



CHILDREN'S
HOME
SOCIETY OF
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www.chs-ca.org

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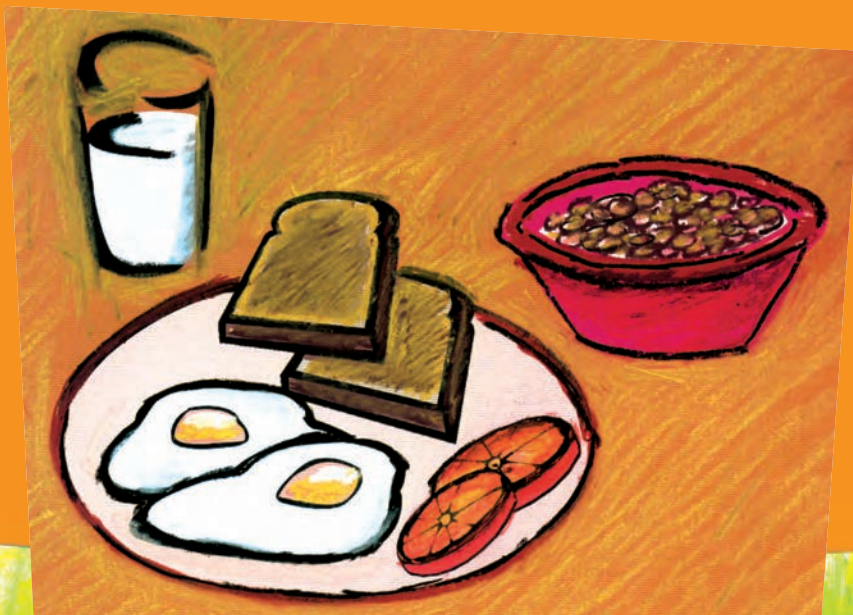
NUTRITION

HEALTHY EATING FOR HEALTHY CHILDREN



C H I L D R E N ' S H O M E S O C I E T Y O F C A L I F O R N I A

Having good nutrition means giving your body the food it needs to grow and stay healthy. Healthy eating habits help children have the energy they need physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. It also helps them prevent and fight off illnesses. As parents and caregivers, you can help your children build healthy eating habits so they can make smart nutritional choices.





It is important for parents and caregivers to know about proper nutrition for children and help them develop a lifestyle of healthy eating. This brochure provides nutritional tips for children ages 12 months and older.



★ MY PLATE

My Plate is a general guide that informs families about various nutrients they need, based on their age, gender, and activity level.

FOOD GROUP	DAILY RECOMMENDATION*	EXAMPLES	HEALTHY OPTIONS
Grains	3 to 7 ounces <i>At least half should be whole grains</i>	Bread, bulgur, cereal, cornmeal, couscous, grits, muffin, noodles, pasta, pita bread, rice, tortilla	Low-fat popcorn, dry cereal (low in sugar), oatmeal, pretzels,*** fig bars, rice cake, whole-grain crackers, whole-wheat bread
Vegetables	1 to 3 cups	Asparagus, bean sprouts, bok choy, broccoli, cactus, carrots,*** collard greens, corn,*** jicama, okra, peas,*** potato, spinach, squash, tomato	Baked potato, raw and cooked vegetables, salads, and vegetable juices
Fruits	1 to 2 cups	Apple, banana, grapes,*** lychee, mango, melon, nectarine, orange, papaya, peach, plantains, strawberries, watermelon	Fresh fruit, unsweetened dried fruit including raisins***
Protein	2 to 6 ounces	Beef, chick peas, dry beans, eggs, fish, lentils, nuts,*** poultry	Peanut butter spread, tofu, tuna
Dairy	2 to 3 cups	Cheese, milk (skim or 1%**), yogurt	Cottage cheese, low-fat/frozen yogurt,** natural cheese (cheddar, Swiss)

* These amounts are appropriate for individuals who get less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity, not including normal daily activities.

** Children younger than two years old should drink whole milk and should not eat reduced-fat foods.

*** For children younger than four years old, these foods can be choking hazards. Avoid giving large chunks of food.

★ FOOD FACTS

- Carbohydrates provide energy. Fat helps growth and provides energy. Protein helps growth and brain development.
- If a child eats a diet based on My Plate, he will get the vitamins needed to be healthy. Give your child vitamins and supplements only if the pediatrician recommends doing so.
- Children should eat three full meals and two to three snacks every day. When a child becomes a toddler, her appetite often decreases. Try serving smaller amounts. If she wants more, offer a second serving. Do not force her to eat food.
- Healthy oils are fats that provide essential nutrients. Some oils are used in cooking, such as canola or olive oil. Other foods are naturally high in oils, such as nuts, fish, and avocados.
- Foods labeled "reduced-fat" may have high amounts of sugar.
- When a child eats more calories than he uses up in physical energy, he can become overweight. Watching television and snacking for several hours at a time on a regular basis can lead to obesity.

