



Encourage your child to listen to their internal hunger cues. Eat when you are hungry and stop when you are full. Never force your child to clean their plate. As this can lead to unhealthy habits as an adult.



Food Sources of Key Nutrients

Iron– Red meats, and fortified grain sources

Folic acid– Dark green vegetables, beans, fortified cereals and breads

Calcium– Dairy, beans, collards, broccoli, spinach, kale, and tofu

Healthy Tips for Tots

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Healthy Ways To Feed Your Children

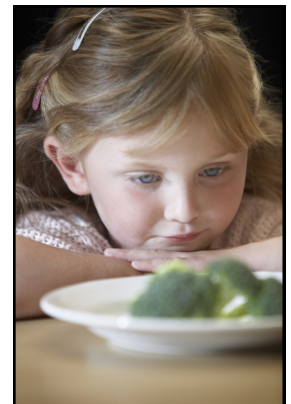
"If you eat two more bites of your broccoli then you can be finished," pleads an anxious parent. Does this sound familiar? Feeding children is not always easy. However, the way in which parents respond to feeding challenges can determine whether these behaviors persist or fade. Nutrition during childhood sets the stage for behaviors and habits that tend to last a lifetime. Let's take a closer look at some things you can do to make meal times more enjoyable.

- Avoid using food to control behavior. [Huang, et al](#) suggest it may be successful in the short term but you run the risk of long term complications. Children may grow up rewarding themselves as an adult with food.

Food is as a necessary fuel that our bodies need to function, not a reward.

- Be a good role model. It's critical that you demonstrate healthy eating behaviors. Your child is going to likely follow your lead, so take them down the right path.
- Have a schedule. Plan ahead and keep in mind your child's schedule. Your child will not be as inclined to try new foods if he or she is in need of a nap. Make sure to offer a meal or snack every 2-3 hours. Children need to be fed frequently to ensure appropriate calories and nutrition.
- Serving sizes. Serve your child appropriate portion sizes. A

good rule of thumb is one tablespoon per year of age. For starters serve your two year old, two tablespoons of ground up chicken, two tablespoons of green beans and two tablespoons of rice.



Snack Foods

It's critical that you stock your cabinets with nutrient dense snacks that are rich in iron, folic acid, calcium and protein. Why? Because it is easy for children to fill up on "junk food" and not get the nutrition they need to grow healthy and strong. Foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low fat dairy are recommended.



Here are some examples of nutritious snacks that provide vitamins and minerals your children need for proper growth.

- Spread peanut butter on apple slices.
- Peel a banana roll in yogurt then crushed cereal and freeze.
- Dip vegetable slices such as zucchini, bell pepper and celery in hummus.
- Blend low fat milk, strawberries and a banana for a smoothie.
- Sprinkle low fat yogurt with granola and blueberries.

Special Considerations



Calcium is important for young children because of its role in bone health. The adequate intake (AI) for toddlers is 500 mg/d while for young children it rises to 800 mg/d, almost double. How can you be sure your child is getting enough calcium? Milk and dairy products are the best sources of calcium. However, you can also get calcium from non dairy foods such as collards, spinach, black-eyed peas, salmon and tofu. With proper care and planning, these non-dairy sources of calcium are a good alternative if your child does not drink milk due to an allergy or intolerance. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that children between the ages of 1-8 years old consume 2 cups (16 oz) of low fat dairy products each day. For children ages 1-2 years old, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends whole milk to support neurological development. The American Academy of Pediatrics also recognizes that most children do not meet the recommended intake of calcium and therefore this nutrient is of concern in this population group.

Iron is another nutrient of importance for children. The recommended intake is 7 and 10 mg per day respectively for toddlers and young children. During childhood iron deficiency is one of the most common problems children face. Not getting adequate amounts of iron daily results in inattentiveness, fatigue and tiredness. Children who drink a lot of milk are more prone to iron deficiency anemia because milk is a poor source of iron. Provide your child a variety of iron rich foods including, meats, fish, poultry, eggs and fortified grains. Interested in increasing iron absorption? Consume a vitamin C rich food, such as orange juice or tomato sauce with a fortified source of iron, this helps to change the electrical charge on iron to increase its absorption.

If you have concerns about your child's intake of calcium, iron, or other nutrients please consult your physician or a nutritionist.

Pair a vitamin C rich food with a fortified iron source to increase absorption.

MyPyramid For Children

Food Group	Age: 3 years, Male	Age: 3 years, Female	Recommended Food
Grains	5 oz equivalent	4 oz equivalent	Wheat, rice, oats, breads, pasta, breakfast cereal, and
Vegetables	1 1/2 cups	2 cups	All frozen, fresh and
Fruits	1 1/2 cups	1 cup	All fresh, frozen,
Milk	2 cups	2 cups	All fluid milk, cheese
Meat and beans	4 oz equivalent	3 oz equivalent	1 oz lean meat, poultry or fish, 1 egg. Meat equivalents: 1 tbsp. peanut butter, 1/4 cup cooked legumes, or 1/2 oz nuts or

Visit MyPyramid.gov to receive specific recommendations for your child's needs.



HEALTHY TIPS FOR TOTS

This newsletter is not a substitute for personalized medical advice. If you have prior existing conditions, symptoms, or are taking medications which may affect your ability to adapt to nutrition or exercise programs, please consult your physician.