

Updated 8/2011

FLIPS

GYMNASTICS

Team Handbook

OVERVIEW OF FLIPS COMPETITION PROGRAM

Welcome and congratulations on being a member of the FLIPS gymnastic team.

GENERAL PHILOSOPHY

FLIPS feels that gymnasts need to grow at their own pace. Our competitive teams receive a strong physical, ethical, and moral foundation, along with many valuable qualities that will carry over to "life after gymnastics".

- self discipline (knowing what has to be done to achieve a goal)
- self motivation (working hard because they want to)
- time management (time is a valuable commodity)
- respect (for danger, teammates, judges, and coaches)
- sportsmanship (playing by the rules, winning, and losing)
- dedication (staying focused on their goals)
- leadership
- concentration
- team work, friendship, friends, FUN
- nutrition and physical fitness

Gymnastics excellence means becoming the best you can be individually. This requires setting long and short term goals, time, energy, and hard work to achieve these goals.

GIRLS COMPETITIVE PROGRAM

COMPULSORY Program:

There are three compulsory levels that FLIPS team enters the USAG (USA Gymnastics) competitions: 4, 5 and 6. In these levels gymnasts perform the same routines on other gymnasts.

Level 4: Beginning level for the gymnast. This level is for the gymnast who has just joined the team and will develop basic skills on each event plus flexibility and strength. This level is also an introductory of competitive gymnastics for the athlete and parents.

Level 5: Beginning level for the gymnast. This level is for the gymnast who has just joined the team or progressed past Level 4. They will continue developing basic skills plus flexibility and strength.

Level 6: Advanced level of basic skills competition. Gymnast will continue to develop basic skills at a higher level.

The Level 4 - 6 gymnasts will compete in the state of MN, but may also travel to one out of state meet per year. They will compete in 4-5 invitationals, and 3 qualifiers. Qualifiers (level 5 & 6 only) are the only competitions in which a gymnast can qualify for the state competition by achieving the required score (determined yearly by the state board). The official competition season for Levels 5/6 is September through December, and extends to the state meet level. Our travel meet is in Jan or Feb.

OPTIONAL Program:

Level 7: Level 7 is the first level where gymnasts do optional routines. They will have individual skills and choreography choices. Competition runs January-March.

Level 8 The gymnast develops basic optional skills, and creativity through routine development. Their competition season runs Jan through April and culminates with the State or Regional Gymnastics Meet (Flips will only compete Level 8 gymnasts who qualify for the Super Team competition at Regionals).

Level 9 The gymnast works on development of individualized optional routines as well as more difficult optional skills. The competition season is January to May. Level 9 extends to the Western National level. The gymnasts may qualify to Nationals at the Regional meet (MN, IA, WI, NE, SD, ND, MO).

Level 10 is the highest level of USAG competition without entering the Elite Program. From the Elite Program come the Olympic team members. The Level 10 gymnast works on advanced optional routines. The Level 10 season runs January to May. Level 10 competition extends to National Level.

All optional girls will compete in meets held both in and out of the State of Minnesota.

TIME COMMITMENT

Competitive gymnastics is a year round commitment. Because of this, occasional, personal sacrifices will sometimes have to be made. This is not to say that gymnastics must consume your life style, or that family vacations are not allowed. Actually, they are encouraged. Our coaching staff realizes that family and academics must be priorities. Ultimately, we hope that our athletes learn to budget their time when other activities arise. If the gymnast is going to be late or absent, please call the gym and leave a message for the coach before practice. Gymnasts are expected to attend all scheduled workouts. At the team level year round practice is required. We feel that the efficient use of a 3-4.5 hour workout is sufficient for any one day. The gymnasts practice from 10-20 hours per week depending on their level.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

The gymnasts are expected to attend all practices, however the coaching staff understands that there can be conflicts with practice times (school events, schoolwork, conferences, special events, family events, family vacations, and sickness). The occasional absence is understandable, but in the case that many absences occur, the gymnast will need to make up those practices by scheduling private lessons with a team coach. This policy provides the gymnast an option to maintain their skills, focus, strength and flexibility. Often times when a gymnast misses too many practices they fall behind, this policy keeps the gymnast on track with their competitive goals. The gymnast is required to schedule a 1 hour private lesson with a team coach if they miss $\frac{1}{4}$ of their practice time each month.

