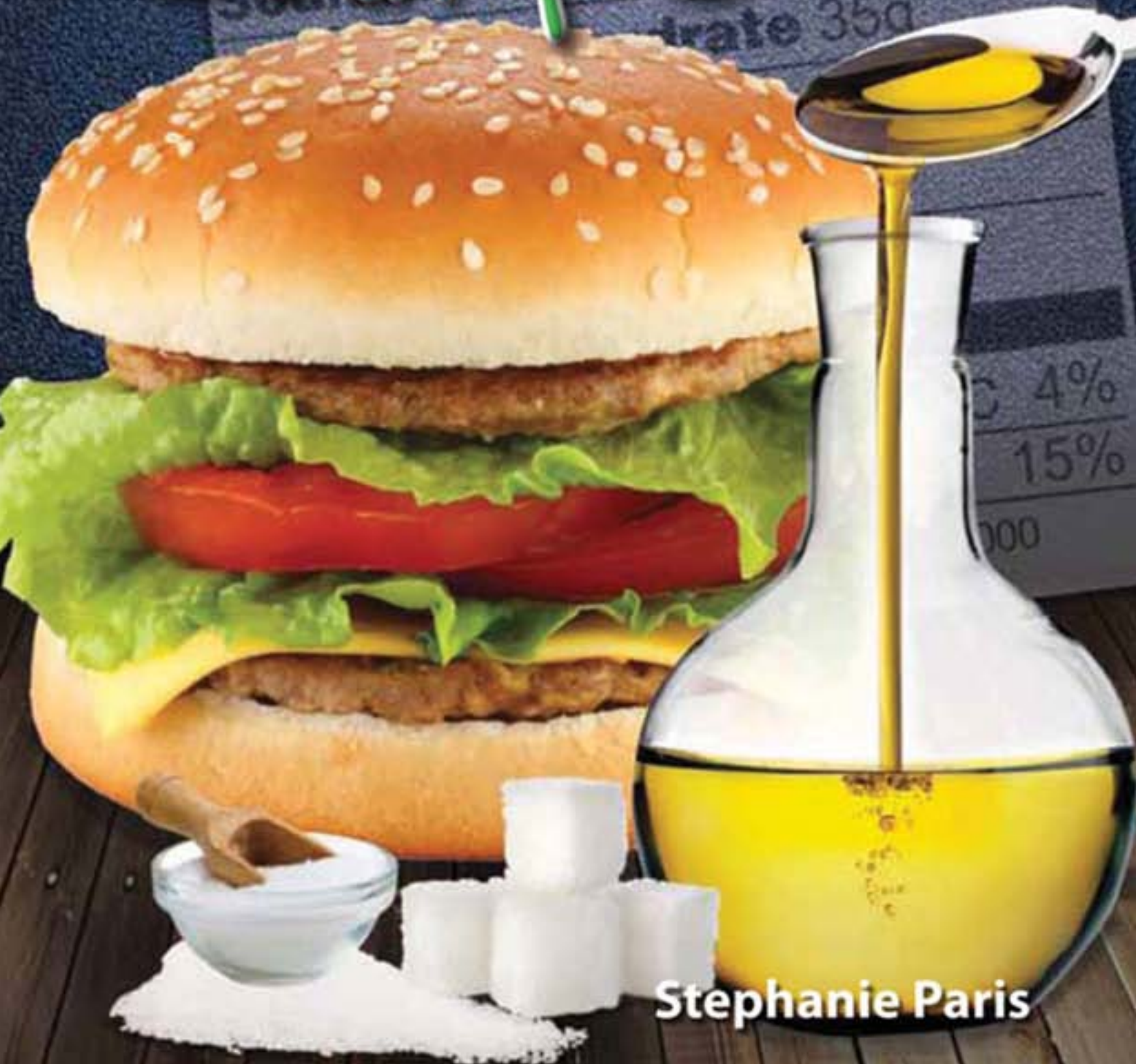


**STRAIGHT TALK**

**TIME**  
FOR KIDS

# The Truth About Food



**Stephanie Paris**

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# The Truth About Food



Stephanie Paris

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The background of the page features a soft-focus image of a white bowl filled with cooked quinoa. In the upper right corner, there are two stylized green leaves with yellow veins. At the bottom left, there is a small green starburst graphic. The top of the page is decorated with two parallel purple diagonal lines.

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# Fuel for Life

What do you like to do? Do you like to play soccer, or do you prefer to read adventure stories? Maybe you like video games, dancing, or just talking with your friends. No matter what you enjoy, your body needs energy and the right building blocks to make it. Our bodies get what they need through eating. But your body can't form the building blocks to make a healthy body if you don't eat healthy foods.

What happens when you don't eat right? Eating too much of the wrong food can be harmful. Eating too much of any food can lead to weight issues. And eating too little of the right foods can lead to poor **nutrition**. So how can we choose the right foods?





# THINK LINK

1

What kinds of foods are healthiest for your body?

2

How do you give your body energy?

3

How can you make healthier choices in your life?



# Every Body, Every Day

We get the nutrients we need to **thrive** in many ways. Everyone needs to drink water. Everyone needs to eat a variety of foods to stay healthy. It's also important to remember that every body is a little different. Babies need different foods than older kids. Someone who is bigger and very active will need more food than someone who is small and sits a lot. **Allergies**, body type, and personal taste all affect what we need to eat.

