Enjoy healthy eating

Young adults with 22q11.2 deletion syndrome (22q or 22q11.2DS) may experience low calcium levels, constipation, and/or problems with their weight. Healthy eating habits are therefore important.

**Tips for young adults**

- Limit your intake of sugary drinks like pop, iced tea and juice. Drink these items only once in a while.

- Eat enough calcium. Add foods like low fat milk, cheese and yogurt, dark green leafy vegetables (such as broccoli, spinach, and kale), canned salmon (with bones) and almonds.

- Eat at least ½ cup (about the size of your fist) of fruits and/or vegetables with every meal.

- Drink about 4 glasses of water each day.

- Choose snacks that are natural and not processed. Unsalted nuts, fruits, raw vegetables, and low-fat yogurt are all great choices.

- Avoid “super-sizing” restaurant or fast food meals.

**Tips for caregivers**

- Reward your young adults for healthy eating habits.

- Stock up on healthier snacks and leave them in visible, easy-to-reach places. Strive to limit the amount of unhealthy foods in your home.

- Involve your young adults in food shopping and preparation. They will be more likely to taste the final dish.

- Remember to model healthy behaviours. If you aren’t eating it, neither will your young adults.

**Did you know…**

- Healthy eating habits will help you feel good.

- Up to 80% of individuals with 22q have a history of low calcium levels, which can cause seizures.

- Soft drinks (“pop” or “soda”) contain ingredients that prevent calcium from being absorbed in our bodies.

- The high levels of sugar in pop can cause cavities and weight gain.
Do you experience:

□ Problems with appetite or cravings?
□ Constipation or diarrhea?
□ Weight gain?
□ Heartburn?

If you answered yes to any of the above, you may benefit from nutrition counselling. Please talk to your doctor or dietitian about it.

Please contact us if you have any questions

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This fact sheet was produced in collaboration with the Good 2 Go Transition Program at The Hospital for Sick Children. www.sickkids.ca/good2go/

Note: 22q11.2 deletion syndrome (“22q” or “22q11.2DS”) has also been known as DiGeorge syndrome, velocardiofacial syndrome, and many other names. For more information, please visit www.22q.org/awareness-events/awareness/same-name-campaign/.