

multidisciplinary programs offer interventions combining medical, dietary, exercise, and psychological support. This therapy is labor intensive and fairly costly. **Diet modification** is an essential part of weight reduction programs. Dietary counseling focuses on improving the nutritional quality of the diet rather than on dietary restriction. Children and adolescents should avoid fad diets. Most dietitians and nutrition experts recommend a diet with no *trans* fats, low-saturated fat, moderate total fat ( $\leq 30\%$ ), low sodium, and at least nine servings of fruits and vegetables, consistent with the My Plate\* food guide for children. Also, promoting high-fiber foods and avoiding highly refined starches and sugars decrease caloric intake. Many programs recommend using a food diary as a helpful tool to increase awareness of food choices and eating behaviors. The goal is to encourage the individual to make healthy choices in food selection and discourage using food by habit or to appease boredom. [Box 16-4](#) contains helpful suggestions.

#### **Box 16-4**

### **Recommended Behaviors for Preventing Obesity**

In counseling adolescents whose body mass index (BMI) is between the 5th and 84th percentiles, physicians and health care providers should recommend the following steps to prevent obesity:

- Limit consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Consume recommended quantities of fruits and vegetables.
- Limit screen time to no more than 2 hours per day.
- Remove television and computer screens from primary sleeping areas.
- Eat breakfast daily.
- Limit eating at restaurants.
- Have frequent family meals in which parents and youth eat