



Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital
Caring for your Child's Nutrition

Nutrition Guidelines for Your School Age Child

Children between the ages of 7-12 years are growing rapidly and their appetites are increasing. It is especially important for children in this age group to get well-balanced, nutritious meals and snacks to ensure good nutrition for growth and to help prevent excessive weight gain.

During these years, many changes are happening. Be aware that children may start skipping meals or dieting. They may spend more time in sedentary activities such as TV, video games or computer. Changes that go along with puberty will begin. Peer pressure will often be at its greatest during this time.

Parents and caregivers should limit television, computer and video game time. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting screen time to no more than 1-2 hours of quality programming a day. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends at least 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day. For more exercise and nutrition information, visit www.myplate.gov.

Feeding Guidelines for children 7-12 years of age

<i>Food Group</i>	<i>Food Samples and Serving Sizes</i>
<u>Dairy Products</u> <i>3-4 servings per day</i> Good source of protein, calcium, Vitamin A and Vitamin D	1 cup of milk (<i>low-fat or skim is best</i>) 1 cup low-fat yogurt 1 ounce of cheese
<u>Meat/Protein Foods</u> <i>2 servings per day</i> Good source of protein, iron, zinc and B vitamins	2-3 ounces fish, poultry, meat ½ cup beans 2 tablespoons peanut butter 1 egg

<i>Food Group</i>	<i>Food Samples and Serving Sizes</i>
<u>Breads/Cereals/Starches</u> <i>6-8 servings per day</i> Good source of complex carbohydrates, fiber, B vitamins, minerals	1 slice bread ½ cup cooked cereal, rice, pasta ¾ cup dry cereal 4 crackers
<u>Vegetables</u> <i>3-4 servings per day</i> Good source of Vitamin A and C, potassium and fiber	½ cup cooked vegetables 1 cup lettuce/salad <i>Offer dark green or yellow vegetables every other day</i>
<u>Fruits</u> <i>2-3 servings per day</i> Good source of Vitamin A and C, potassium and fiber	1 cup fresh fruit ¼ cup dried fruit ½ cup canned fruit ½ cup juice
<u>Fats/Oils/Others</u> Good source of Vitamin E	3-5 teaspoons per day, such as butter, margarine, oil <i>Limit chips, candy, desserts, ice cream and sodas since they provide very little nutrition</i>

The following is a sample menu of a day filled with healthy meals and snacks:

Breakfast

¾ cup 100% fruit juice
 ¾ cup Cheerios
 1 cup low fat milk

Lunch

Turkey or Ham sandwich: 2 slices of bread,
 1 oz. meat, 1 slice mozzarella cheese,
 1 Tbsp. reduced-calorie mayonnaise
 1 medium banana
 6 baby carrots with low fat ranch dressing
 1 cup low-fat milk

Snack

2 cups low fat popcorn
 1 cup low fat yogurt

Dinner

2 -3 ounces of roasted chicken
 1 cup broccoli
 1 cup mashed potatoes
 1 cup low-fat milk

PM Snack (optional)

4 graham cracker squares
 1 Tbsp. peanut butter

Foods Not Recommended

High-fat foods:

Avoid foods with more than 30% of calories from fat. Reading the Nutrition Facts label will help you determine if the food is too high in fat. A general rule of thumb is for the particular food to have less than 5 gm of fat per serving. Try to limit the amount of fried food in the diet.



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 bar (37.0 g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 130	Calories from Fat 27
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 3.0g	5%
Saturated Fat 0.5g	2%
Sodium 105mg	4%
Total Carbohydrates 23.0g	8%
Dietary Fiber 2.0g	8%
Sugars 12.0g	
Protein 2.0g	
Vitamin A 15%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 20%	Iron 10%

* Based on a [2000 calorie diet](#)

Foods that cause dental cavities:

Avoid soda, gum, hard candies, lollipops and other sugary foods.

Sugar-sweetened beverages:

These drinks will fill children up and provide very few nutrients. Offer water and milk (in appropriate amounts) first and limit juice and soda.

Caffeinated beverages:

Caffeine can cause dehydration and restlessness. These beverages may replace healthier beverage choices.

Additional Information:

If you have questions, call: _____, Registered Dietitian

Phone: (717) 531- _____ or (717) 531-8406