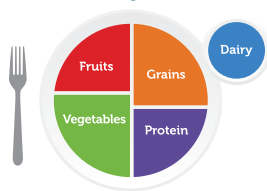




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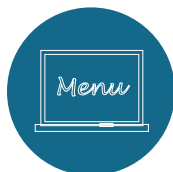
# Healthy Eating for Families

Healthy eating is important at every age. Offer your family a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding on foods and beverages, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



## Connect at mealtimes

Sit down together for a meal when you can. Turn off the TV and put away screens and devices, so you can “unplug,” interact, and focus on each other.



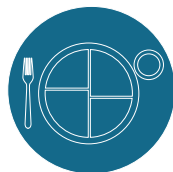
## Plan out meals

Reduce stress at mealtimes by planning out meals before the week starts. Include quick and easy dishes, or leftovers, on nights that are extra busy.



## Let everyone help

Kids learn by doing. Younger ones can mix ingredients, wash produce, or set the table, while older kids can help with ingredients. Everyone can help clean up.



## Serve a variety of foods

Include choices from each food group—fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives—in meals and snacks throughout the week.



## Let kids choose

Get kids engaged with meal preparation at home. Serve meals “family style” to encourage kids to be creative with their plates.



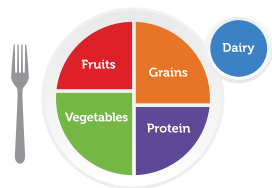
## Offer nonfood rewards

Foods aren't the only rewards that kids like. Younger kids may enjoy gathering points toward a special outing, and older kids could earn extra screen time or an allowance.





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# Healthy Eating for Infants

Healthy eating is important at every age. When it's time for solid foods, offer babies a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding on foods and beverages, choose options that are full of nutrients and lower in sodium and avoid added sugars. Start with these tips:



## Feeding your young baby

If possible, feed your baby only breast milk from birth to about 6 months of age, and continue through at least the first year of life—longer if desired. If breast milk is unavailable, feed your baby iron-fortified infant formula. Talk to your healthcare provider about vitamin D supplements for your baby.



## Look for cues

When babies are hungry, they usually let you know. But fullness cues are not as obvious. Babies may be full if they close their mouth, turn their head away from breast or bottle, or relax their hands. Recognizing and responding to these cues helps children learn how to self-regulate their intake.



## Starting solid foods

At about 6 months, infants may show signs that they're ready for solid foods, such as bringing objects to the mouth or swallowing food rather than pushing it out. Do not put infant cereal or other solid foods in an infant's bottle, but small amounts of water may also be introduced when your baby starts solid foods.



## Serving first foods

Introduce a variety of foods, flavors, and textures from all food groups. Include foods rich in iron and zinc, particularly for breastfed infants. Examples include lean meats, fortified infant cereals, and beans.



## Prevent choking

Make sure your baby is sitting in a highchair or other safe, supervised place for meals and snacks. Offer foods that are the appropriate size, consistency, and shape for your child's age and eating skills.



## Serving safe foods

Avoid feeding your baby any foods that contain raw or cooked honey. Honey can contain bacteria that could cause serious illness or death among infants. Also avoid unpasteurized foods or beverages, such as juices, milk, yogurt, or cheeses, as they could contain harmful bacteria.



Dietary  
Guidelines  
for Americans

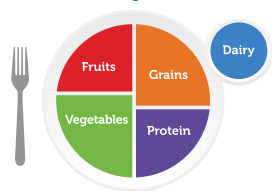
Go to **MyPlate.gov** for more information.  
USDA is an equal opportunity provider,  
employer, and lender.

**The benefits of healthy eating  
add up over time, bite by bite.**

FNS-905-14  
March 2022

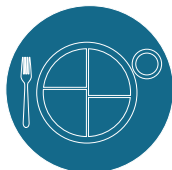


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# Healthy Eating for Toddlers

Healthy eating is important at every age. Offer toddlers a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding on foods and beverages, choose options that are full of nutrients and lower in sodium and avoid added sugars. Start with these tips:



## Provide foods full of nutrients

Offer your toddler a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. Avoid foods and beverages with added sugars and choose those with lower sodium.



## Look for cues

When children are hungry, they usually let you know. But fullness cues are not as obvious. Children may be full if they push food away, close mouth, turn head away from food, or make sounds to let you know. Recognizing and responding to these cues helps children learn how to self-regulate their intake.



## Prevent choking

Have toddlers sit at a table for meals and snacks and not wander around with food in their mouth. Foods such as hot dogs, candy, nuts and seeds, raw carrots, grapes, popcorn, and chunks of peanut butter can be choking risks. See the [USDA Team Nutrition worksheet](#) for more.



## Drinks matter too!

Did you know the only beverages your toddler needs are water, milk, and, if available, breast milk? Avoid drinks with added sugars like soda, flavored milks, juice drinks, and sports drinks.



## Try new foods

Try serving a new food alongside a familiar food in the same meal. It may take up to 8 to 10 tries for a child to accept a new food.



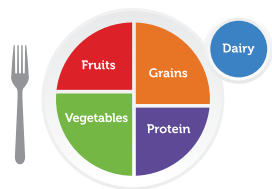
## Serve safe food

Help your child learn to wash their hands before eating. Only serve foods that have been cooked properly and avoid serving your toddler unpasteurized (raw) juice or milk.





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# Healthy Eating for Preschoolers

Healthy eating is important at every age. Offer preschoolers a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding on foods and beverages, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



## Model healthy behaviors

Preschoolers tend to copy what parents or caregivers do at the table. If you eat your veggies, they'll eat their veggies. And, it's good for both of you.



## Think about their drinks

Sugar-sweetened beverages like sodas and fruit drinks are sources of added sugars that are often high in calories. Beverages with no added sugars like water, unsweetened fat-free or low-fat milk (including low-lactose or lactose-free options), or fortified soy beverages should be the primary choice for children.



## Prevent choking

Encourage children to sit at a table for meals and snacks and not wander around carrying food. Check out the [USDA Team Nutrition worksheet](#) for foods that are choking hazards at different ages.



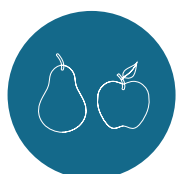
## Try new foods

Let children choose a new food to try at the grocery store. Serve something your child likes along with the new food. It may take up to a dozen tries for a child to accept a new food.



## Get kids involved

Preschoolers can help at mealtimes by washing produce, tearing lettuce, stirring mixes, scooping ingredients, or setting the table.



## Offer choices

Like adults, preschoolers like to have a say in what they eat. “A pear or an apple?” “Whole-wheat toast or some crackers?” You offer the healthy options, but they get to choose.