Guidelines: Level 5-7: 3 missed practices per month Level 8-10: 4 missed practices per month
If a gymnast misses practice for summer vacations more than 3 full weeks during the months of June, July and August they will need to make that time up with two -1 hour private lessons. Private lessons are \$40.00 for one hour.

The coaching staff will contact you to schedule the private lesson if the situation arises.

LOCKERS/CLEANING: Gymnasts are asked to keep their lockers and the locker area clean at all times. No stickers or adhesives are allowed on the inside or outside of the lockers. Padlocks are NOT allowed. Any improper use or lack of respect for the locker area will result in the gymnast locker privilege being revoked. Gymnasts may not keep food in their lockers, due to ants. Gymnasts will be expected to help clean the entire gym 2 times per year (fall and summer). This will include but not be limited to: general cleaning, rotating pits and matting, vacuuming under tramps, and locker area.

FLIPS FEES and USAG FEES

Monthly tuition vary per level, you will be notified of any increase in tuition. There is no family or quarterly discount given on team tuition, since the tuition is already discounted on an hourly rate. **It is required that every team family have a credit card number on file with our front office. We will automatically charge your monthly tuition on your credit card on the 1st of every month. You do have the option to pay tuition ahead of time using cash or check. However, any tuition that has not been paid by the 30th will automatically be charged to your credit card. It is your responsibility to keep credit card numbers updated throughout the year. FLIPS Team annual registration fee (approx \$450) is per gymnast, and is non-refundable.** The fee covers team management expenses; coaches travel expenses, and coaches training expenses. The fee will be increased by a small amount yearly. USAG and MN require all competitors to be a member. The annual fee covers national administrative fees, accident insurance at meets, etc. **The yearly fee is \$115.00. There is a \$25 late fee if tuition or meet fees are not paid on time. *The monthly tuition is based on 48 weeks of training per year. We do not charge you less if we miss more training than that, and we do not charge you more if we do extra practices or have additional staff.***

COMPETITIVE FEES

Competitive entry fees vary from meet to meet. The compulsory level meets range from \$70 to \$100 while the optional levels range from \$100 to \$125 per meet. This amount does not include coach's pay for the meets. Coach's are paid a flat rate for each session they coach. This is not covered by tuition or the team reg fee. This is an additional expense and is paid by the parents (or FGC) through meet fees. Those fees will be divided up and added to each gymnasts meet fee based on the number of girls on the team. All meet fees must be paid by the registration deadline to FGC (late fee = \$25). Information about meets will be given with as much advance notice as possible. **Meet fees are non-refundable**, so the gymnast must be willing to compete or forfeit the fee. Parents are responsible for all travel costs for competitions outside the state.

TEAM UNIFORMS

Team members wear the FLIPS team uniforms at competitive meets. The uniform includes a warm-up suit, competitive leotard, briefs, gym bag and shoes (optionals only). Uniforms are purchased every two years. **Estimated cost: \$350. Gymnasts must wear the proper uniform from the moment they enter the meet facility through the completion of awards.** Optional gymnasts have additional individual equipment required. See gymnast section.

COMPETITIONS

Gymnastic meets are typically held at gymnastics centers and public facilities. Meets are usually held on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. The state qualifying meets (a meet a gymnast competes in to qualify for the state meet) are scheduled in the fall for the compulsory levels, but compulsory invitational meets can be held at any time. We are usually not informed of the exact day and time of

competition until the Monday prior to the meet. Team members will compete in all scheduled meets unless excused by the head coach. Acceptable reasons are illness, injury, and family emergencies. Please remember that the meet actually begins the night before with a good nights sleep. Requirements for competitions:

- Gymnasts are to remain with the team at all times.
- Parents are not allowed to contact the gymnast during warm-up or competition. They may talk to their child at the completion of the awards ceremony.
- Gymnasts expressing negative comments or have bad behavior before or during the competition will be removed from the meet.
- Gymnasts crying for reasons other than injury will be removed from the meet.
- Gymnasts are required to remain in full uniform for the awards.
- Hair must be arranged away from face and not interfere with gymnasts movement.
- Gymnast must arrive at the competition site 15 minutes prior to general stretch time. If a gymnast is late, the coaches will decide if the gymnast will be allowed to compete.
- Gymnasts are not allowed to have food on the floor (USAG rule). Water only.

