUN: Make a collage poster with the ad and the true health information and display it where it will help others.

STEP

5 Help your family stay fit

Why should you be the one having all the fun? Help your family become fit. Teach them some ideas you've learned throughout this badge. Then try one of these activities.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

☐ **Have a "slow food" dinner.** Help make a healthful dinner. Create the menu together, shop for ingredients, then take time to focus on food and eat together. Talk about your favorite flavors. You might even find a way to get a picky eater to try something new! Maybe even play a board game afterward?

OR

☐ **Come up with an active family activity.** Find something everyone can do together, then go do it! It could be a bike ride, a hike, a game around raking leaves in your yard, or a "get our chores done" challenge.

FOR MORE FUN: Create a family obstacle course!

OR

☐ **Have a family check-in night.** Sometimes families can get so busy that they forget to check on each other. Hold a family meeting in which everyone talks about their day and what made them feel especially good or bad. Help each other end the day on a happy note—maybe with a dance party or favorite mostly healthy treat.

Tip: Make it a family tradition. How about doing your activity every other week?

More to Explore

Make it technology free. Turn off TVs, computers, gaming systems, and cell phones and focus on face-to-face family fun. What happens to your stress levels without your gadgets? Start out once a month, and build!

Slow Food

"Slow Food" is the name of a movement started in Italy in 1989. It celebrates the opposite of fast food. Slow fooders slow down to pay attention to what they eat, how it tastes, where it comes from, and who grows it. It now has more than 150 member countries. Maybe there's a chapter in your area!