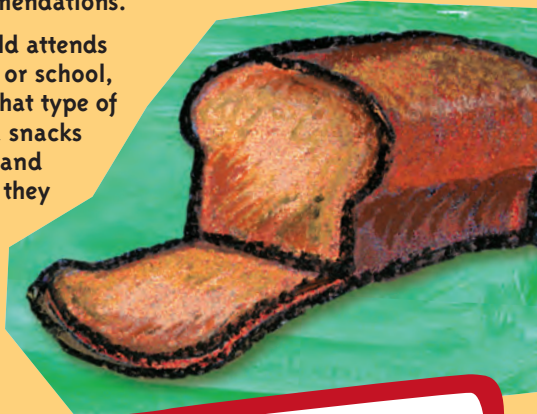


Healthy eating begins with healthy shopping. Buy foods and cooking ingredients that are healthy.

Eating a healthy breakfast every morning helps children focus and stay fit.

★ HEALTHY TIPS

- Serve lean meats: Fish, lean beef cuts, skinless chicken, and turkey.
- Instead of butter, use soft margarine with zero trans fat and vegetable oils made from canola, corn, olives, soybeans, or sunflowers.
- Use fat-free cooking methods like baking, broiling, grilling, poaching, roasting, or steaming.
- Read nutrition labels to make healthy decisions. Percent Daily Values are based on calorie levels for adults. Foods intended for children have a Nutrition Facts Panel that is specific for children.
- Serve meals with small amounts of fat, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and sugar.
- If your child often refuses food, try offering a variety of healthy choices. Avoid bargaining and begging to get your child to eat. (For example, if your child refuses milk, try offering cheese or a fruit smoothie made with milk.)
- Do not keep supplies of snacks high in fat and sugar at home. Buy what you need for special occasions.
- Practice food safety: Wash your hands, rinse and dry fruits and vegetables, and clean surfaces that come into contact with food. Keep raw, cooked, and ready-to-eat foods separate while shopping, storing, and preparing foods. Make sure foods are cooked to a safe temperature and refrigerate perishable foods quickly.
- If you feel your child is overweight or has unhealthy eating habits, talk to her doctor or a registered dietitian for recommendations.
- If your child attends child care or school, find out what type of meals and snacks are given and how often they are given.



Children's early eating experiences affect their future eating habits.

For children younger than two years old, do not restrict fat or calories unless the doctor says to. Keep in mind that the amount they eat will vary because their diets are changing.

★ ALLERGIES & SPECIAL NEEDS

Food allergies are common in many children. For children with special needs, their developmental disabilities or food allergies may require special diet plans.

- Seek help from health consultants, other parents, pediatricians, and therapists.
- You may need to give special attention to amounts of food, frequency of feeding, medication, special equipment, or types of food.
- Some common food allergies are cow's milk, citrus fruits and juice, egg whites, nuts, and wheat.
- Some symptoms of allergies are coughing, diarrhea, itching, nausea, rashes, runny nose, sneezing, stomach pain, swelling, and vomiting.
- If your child has allergies, always check a food's ingredients.

Be a good example by eating healthfully yourself. Allow children to help you prepare meals. When introducing new food to your child, start with a small serving and offer more if he asks.

★ EXERCISE

- Children should have at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day.
- Limit the amount of time children spend doing activities that do not require physical movement like watching television, using the computer, and playing video games.
- Because of funding, some schools are not able to offer recommended amounts of physical education. Some alternative ways for children to exercise are:
 - Dancing
 - Riding a tricycle,
 - Sledding or
 - Jumping rope
 - bicycle, scooter,
 - ice skating
 - Playing at a park
 - or skateboard
 - Swimming
 - Playing sports
 - Rollerskating or
 - Taking walks
 - Playing tag
 - rollerblading
 - Throwing balls



TO LEARN MORE

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Saxton Freyman & Joost Elffers

EATING THE ALPHABET: FRUITS AND VEGETABLES FROM A TO Z

Lois Ehlert

BOOKS FOR ADULTS

HEALTHY FOODS, HEALTHY KIDS

Elizabeth M. Ward, M.S., R.D.

THE FAMILY NUTRITION BOOK

William Sears, M.D., & Martha Sears, R.N.

ORGANIZATIONS

MYPLATE (888) 779-7264 or www.choosemyplate.gov

KIDSHEALTH www.kidshealth.org