TRAVEL MEETS

The optional gymnasts will travel to 3-4 competitions out of state per year. Some of the meets will require the gymnast to travel with the coaches. This allows the gymnasts to bond as a group and to focus on the competition. Parents are always welcome to travel to the meet, but the gymnasts must remain with the group during the entire duration of travel, including all meals and site seeing. The coaches will form a budget for these travel meets, and collect the appropriate funds from each family to cover all travel costs prior to the meet. There will also be travel meets where the parents travel with the gymnast, and handle all travel arrangements including transportation, meals and hotel. The coaches will provide information regarding location, days and times of competition and the hotel we stay in as a team. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the gymnast arrives to the meet on time and prepared. **When traveling for a meet, it is required that all Flips families stay at the hotel that Lori designates for our team. Whether it is the host hotel, or another, Flips gymnasts must all stay at the same hotel.**

ADVANCEMENT

Advancement to the next level is determined by the coaching staff using the following criteria: Skill level, mental attitude, success at gymnast's current level, possible success at the next level, gymnast's desire, and gymnast's work ethics. There is not a specific "time of the year" that the gymnast will advance, as it will vary for every gymnast and every situation.

WORKOUT SCHEDULE

Workouts include a flexibility, strength, and individual event rotations ranging in length from 30 minutes to one hour. Visualization of skills and routines will also be incorporated into practices. The rotation and training schedule is predetermined by the FL!PS team staff. Please see that your daughter arrives on time. If your daughter needs anything taped prior to her workout (done by coaches only), keep that in mind when determining your arrival time. If you find it necessary to pick your daughter up early, please notify a member of the coaching staff at the beginning of practice so appropriate workout alterations may be made. Under no circumstances is a gymnast to leave practice early without informing one of her coaches. We understand a gymnast may compete in another sport, and we support it in Levels 5 to 8. **To attain a high competitive level, gymnastics cannot take a "back seat" to any other activity, except studies. We do reserve the right to cancel practices as we deem necessary. Please remember that the practice calendar and your payment schedule are based off approximately 48 week year. We will not charge you extra tuition if we decide to train extra, and we will not charge you less if we deem it necessary to give the girls additional time off.**

INJURIES

Injuries are part of gymnastics. Our competitive team staff is safety certified and up-to-date on safety techniques. Our number one goal is to create the best facility possible within a safe environment. However, injuries can happen anytime we involve motion, speed and height. If your gymnast becomes injured, the coaching staff needs to be kept informed on the rehabilitation process, and it is necessary that the head coach staff speak with the physician regarding the injury. They are also required to continue attending all scheduled practices. It is necessary for the gymnast to continue their strength, flexibility, rehabilitation and mental training. This will allow them to return to event training immediately after the injury is healed minimizing the gymnast's training recovery period. The gymnast will train 3 times the amount they normally would in flexibility, strength and visualization, in order to prepare them for a timely return when they are healed. There are exceptions to this policy depending on the severity of the injury. These exceptions will be determined by the coaching staff after consulting with the gymnast's physician. **Monthly tuition rates will not be altered because of an injury if the gymnast plans to remain on the team after the injury.**

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

Most injuries that will occur in gymnastics will simply require ice. If this is the case, the gymnast will ice the injured area for 15 minutes. The gymnast may be able to continue practicing at that time, or she may be asked to work on strength or flexibility for the duration of practice. If the injury requires emergency care, the parents will be called immediately. The paramedics may be called depending on the severity of the injury. Coaches will process an injury report, and follow up with the parents regarding the injury. All team coaches are USAG Safety, CPR and First Aid certified. During competitions, the parents will be asked to the competition floor only if an injury is severe and requires immediate medical attention.

