

Feeding Your Child

Parents and caregivers are responsible for what food is served and when and where it is served. Children are responsible for how much they eat and whether or not they eat at all.



FRUITS

Focus on Fruits

- Enjoy a variety of fruit.
- Choose fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruit.

Age	2	3	4
Daily Goal	1 cup	1 - 1½ cups	1 - 1½ cups

PROTEIN

Go Lean with Protein

- Vary your protein routine. Choose from meats, poultry, eggs, seafood, beans, peas, lentils, legumes, soy, nuts, and seeds.
- Use cooking methods like baking, broiling, grilling, roasting, and stir-frying.
- 1 oz meat or poultry is about the size of a standard ice cube = 1/3 serving
- 1/4 cup beans = 1/2 serving
- 1 egg = 1 serving
- Aim for high quality protein with every meal.

Age	2	3	4
Daily Goal	1 - 1½ servings	1 - 2½ servings	1½ - 3½ servings

VEGETABLES

Vary Your Veggies

- Eat a variety of vegetables. Vegetables of different colors provide different nutrients.
- Enjoy vegetables raw or cooked, plain or flavored with healthy fats, herbs, and spices.

Age	2	3	4
Daily Goal	1½ cup	1¼ - 1¾ cups	1¾ - 2½ cups

WHOLE GRAINS

Choose Fiber-Rich Whole Grains

Look for the word "whole" on the ingredients list.

- 1/2 slice whole grain bread = 1/2 oz
- 1/4 cup brown or wild rice, whole grain pasta, or oatmeal = 1/2 oz
- 1/2 whole grain tortilla = 1/2 oz

Age	2	3	4
Daily Goal	1 - 2 oz	1 - 3¼ oz	1½ - 3¼ oz

DAIRY

Serve Calcium Rich Foods

- Choose milk, yogurt, cheese, and other dairy without added sugars.
- If your child doesn't or can't drink milk, choose lactose-free products or other calcium sources such as fortified foods and beverages.

Age	2	3	4
Daily Goal	2 cups	2 - 2½ cups	2½ - 3 cups

NUTRITION NOTES

- A serving size for a child is usually 1 tablespoon for every year of age.
- There will be times when your child will only want one food to eat. The best thing to do is continue to offer a variety of healthy foods at meal and snack times. Your child will outgrow this phase.

MAKE SNACKS COUNT

Snacks are important because children often can't eat enough during regular meal times to satisfy all of their nutritional needs. Establish regular meal and snack times. Space snacks a couple of hours before the next meal and a couple of hours after the last meal.

HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS

- quartered sandwiches
- ready-to-eat cereals
- thin slices of cheese
- whole grain toast or crackers
- pieces of fresh or canned fruit
- yogurt
- graham crackers and milk

REDUCE RISKS OF CHOKING

Always watch children during meals and snacks. Keep the following foods from children until 4 years of age:

- nuts, seeds, and chunks of peanut butter
- hot dogs and chunks of meat and cheese
- hard candies, popcorn, and chewing gum
- whole grapes
- marshmallows
- raw vegetables

KNOW THE LIMITS ON FATS, SUGARS, & SALTS

- Choose healthy fats from foods like nuts, seeds, seafood, avocados, olives, and eggs. Check the nutrition facts label and choose foods that are low in saturated fats and sodium.
- Offer food and beverages low in added sugars.

RETHINK THAT DRINK

- When your child is thirsty, try to encourage water instead of juice or milk.
- He or she may fill up on juice or milk and not eat the recommended amounts from the food groups.

CREATE HEALTHY BONES

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children who are ingesting less than 1 liter (1 quart) per day of vitamin D-fortified formula or milk, should receive a vitamin D supplement of 400 IU/Day. Since 1 quart of milk is in excess of the recommended 2 cups of milk per day for pre-school children, most children will require a vitamin D supplement.

DENTAL HEALTH

- Limit foods high in sugar such as soft drinks, candy, cookies, pastries, jams, syrups, and presweetened cereals.
- Encourage children to brush their teeth after meals and snacks.

REMEMBER

Alcohol, tobacco, and drug exposure are hazardous to a child. Eliminate substance use and give your child a healthy start.

For more information, including referrals, ask your WIC counselor.



OKLAHOMA
State Department
of Health