COUNTING

CALORIES

A **calorie** is a unit of energy. Some foods have a lot of calories. Others have very few. You can find out how many calories are in a serving by reading food packaging or looking online. Most kids need between 1,600–2,500 calories each day.



# BODY BASICS

## WHAT WE NEED

## WHY WE NEED IT

### Protein

Human bodies need **protein** to replace cells that have worn out and died. And you need protein to help you grow!

### Vitamins and Minerals

Your body gets weak and sick if you don't get enough **vitamins** and **minerals**. But be careful! There are some that can make you sick if you have too much.

### Fatty Acids

These are a special type of fat your body needs but cannot make on its own.

### Calories

This is energy. Your body needs enough calories to do all the things you do in a day. But you don't want to eat too much, or your body may store fat.

### Fiber

**Fiber** keeps your **digestive tract** clean and makes sure foods move through the system smoothly.

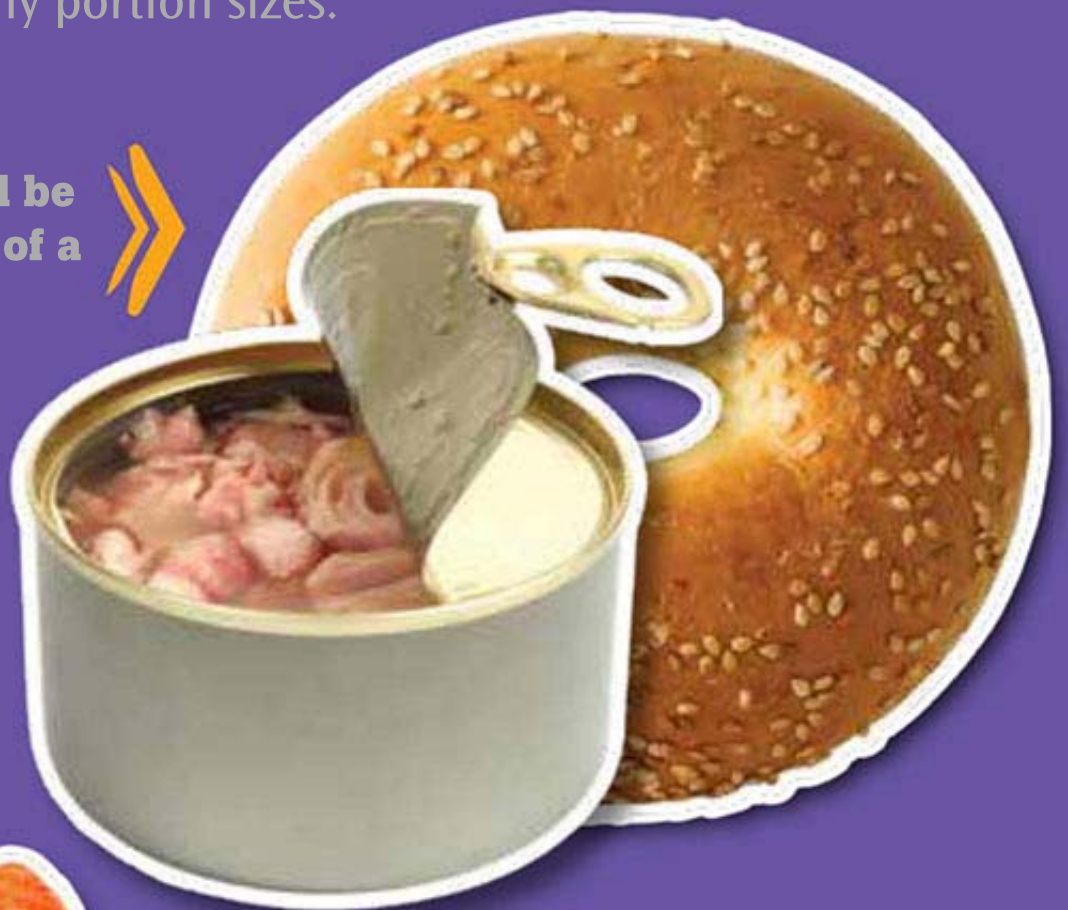




## HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Eating the right foods is only one part of the puzzle. It's also important to eat the right amounts. Many restaurants like to make customers feel as if they are getting a good deal by putting a LOT of food on the plate. But that isn't healthy. Some restaurant meals serve more than an entire day's worth of calories on one plate! Check out these healthy portion sizes.

**A bagel should be about the size of a can of tuna.**



**Dried fruit is high in calories. A serving is the size of a golf ball.**



**A cup of rice is about the same size as a light bulb.**

**A single serving of meat is the same size as a deck of cards.**



# Rise and Shine

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. *Fast* means “to not eat.” So to *break fast* means “to eat again after not eating during the night”

Overnight, your body works hard while you sleep. It builds new cells and fixes things that were damaged. To start your day, you need fuel, but not just any fuel. It’s especially important that you eat healthy foods for breakfast. Your body has used up a lot of energy and nutrients from the food you ate yesterday. If you don’t eat a good breakfast, you will probably feel tired all day.

## SMART START

Want to get an A on that test? Eat your breakfast! Many studies have shown that kids who eat a good breakfast every day do better in school. And kids who eat a good breakfast before a test get better scores!



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