TEAM COMMUNICATIONS

We have an open communications policy on our team with gymnasts, parents and coaches. If any concerns or questions should arise, feel free to contact the coach and they will listen to your concern or question and do their best to help. The head coaches hold one formal conference with each gymnast and her parents per year. Other meetings can be arranged upon request. If your child has a coaching issue, the child must talk to the coach that is directly involved. The parent may be present, but the child should discuss the issue with the coach. There is no better life lesson than to teach your child how to directly deal with someone they are struggling with. If you have already talked to the coach and feel you still need to talk to the team manager, you may set up a meeting. The team manager will not discuss issues with parents unless they have already spoken to the coach directly involved in the situation.

MAILBOXES & BULLETIN BOARD

Each gymnast on the competitive team will have a "mailbox" (file folder) in the lobby. It is important that parents and gymnasts check mailboxes and the team bulletin board daily as these are the major source of communication to you. The optional parents will also receive weekly e-mails.

SAFETY

Team gymnasts will walk through a safety clinic each twice year to ensure they are aware of and responsible for safety rules and regulations. They will be reminded of and practice safety falls, trampoline safety and general gym safety.

VOLUNTARY TERMINATION

If a gymnast decides to leave Flips they will need to inform the head coach as soon as they make their decision. At the time we are notified of your decision, you will be asked that your daughter's last day at Flips will be that one. The reason for this policy, is that it is unfair for the gymnasts training at Flips to be sharing coaches attention with a gymnast who will no longer be competing at Flips. Any account debts or credits will be taken care of by our office manager.

OTHER QUESTIONS

Team coaches hold a parent meeting once per year to answer questions and give updated information. It is mandatory that one parent from each family attends the meeting. We're certain questions will arise after you read this information and/or at other times during the year, please feel free to take advantage of our open communications policy. The coaching staff is here to help you have a positive experience, so please help us by communicating!

BEING A COMPETITIVE GYMNAST

To have made the FLIPS team you have already worked hard to develop your gymnastics skills. You will find that you will work even harder now that you will be competing in gymnastics. Sometimes practices will be very frustrating. It may be that you are not able to do what you tried very hard to do. Be patient with yourself. Work on a smaller part of the skill you are trying to attain. It takes many failures and many, many hours to learn to be a fine gymnast. There are exercises to build your strength and flexibility. These exercises must be done over and over. They are essential for developing your body to perform well. You may be afraid to try a new skill. Your coach is there to help you. Work to overcome your fear. You are a member of a team. All of you are putting forth your best effort to become better. Encourage the other members of your team! If someone learns a new skill after trying for a long time, tell your teammate, "That's great!". You will maintain a positive attitude toward your training and be supportive and encouraging to your teammates at all times. Cooperation with the coaching staff and respect for the facility, equipment and other gymnastics classes is expected. Be enthusiastic for gymnastics at practice!

Fulfilling a Gymnast's Responsibilities Being a member of the FLIPS Team requires that you be respectful of the facility and.....

- Attend practices regularly, and on time.
- Dress properly, leotard only, no tights or shorts.
- Listen carefully to your coach, and ask question if you don't understand.
- Work hard during practice, at everything.
- Be polite and respectful at all times to coaches and teammates.
- Display good sportsmanship at all times.
- Dream high, anything is possible.
- Smile and have fun.

Attitudes:

- Set realistic, progressive short and long term goals.
- Be willing to work hard and find reward in that.
- Take instruction without resenting constructive criticism. Listen and trust coaches.
- Stay positive and refuse to be frustrated, work through it.
- Rebound back from setbacks and defeat, to apply yourself.
- Be polite and well mannered in training, demonstrations, and competitions.

- You need mental courage. You may be apprehensive about a move, but stay calm to work through the fear with the coach's reassurance.

Flexibility and Strength:

- Continuously work to increase flexibility and strength in all joints and muscles.

Nutritional Guidelines

Team members are expected to maintain good nutritional habits. Gymnasts need proper nutrition to keep their bodies fueled for workouts. Good nutrition leads to a healthier, longer life. A meet is much less physically demanding than a practice, so no special energy foods are necessary. Keep in mind that a meet is more emotionally draining, so foods that settle easy are a must. Gymnasts can bring a small healthy snack to practice to break and refuel (must have protein and carbs). Entire families could follow nutritional guidelines for a healthier, longer life. As parents you need only to monitor the types of foods that your athlete consumes. It does not in any way mean a stringent diet! Simply being conscientious about what they are eating will keep any "bad habits" from developing.

