

A Parent's Guide to Healthy Kids

Helping Your Child With Their Nutrition



Eating healthy is important for all of us, but especially for our children while they are growing. What your child eats affects behavior, brain development, and attention span. It helps to stabilize their energy, improve mental development, help them maintain a healthy weight, as well as aid in preventing mental health conditions including depression, anxiety, and ADHD.

To help your child make the best nutrition choices possible, we have put together some healthful information on tips and what your child should be eating as they develop.

Start with Breakfast

Eating a balanced breakfast with protein is a great way for your child to start their day. Protein can help them stay fuller longer. Good examples include egg sandwich on whole-wheat bread,

Greek yogurt, peanut butter on whole-grain toast or hard-boiled eggs, toast, and an apple.

Make Mealtimes a Priority

Sitting down at the table as a family is an important part of establishing healthy eating habits.

Limit Sugar

Sugar occurs naturally in many foods. These include fruits, vegetables, grains, and dairy products. Children get all the sugar they need from these foods. Many foods (such as candy) have added sugar. At best, all this extra sugar just adds empty calories to their diets. At worst, it can contribute to hyperactivity, mood disorders, obesity, and type 2 diabetes.

Avoid Sugary Drinks

It is recommended that children should have no more than 12 grams (3 teaspoons) of sugar a day.

Yet one can of regular soda has 40 grams (10 teaspoons) of added sugar. By cutting out sodas and juices and encouraging them to drink water instead, are easy ways is an easy way to reduce sugar.



Don't Ban Sweets

Telling your child can't have doughnuts or cake ever again can create cravings. When they do have a sweet treat, they tend to overindulge. Just make these kinds of foods a special treat instead of a regular part of their diet.



Modify Recipes

Many recipes taste just as good with less sugar added. Try reducing the amount of added sugar by half and see how it comes out.



Eat More Fruit

Fruit has plenty of natural sugar and encourage your child to eat more to satisfy their sugar cravings. Make desserts that are centered around fruit. Have them try a fruit smoothie instead of a milkshake.



Be Smart About Fat

Healthy fats are an important part of your child's diet. They help children get and stay full. They also benefit their brains, improving memory and lifting mood. The key is to make sure your kids are eating the right fats. Healthy fats are unsaturated fats. These can be: Monounsaturated – olive oil, avocados, nuts (almonds or pecans), and seeds (pumpkin or sesame) or Polyunsaturated – flaxseed, walnuts, or omega-3 fatty acids found in fish such as salmon or tuna.

