

# Taking the “PAIN” out of “GAIN” in 2011

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You cannot open a magazine, walk through a store, or watch television without hearing about the benefits of healthy eating and exercise. Yet, many of us are overwhelmed by the thought of changing our life style even though we know it’s important. If you are interested in jump-starting your family on a healthy life style here are few strategies to make change easier and take some of the “pain” out of “gain” in 2011.

## Pick Something Small to Adjust

Make small, easy changes over time. Suggesting that your family take a run together will probably get a lot of eye-rolling. It’s easier to start more modestly with something that the whole family is willing to try. You might suggest taking a walk after dinner a couple of nights a week. Avoid diets; instead make small manageable changes to your eating habits. For example, try putting a lighter cream cheese on your bagel. Eat two cookies instead of three. Small changes can have a big impact.

## Focus on Family

As families, we can more successfully adopt healthy choices and make changes. It’s hard to make changes on your own. Creating family habits around smart eating and physical activity can make it easier for everyone to maintain a healthy weight. For example:

- Planning regular family time that involves physical activity means that everyone is supported and encouraged to be active.
- Putting a bowl of fruit on the kitchen counter and making a family agreement not to have chips or other high-calorie snacks in the house can change everyone’s snacking habits.
- Eating one family meal together every day has been shown to protect against obesity. Trying a new food will add a little adventure and helps picky eaters to expand their tastes.

## Keep Moving

Limit video, TV, and computer time. Advances in medical therapy have given people with bleeding disorders freedom to enjoy activities that may once have been “off limits”. Studies have shown that in general, persons with toned muscles and strong joints experience fewer bleeds than inactive individuals. Keep in mind the three “Es” - start early, educate yourself, and chose activities that you enjoy.

## Actively Choose

This means not doing things by default. When we are tired, we sometimes come home and automatically turn on the TV. Recognize that you have more control than you

might think. You can turn off the TV and limit computer games. You can give your family more vegetables for dinner. Stop and savor the moment and be conscious of your choices.

Making the decision to help your family eat well and get more physically active is the first step. For additional ideas, talk to your hemophilia treatment center staff, visit the "We Can!" website at [www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/), or contact the National Hemophilia Foundation at 800-42-HANDI and request information about maintaining healthy weight, nutrition, and physical activity. Make a commitment to a healthier lifestyle for you and for your family.