Discipline Procedure

Whether in the school classroom or in the gym the best environment for learning is a disciplined one. Discipline in this context means that students follow the rules. The coaching staff will discuss appropriate behavior in the gym. If a discipline problem occurs the procedure is as follows:

- First, the coach who noticed the problem will discuss the problem with the gymnast, and the gymnast may be asked to sit out for a period of time.
- Upon a second offense the parents are called and will be made aware of the situation.
- Finally, if discipline problems persist, a conference with the gymnast, the parent, the head coach, and the coach most directly involved with the problem is held. A solution that is suitable for all should be reached.
- If there is another occurrence the gymnast will be removed from the team program.

Team Bags

Optional team members must maintain their own "gym bag" which should include: two pairs of broken in grips and wristbands, bear claws, thera band, wrist weights, and a copy of your floor music.

Injuries

It is extremely important that gymnasts communicate their injuries to coaches. It may be hard, but the only one that knows exactly how much you can tolerate is you! Please use the following steps if you have trouble training due to an injury:

- Tell the coach immediately if you have slight pain due to an injury (do not wait until it hurts so bad that you are in tears!). The coach will ask you to work through your pain for a few more reps or minutes, depending on what the gymnast can tolerate. Gymnastics, as with any sport, requires the athlete to "work through" small amounts of pain. However, you must work through the pain while still maintaining 100% effort on the activity.
- After working through the pain for a few more turns, and if the gymnast is experiencing any amount of pain that is not allowing them to perform up to 100% on the given activity, they **MUST** stop the activity. This is where the injury poses a safety issue. The gymnast must immediately notify the coach when this occurs. The coach will then ask the gymnast to replace that activity with conditioning or stretching, or another activity that is not hindered by the pain.

PARENT OBLIGATIONS

First and foremost, decide whether or not this program is for you and your child.

- Can she handle an accelerated pace?
- Can she handle the initial increase in training time?
- Can she handle the discipline, commitment and conditioning?
- Is gymnastics what she wants to do?
- Can you trust a large portion of your child's growth and development to our staff?
- Can you afford it financially?

Financial Commitment

You must be willing to undertake the expense of gymnastics. You will be the bank for leotards, tape, warm ups, travel, doctors, annual registration, tuition, meet fees, floor routines, gym bags, floor music, USAG membership fees, etc, etc, etc.

Coach/Gymnast/Parents

The parent has one of the most difficult jobs on the coach/gymnast/parent team because they have the smallest role in actually controlling performance. At the same time the parent feels a much higher sense of personal attachment to this performance. They ride a roller coaster at times of feeling failures and successes of their children personally, and feeling a greater responsibility for these. This combination of a high emotional stake in a performance that they have so little direct control is stressful! Many times this stress causes them to lose sight of their role on the team and attempt to work beyond their limits. This can cause stress for the coach and the gymnast, as well as reduces the effectiveness of this three part team.

What do we mean by parent's going beyond their roles? The most common ones are of course the parent that begins to "coach" their child. This is the parent that begins to try to make technical corrections on the way a skill is being done, or attempts to make decisions on what skills should be in a routine, or feels they know which group their child should be in, or gives corrections to their child at a competition. If you choose FL!PS as the gym to train your child, be sure of your decision and then let us do our jobs. Once your child walks through the gym doors or onto the competition floor, they are our responsibility. We will not allow interference with our coaching. **If you have a problem, please talk to the coach at the appropriate time.** We will explain but we will not discuss coaching issues. We may make mistakes but we are professionals that have trained and continue to train to do this job. If you do not feel that we are not qualified you have the ultimate control of removing your child from our program.

Some Guidelines For The Parents:

Danger signs-- they indicate the parent needs to reevaluate their actions and attitudes.

- Observing every practice - intently.
- Learning about technique and deductions and applying it to their gymnasts.
- Comparing your child and their progress to other gymnasts on the team.
- Verbally abusing the gym, its coaches, its facilities yet remaining in the program (this usually demonstrates a deeper frustration or problem - identify the real problem).
- Video taping every meet and requiring your child to review it at home with you.

Incorrect

You beat Susie, all right.
Did you do your skill today?
If you win today there's \$20.
in it for you.
That judge never liked you.

