

# February 2026

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**Blank Children's Hospital**  
UnityPoint Health

A department of UnityPoint Health - Des Moines - Iowa Methodist Medical Center

### Calcium: It Does a Body Good

Calcium is a mineral found in some foods and drinks. Calcium helps to build strong bones and teeth.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) states most young people should drink these amounts of milk:

1-3 years of age: 2 cups per day

4-8 years of age: 3 cups per day

Preteens and teens: 4 cups per day

Other foods that contain calcium are: yogurt, smoothies (made with milk, yogurt and fresh fruit), cheese, kale, broccoli, cottage cheese, almonds and pinto beans.

### Warm Up Stretches/Cool Down Stretches

It's important to warm up before a workout to get your body ready to go and to prevent injury. It is just as important to give your body a chance to cool down with light activity and longer stretches after a hard work out. Let's start and end the month with this warm up and cool down routine.

Skips

Side shuffle

Knee to chest stretch

Overhead and side reach

Arm swings and circles

Leg swings

**Warm up:** Do each move

for 30 seconds. Repeat

the sequence 3 times.

**Cool Down:** Do each move

for 30 seconds going a little

slower than the warm up.

### Build a Better Breakfast

Breakfast is important! It gives you energy to start your day by "fueling" your body! It can help you to focus on work or school. It can help you to feel and act your best. If you are not super hungry in the morning, try something small like a cup of yogurt with fruit or a trail mix with raisins, nuts and cereal. Breakfast doesn't have to be complex. Keep it simple: Oatmeal with applesauce and milk, a waffle or pancake with fruit (blueberries work well), an English muffin with a slice of ham, egg and cheese. Try to choose whole grains when possible!

### **Fitness Deck**

This is a great activity for those days/evenings when you want to stay indoors. Just grab a deck of cards and assign a different activity to each suit. Hearts could be sit-ups, spades could be jumping jacks and so forth. Shuffle the deck and take turns drawing from the pile. The number on the card tells you the number of times you need to complete the activity. You will have to assign numbers to the Aces, Jacks, Queens and Kings.

### **Try It Out!**

#### **YOGA**

Yoga and mindfulness have been shown to improve both physical and mental health in school-age children ages 6-12 and can be beneficial to many ages. Yoga can help build strength and flexibility, improve focus and attention span, and reduce stress and anxiety.

Start simple and make it fun. Choose a different theme each week like arctic animals or superheroes and make poses like you think these animals or superheroes might do or look on-line for a family yoga session.

[Yoga for Kids! - YouTube](#)



### **Super Bowl Circuit**

It's the Big Game! Before you try out all those yummy Super Bowl snacks, get in a little activity first. We're bringing back our football workout! Try these exercises which are also drills many football teams use in practice. Do each exercise for 30 seconds. Repeat the circuit 3 times.

High knees                      Toe Touch straight kicks

Jumping jacks                  High-knee walking lunges

Backward walking lunges

Now it's time to watch some football!

### **Indoor and/or Outdoor Activities**

Obstacle Course

Build a fort

Hide and Seek

Picnic

Scavenger Hunt

Hopscotch

## National Days

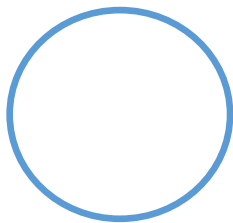
**National Protein Day**-Protein is essential to build muscle, help you feel full longer, and help you think clearer. Pick your favorite protein for a snack along with a healthy carbohydrate. Here are some options:

Cheese      Yogurt

Lean meats   Peanut/Nut Butter

Edamame      Hummus

**National Almond Day:** Almonds contain protein, fiber and calcium and are a nutritious snack that can help you feel full in between meals. Add them to a trail mix or add a spoonful of almond butter to your oatmeal or slice of fruit.



It's February, so that means Valentine's Day! What do people often like to eat on Valentine's Day? **Chocolate!** Here are some easy and healthy recipes to help you incorporate chocolate during this month!

### Dark Chocolate Banana Nut Pops-

[Dark Chocolate Banana Nut Pops \(bhg.com\)](http://bhg.com)



### Chocolate-Dipped Trail Bites

[Chocolate-Dipped Trail Bites \(bhg.com\)](http://bhg.com)



### Banana Pudding with Shaved Dark Chocolate

[Banana Pudding with Shaved Dark Chocolate \(bhg.com\)](http://bhg.com)



### Black Bean Brownies

[Black Bean Brownies \(allrecipes.com\)](http://allrecipes.com)



### Dark Chocolate Raspberry Truffles

[Dark Chocolate Raspberry Truffles | Amy's Healthy Baking \(amyshealthybaking.com\)](http://amyshealthybaking.com)



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For an electronic version with clickable links, go to:  
<https://www.unitypoint.org/blankchildrens/fitness-and-nutrition-calendar.aspx>