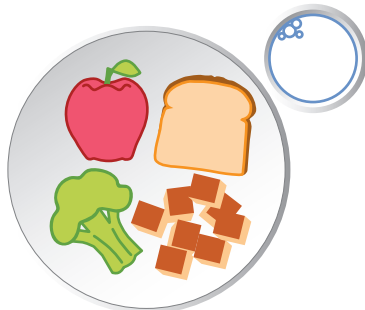


# BUILDING GOOD HABITS

*Building good eating habits at any age will benefit you and your child for a lifetime. But how do you know what, when, where and how much to feed your child?*

## What to Offer

- Plan meals that have foods from at least three (3) of the food groups: dairy, grains, fruits, vegetables, and protein.
- Offer a variety of foods. Offer new foods many times, prepared in different ways. Give kids a taste at first and be patient.
- Serve milk at meals. Milk provides protein, calcium and other nutrients that are not found naturally in other beverages.
- Serve only water between meals. Kids may refuse to eat at scheduled meal and snack times if they fill up on other drinks.
- Limit juice (even 100% fruit juice) to less than 6 ounces per day.
- Fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables are all smart choices. They contain the same amounts of vitamins and minerals. Choose fruits and vegetables without added fat, salt, or sugars.
- Make finger foods. Serve finger foods with a dip like yogurt. Bite-sized pieces (no larger than ½ inch) are easier and safer for small kids to handle.



## The 5 Food Groups

The food groups include these foods and more:

**Dairy:** milk, yogurt, and cheese

**Grains:** breads, tortillas, rice, cereal, and noodles

**Vegetables** (cooked under age 4): tomatoes, carrots, squash, peas, broccoli, and spinach

**Fruits:** bananas, oranges, apples, berries, pears, peaches, and apricots

**Protein:** eggs, chicken, turkey, fish, peanut butter, beans, nuts, beef, and pork

## Where to Offer

- Serve meals and snacks at a table as often as you can. This reminds everyone that eating and other activities, like watching TV, do not go together.
- Make meal time family time. Family meals help kids learn good eating habits from role models like you. Make meal times happy and relaxing by turning off the TV and talking to each other.

## When to Offer




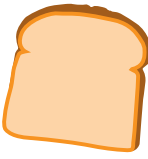

- Set regular times for meals and snacks. Young children need routines to practice new skills, like trying new foods. A regular schedule helps kids learn there is always another chance for them to eat what they need.
- Offer 3 meals per day with snacks in between. A snack after dinner is ok.

## How Much to Offer

- Kids usually eat when they're hungry and stop when they're full. It's helpful to know that before eating, their stomachs are about the size of their fist. So what may not look like much food to you, may actually be just right for their small stomachs.
- Let kids learn by serving themselves. Teach them to start small, and tell them they can get more if they're still hungry. A good rule of thumb for an initial serving is 1 tablespoon per year of your child's age.
- Let kids decide how hungry they are at meal or snack time. Offer healthy foods at scheduled times, but try not to worry if they don't always eat it. Trust their appetite and don't force or pressure them to eat.

## How Much?

Use this chart as a guide for how much food to offer your child each day. Your child's appetite will vary meal to meal and day to day. Try to balance amounts over a couple days or a week. Work with your health care provider to make sure the amounts are just right.

	 <b>Dairy</b>	 <b>Fruits</b>	 <b>Vegetables</b>	 <b>Grains</b>	 <b>Protein</b>
<b>2-3 yr-old</b>	<b>2 cups</b>	<b>1 cup</b>	<b>1 cup</b>	<b>3 oz.</b>	<b>2 oz.</b>
<b>4-5 yr-old</b>	<b>2.5 cups</b>	<b>1 cup</b>	<b>1.5 cups</b>	<b>4 oz.</b>	<b>3 oz.</b>
<b>Portions</b>	<b>1 cup =</b> 8 oz. milk 1.5 oz hard cheese 8 oz. yogurt	<b>1 cup =</b> 1 large fruit 8 oz. 100% juice ½ cup dried fruit 1 cup chopped fruit	<b>1 cup =</b> 1 cup chopped raw or cooked vegetables 2 cups leafy greens 1 cup juice	<b>1 oz. =</b> 1 slice of bread ½ cup oatmeal, rice or pasta 1 cup dry cereal	<b>1 oz. =</b> 1 oz. of cooked meat, poultry or fish ¼ cup beans 1 egg 1 T peanut butter ½ oz. nuts

**Cook Together. Eat Together. Talk Together. Make Mealtime a Shared Time.**