

# FEEDING YOUR YOUNG CHILD

## AGE 1 TO 5

### Growth, Independence, Appetite

Growth is not as fast during this time, especially after the age of 2. Activity level will impact appetite and it may be normal for your child to eat only one good meal a day.

Your child will want to do more and more things on his or her own. It is common for the independence to show up at mealtimes resulting in refusal to eat a food or to eat at all.

### Encouraging Variety, Offering New Foods

Offer food choices from at least 3 food groups during a meal. For example, spaghetti with meatball and broccoli (starch or grain, protein, vegetable). Offer different types of foods throughout the day.

Set a good example by eating many different types of foods yourself. Offer new foods in a non-pressured way and allow your child to decide whether to eat the new food. Talk about the food and teach your child how it will taste, feel, smell, etc. Offer the new food again. It is common for children to reject a food 12 to 15 times before even trying (OR EVEN MORE).

Do not pressure, bribe or play games to get your child to eat. This often backfires and they eat less.



### When to Feed Your Child

Toddlers and preschoolers need scheduled meals and snacks. Offering 3 meals and 2-3 snacks each day to provide opportunity to eat and encourage variety is important. Allow 2 to 3 hours between meals and snacks to allow your child to become hungry. If a child chooses not to eat a meal or snack it will not be long before the next scheduled meal or snack. Do not make meal or snack times excessively long. Meals should last between 15-30 minutes and snacks between 10-20 minutes.

### Where to Feed Your Child

ALL food and drink should be consumed at the table or designated location. There is no reason to allow your child to carry food or liquids around. This is referred to as grazing and prevents your child from knowing when they are hungry or full. Do not offer foods or liquids (other than water) between meals and snacks. A highchair or booster seat may be needed.

### Drinks

Serve milk at meals to provide your child with calcium and other vitamins and minerals. At 2 years of age your child can change from whole milk to low fat milk. One small serving of juice per day is acceptable. More than this provides extra sugar and little nutrition. Water is the best choice, especially between meals. Drinking caloric liquids between meals will make your child less hungry at mealtimes.

## How Much Is A Serving?

- Offer  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of an adult portion size (example  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  sandwich)
- *Rule of Thumb:* Offer 1 tablespoon of each food for each year of your child's age. For example, offer 2 tablespoons of mashed potatoes to a 2 year old. If your child is still hungry, offer seconds.
- The amount your child eats will vary day to day depending on their activity level and growth.

## MILK & DAIRY

(3-4 servings per day)

Milk  
Cheese  
Yogurt

$\frac{1}{2}$  oz

$\frac{3}{4}$  oz

### Suggested Serving Size

1-3 years

4-5 years

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup

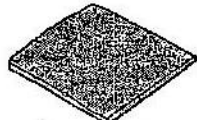
$\frac{3}{4}$  cup

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup

$\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$  cup



$\frac{1}{2}$  cup milk



1 oz cheese



$\frac{1}{2}$  cup yogurt

## MEAT/PROTEIN

(2-3 servings)

Meat, fish, poultry  
Eggs  
Beans (cooked)  
Peanut Butter  
Cottage Cheese

1-3 Tbsp

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup

### Suggested Serving Size

1-3 years

4-5 years

1-3 Tbsp

4-5 Tbsp

1 egg

1 egg

1-2 Tbsp

1-2 Tbsp

$\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup



1 oz chopped meat



1 cooked egg



1 Tbsp peanut butter

## FRUITS & VEGETABLES

(4-5 servings per day)

Cooked Vegetables  
Fruits  
Raw Vegetables

### Suggested Serving Size

1-3 years

4-5 years

2-3 Tbsp

4-5 Tbsp

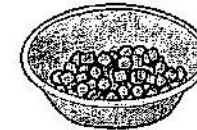
$\frac{1}{4}$  cup

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup

few pieces



$\frac{1}{2}$  cup 100% fruit juice



$\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked vegetables



$\frac{1}{2}$  cup fresh fruit

## BREADS, CEREALS, GRAINS

(3-4 servings)

Bread  
Cooked cereal, pasta,  
rice noodles  
Dry cereal  
Muffin, pancake,  
roll, biscuit  
Crackers

### Suggested Serving Size

1-3 years

4-5 years

$\frac{1}{2}$  slice

1 slice

2-6 Tbsp

$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  cup

rice noodles

Dry cereal

2-6 Tbsp

$\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup

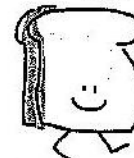
Muffin, pancake,  
roll, biscuit

$\frac{1}{2}$  small | 1 small

Crackers

2 - 4

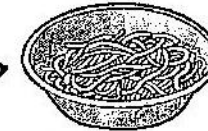
4 - 6



1 slice bread



2 crackers



$\frac{1}{2}$  cup noodles



$\frac{1}{2}$  tortilla

## FATS & OILS

(3 - 4 servings)

1 tsp vegetable, olive, canola oil  
1 tsp margarine with zero trans fats  
1 Tbsp Low fat mayonnaise  
1 Tbsp salad dressing

