



### **Eating for Beauty**

There are so many amazing skills to learn and lots of badges to help inspire you. The Girls Guide to Girl Scouting has a variety of badges that will allow you to start new hobbies and find out incredible things. You can do the activity on your own or with your friends and all the badges will allow you to build a skill that will help you with your Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Badges have five steps. You need to complete all five steps to earn the badge. You don't have to do all the activities perfectly. After all, you're learning something new. Do the best you can and you'll soon find that you can do things you never thought you could do! The Girls Guide to Girl Scouting and badges can be purchased at either the Monmouth or Ocean Council Shops or online. If you have further questions about how to earn a Cadette badge please contact BJ Wood at (732) 938-5454, ext. 132 or [bjwood@girlscoutsjs.org](mailto:bjwood@girlscoutsjs.org).

Nutrition isn't just about maintaining a healthy weight: Eating well helps you inside and out. Choosing the right foods can help you sleep better, stress less, and get smooth skin, shiny hair, and strong nails. In this badge, find out how to eat to keep your skin glowing, your mind focused, and your energy flowing!

#### **Steps**

1. Know how good nutrition helps your body stay healthy
2. Find out how what you eat affects your skin
3. Explore how your diet affects your stress level
4. Investigate how what you eat affects your sleep
5. Look at how your diet affects your energy

Step 1: Know how good nutrition helps your body stay healthy

Your body is a complex, amazing machine. Are you giving it the right kind of fuel? Set habits now that will keep your body at its peak performance all your life. First, take a look at the good and great, the bad and really bad in your current eating habits.

- A. Eat by color! Use the food pyramid's color groups to track how many servings of each color you're eating. Try this for two weeks and see if you can make the second week healthier than the first.

- B. Have a food-log challenge with friends. Make an exact and honest list of everything (everything!) you eat for a week. Swap your list with a friend and analyze each other's choices. Decide on two changes you can make that will result in healthier eating habits, and put them in action for the next week.
- C. Make your own food pyramid. Trace the FDA pyramid. Then head to your fridge and pantry, and draw what's in them onto your pyramid. The foods from your house might look different from the pictures on the pyramid, but the FDS guidelines can still help if you know where your foods fit in. Share your pyramid with Girl Scout friends and work together to write a week's worth of healthy meals from your pyramids.

**Step 2:** Find out how what you eat affects your skin

Lean protein, complex carbohydrates, whole grains, fruits, and veggies make your skin, hair, and nails look better. People used to think chocolate and greasy food caused acne, but research indicates they have little effect on pimple production. However, drinking water is beneficial for skin health, glow, and for reducing acne. Get your skin glowing in this step.

- A. Get enough water. Scientists used to think that everyone needed to drink eight glasses of water a day, but most researchers now think that number is too high. Find out the best amount of water for your age and activity level, and come up with three clever ways to get enough water every day. You might program your computer or phone to make a gurgling noise for an alarm, or place a glass pitcher with beautiful lemon slices on your desk. Practice for a week – and see if you can get others to join you!
- B. Make a Top 10 list of antioxidant-rich foods. Come up with a way to work at least four into your regular diet.
- C. Do a grocery-store scavenger hunt. Find foods that contain selenium, essential fatty acids, healthy oils and/or vitamin A – all things that are thought to improve skin health. Choose three of these foods to work into your meal routine.

**Step 3:** Explore how your diet affects your stress level

Caffeine and sugar affect mood swings fatigue, and your ability to concentrate. When your levels of cortisol (also known as the stress hormone) go up, so do your cravings for fat sugar and salt – what a cycle! Take a look into the science behind eating and stress.

- A. Food makeovers. Find three foods you eat that are high in sugar fat, or salt, and make a healthier choice, either by substituting another food altogether or by creating new recipes that use healthier ingredients. Food magazines and websites are full of fun tricks for this.
- B. Sugar detective. Just because the label doesn't say "sugar" doesn't mean the product isn't full of it. Look up all the names under which sugar masquerades. Then take a trip to the store and find as many items as possible with sugar in disguise.
- C. Chemical detective. Go online or to a library to research food additives and chemicals that are believed to contribute to anxiety and stress. See how many you can find in the foods you and your family eat. Talk to your family about limiting these foods and finding substitutes for them, and why it's important to your family's health.

**Step 4:** Investigate how what you eat affects your sleep

Lack of sleep affects your ability to focus, your stress level, your weight . . . the list goes on and on. Research says that teens and tweens need more sleep than adults do and are more affected by lack of sleep than adults are. Check out how what you eat – and when you eat – can help you get better sleep.

- A. Make an illustrated chart of snooze/lose foods. These are foods that help you sleep and those that keep you awake. Post it near your bed and keep a journal for a week to see what works for you and what doesn't.
- B. Take the two-week test. For two weeks, track the time you eat dinner, what and how much you eat at dinner and before bed, and how easy it is to get to sleep. Keep other variables the same – hit the sack at the same time, and exercise the same amount during the day. Do you notice that caffeine and high-sugar snacks before bed tweak your system?
- C. REM it up. Look into the importance of rapid eye movement (REM) sleep. Many specialists stress the importance of uninterrupted sleep, which means not drinking after a certain time so you won't have to get up to use the bathroom. Avoid drinking three hours before you go to bed for four nights in a row. Did you sleep better?

**Step 5:** Keeping energy up is all about keeping blood sugar steady – not up or down.

For some people, eating whole foods and enough fiber and protein at each meal does the trick. For others, eating five or six small meals throughout the day works best.

- A. Take a poll of friends and family. Ask them five questions about when they feel most energetic and how it seems to relate to what and when they've eaten. Now ask yourself the same questions. What conclusions or advice can you draw?
- B. Do an exercise/energy experiment. There are times during the day – especially when you exercise – when getting food into your body fast is key. Make a list of 20 healthy foods you can make and eat quickly. Star those that are portable and keep one or two in your backpack for a week. See which ones make you feel best before, during, and after your workouts.
- C. Create a chart or blog post. Explain the ways the fiber and vitamins in five different fruits can help you stay energized and why.

