



Your Child's Nutrition From Ages 1 to 6

These years can be challenging when it comes to feeding, especially during the toddler years. Your child will want independence and control. One of the most important responsibilities that you as a parent have is to introduce new flavors and textures to their diet and to make sure that the foods offered are nutritious.

REMEMBER: You decide what variety of healthy foods to offer at a meal and your child decides which of those foods to eat, how much to eat, and whether to eat at all.

1-3 YEARS

These are some feeding tips that will be useful for this age group:

- Avoid battles over food and meals.
- Provide regular meals and snacks.
- Be flexible with new foods.
- Provide the right portion size, about one-fourth the size of an adult portion.
- Limit juice intake to 4 to 6 ounces per day.
- Dessert should not be used as a reward. Try serving it with the rest of the food.
- Make the food easy for your toddler to eat. Offer bite-sized pieces of food that are soft and moist and served at room temperature. Use child sized utensils and a high chair.
- Most children younger than 2 years need whole milk. After age 2, you can switch to low fat or fat free milk.

- To help prevent iron-deficiency anemia, limit milk intake to 16-24 ounces a day.
- Offer your child 3 meals and 2-3 snacks, but keep in mind that it is common for toddlers to skip meals.
- Foods not recommended:
 - Sweetened flavored milk drinks
 - Undercooked meat served in large chunks
 - Difficult to chew fresh vegetables and fresh fruits
 - Dried fruits
 - Sweetened beverages: fruit flavored drinks, soda, sport drinks, tea
 - High sugar, high salt, or fried foods.

3-6 YEARS

For this age group, use the same general guidelines as for the 1 to 3 year olds plus:

- Involve your child in food shopping and food preparation whenever possible.
- A quick rule of thumb is 1 tablespoon of food per year of age from each of the food groups at lunch and dinner.
- Seat your child at the table. Do NOT allow him or her to eat while walking or playing.
- Avoid being a short order cook.
- Many times children do not like foods to be combined or mixed together.
- Ways to help your child try new foods:
 - Offer just one bite of a new food.
 - Do not bribe, trick or force a child into trying a new food.
 - Provide a mix of favorite foods along with a small amount of new or previously disliked foods.
 - If your child refuses a food after 3 tries, reintroduce it after several days or weeks.

FEEDING GUIDELINES

FOOD GROUP	12-23 months	2-4 years	4-6 years
Milk/ Milk Products <i>4 servings daily</i>	Whole milk and whole milk products	Skim or 1% milk and low fat dairy products	Skim or 1% milk and low fat dairy products
Milk/Yogurt	4 to 6 ounces	4 to 6 ounces	4 to 8 ounces
Cheese	1/3 ounce	2/3 to 1 ounce	1 ounce
Meat /Protein Foods <i>2 servings daily</i>			
Beef, pork, poultry, lamb, fish, veal	½ to 1 ounce	½ to 1 ounce	1 to 2 ounces
Eggs	½	¾	1
Peanut butter	Not recommended	1 tablespoon after age 3	1 to 2 tablespoons
Legumes or beans	¼ cup	¼ cup to ½ cup	½ cup
Breads/Cereals/Starches <i>4 or more servings daily</i>			
Whole grain breads	½ to 1 slice	¾ to 1 slice	1 slice
Cooked cereals, rice, pasta	¼ cup	1/3 to ½ cup	½ cup
Fruits/Vegetables <i>4 or more servings daily</i>			
Fruits/Vegetables	4 ounces of juice 1 to 2 tablespoons or more of vegetables or fruits	4 ounces of juice 2 to 4 tablespoons or more of vegetables or fruits	4 ounces of juice 4 or more tablespoons of vegetables or fruits
Fats/Oils <i>3 servings daily</i>	Do not limit	1 to 3 teaspoons	1 to 3 teaspoons
Other			
Jams, jellies, soft drinks, candy, sweet desserts, salty-high fat snacks	Use in moderation if desired	Use in moderation if desired	Use in moderation if desired

Tips to Prevent Choking

- Always supervise mealtimes.
- Be aware if your child is eating in the car.
- Coughing is a sign a child is removing an object naturally.
- Avoid hard to chew foods or foods that increase the risk of choking. Foods that may cause choking include:

Whole corn	Popcorn
Whole grapes *	Raisins, unless cooked
Hot dogs*	Raw apples
Meat chunks	Raw vegetables
Sausage links*	Gumdrops
Nuts, unless chopped fine	Hard candy
Peanut butter	Jelly beans

**cut hot dogs and link sausages lengthwise and grapes into quarters*

Additional Information:

If you have questions, call: _____, *Registered Dietitian*

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