Correct

You have a new high all-around score!
How was practice?
Do your best.
Work hard, you'll do better next time.

She's been at this level for 3 years,
it's time to move up!

As long as she is progressing (even slowly),
and is happy and safe, I'm happy!

Become the essential link in the training triangle of coach/gymnast/parents. Your trust in the coaching staff is paramount. Gymnasts need more encouragement at "plateaus" in their skill development. At times when no progress is being made, or at least it seems that way, a supportive hug after practice sure feels good (if her shoulders don't ache)! Encouragement is great, but please refrain from pressuring the child to "outperform" anyone else or to attempt skills which may be beyond their present physical ability and therefore dangerous. Truly believe that we have your daughter's best interest in mind, and we ask you to support the coaching staff during the rough times.

Find out about your gymnast's progress periodically. A good time for a brief conference with the coach is just after practice. For a full discussion of your gymnast's progress, make an appointment with the child's coach. Advise coaches on adverse situations or stresses the gymnast may be undergoing outside the gym. Should problems arise, communicate with the coaching staff. We would much rather bring the problems to the surface rather than hear about your discontent through the ever present "gossip grapevine".

Meet Selection

Meet selection decisions will be made by the coaching staff, and gymnasts will be invited to compete in the competitions. Athletes are expected to attend all meets assigned unless the coach excuses the gymnast after discussing it with the parents. Skill selection, training techniques, competitive level, music selection, choreography and all other similar matters are the responsibility of the coach **NOT THE PARENT**. Parents are encouraged to communicate concerns to the coaching staff but discouraged from attempting to be part of these decisions. Gymnasts will only be signed up for a meet if they are able to compete in at least 2+ events.

Meet Behavior

No one can prepare you for your daughter's first competitive gymnastics experience. You have a unique relationship with your child. We rely on you to create a relaxed and supportive atmosphere prior to, during, and after the meet.

For the best interest of your athlete please do not say anything before a meet, ex. point your toes, run hard, smile, stick your routines, nothing at all. Just some encouraging words, "**good luck**" will be sufficient. Once warm ups have started, you will no longer communicate with your athlete until the meet is completely over. If you do wave your child over during any part of the warm ups or meet, the coach is not going to allow her to leave the group. So please, don't put your athlete in that situation. Also, parents are not allowed on the meet floor. We like the athletes to have a clear conscious and subconscious mind. This allows us to focus their thoughts where they are needed with no interference. Again, if you feel we are missing something important like a coaching tip, please feel free to discuss the matter with the coaching staff, but a meet is not the time or the place. It is not the parents' responsibility to discuss judging and scoring during competitions. Under **NO** circumstances are the parents or gymnast to converse with the judges. We are representatives of FL!PS and are expected to behave in a friendly and polite manner.

Parents number one job is to be their athletes biggest fan, during good meets and especially during bad meets. On the road to a final goal there are great, good and bad practices and meets. Remember that attainment of personal victory was preceded by many failures. How do you think your athlete will feel after a fall on the beam and they look up to see their parents shaking their heads in disgust? That can affect their confidence for the rest of the meet. Ask yourself, how do I perform when I'm feeling very self conscious, or how do I perform when I have confidence? Every bad practice or bad meet is as important

as a good/great practice and meet. They are all steps towards a final goal and are learning experiences. Please be your child's biggest fan through anything, they need you.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION FOR GYMNASTS

The following are some general guidelines for good nutrition for the healthy gymnast.

DAILY NUTRITION:

- MILK GROUP = 3 cups
 - Milk (1 cup), cheese (1.5 oz), yogurt (1 cup)

- MEAT GROUP = 5 oz
 - Ideas: ½ chicken breast, 1 tbsp peanut butter, ¼ cup beans, 1 egg, fish
 - Lean chicken, turkey or beef, peanut butter, legumes (beans), nuts
 - Broil it, bake it, grill it! Don't fry, it makes them cry!

- VEGETABLE GROUP = 2 cups
 - choose dark green or dark orange

- FRUIT GROUP = 1.5 cups (or 2 pieces of fresh fruit)
 - Choose fresh, dried or canned, but stay away from fruit juices

- BREAD & CEREAL = 4 oz
 - 1 oz = 1 slice of bread or ½ cup cereal or pasta
 - At least 2 oz should be whole grain, NOT white

- FAT = 5 teaspoons
 - You get most of your fats from natural oils and nuts (With zero trans fat).
 - Healthy fats include peanut butter, avocados, and fish.
 - If you need a treat, limit yourself to ONE of these: 2 oreo cookie, pudding cup, ice cream sandwich, Kid size frosty, handful of chips (about 100 calories each).

Don't do this....

- Fill a bowl with ice cream (this often ends up being 4+ servings!)

Always do this....

- Go to the movies with pre made snacks like grapes & home popped popcorn.
- Plan your meals ahead of time, you'll always eat healthier!
- Eat small meals/snacks every 3 hours. If you wait longer than that, you will get too hungry and make bad choices, plus, your body will go into "storage" mode because it cannot trust when the next meal will come!
- When dining out or fast food, always find the "healthy" option (grilled chicken sandwich or salads with Italian dressing are always good choices!)

If this seems overwhelming, make small changes each week or month. If your family is used to white pasta, slowly mix it with whole wheat pasta. After awhile, they won't know the difference and they will be used to it!

What should I eat.....?

BEFORE PRACTICE:

Eat a balanced meal of protein and carbs. Carbs will give them quick energy while protein will give them energy to last though a 4 hour practice.

DURING PRACTICE SNACK:

Each practice, the girls get a 5 minute break for a light snack. Healthy ideas that mix carbs and protein: Crackers & cheese, protein bar, celery with peanut butter, cottage cheese & fruit.

AFTER PRACTICE:

You won't need a huge meal just before bedtime. Enjoy a light meal with protein (to rebuild muscles), carbs (to get through your homework), veggies and chocolate milk!

BEFORE A MEET:

Nothing too heavy, but include proteins and carbs. Bring a healthy snack in your gym bag for when hunger strikes. No need to "carb load" before a meet. The girls only do about 30 minutes of activity at a meet, but their nerves eat up those calories so don't skip this meal

What to avoid:

- "Fat free"
 - This does not mean sugar free. Sugar turns into fat on our bodies faster than actual fat does. So fat free is not necessarily healthy.
- Soda Pop
 - Soda stops calcium from being absorbed in the bones. For every pop you drink, it cancels out the calcium from 10 glasses of milk! 1 can of soda a day (diet OR reg), you increase your risk of diabetes, obesity, and high blood pressure by 35%!
- White sauces and dips
 - Spinach dip (not healthy just because it has spinach in it)
 - Alfredo sauces (choose red sauce instead, more nutrients and less calories)
 - Ranch & Blue cheese dressings (choose Italian and vinaigrettes instead)
- Coffee house smoothies
 - These often have more sugar than kids need in 3 days. They think it is healthy because it has fruit in it. No one needs that much fruit in one day either!
- Items that are "low fat, sugar free, fat free" are healthy for me.
 - They have replacement substances that are just as unhealthy as their natural counterparts.
- Buffets are sure way to overeat. But if you can control yourself, buffets often offer great choices like fresh fruits and veggies that aren't always readily available at home. Just be smart, and drink lots of water and rest during the meal to avoid overeating.

Thank you for taking the time to have good nutrition! Please be sure to share this information with your whole family so they can support the correct eating habits of a healthy gymnast! For more good nutritional informational and meal ideas, go to www.mypyramid.gov

FLIPS TEAM COMMITMENT

I have read and understand the team rules and the responsibility descriptions for coach/gymnast/parent. I feel that this sport has many benefits to offer my family, myself and my child. In choosing FLIPS Gymnastics I feel that my child's goals can be reached. I make a commitment to fulfill my roles to the best of my ability and to support this program in my words and actions. If I have a disagreement or problem with the staff or program I will contact the head coach first to attempt to resolve the situation. If at any time I feel that this is no longer the best program for my child I will notify FLIPS and stop her training at this gym. I also understand and agree that if at any time my actions or words become detrimental to this program, I will be asked to remove my child from the program.

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

I have read the team rules and responsibility descriptions for coach/gymnast relations. I understand these rules and make a commitment to do my best to fulfill my responsibilities on this team. I also make a commitment to compete.

GYMNAST SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____