

Right Sizing: A Guide to Kid-Friendly Portions

Feeding young children takes patience, common sense and lots of love. Your reward is knowing that healthy eating habits help children get the energy and important nutrients they need to be their best.

Food Supplies Nutrients for Growth

Two- to six-year-olds are growing, learning, developing motor skills and becoming more independent. They require the same nutrients you do, but in different amounts. Since no one food or food group supplies all nutrients, encourage kids to eat a variety of different foods each day. For example, offer foods from three or more food groups for breakfast and lunch and from four or more groups for dinner. Keep food interesting with different flavors, colors and textures.



Cheesy Macaroni & Veggies

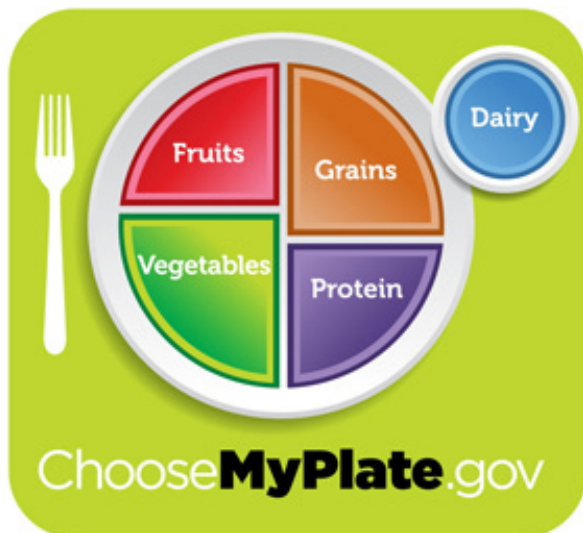
Right-Sizing Food for Kids

It's hard to predict how much food youngsters will eat at any given meal or snack. Their appetites may vary from day-to-day or from one eating occasion to the next. Factors include time of day, degree of hunger, familiarity of foods, activity level, being over-tired or growth spurts.

In general, two- to three-year-olds need the same type of food group foods as four- to six-year-olds, but smaller portions because their calorie needs are lower. One exception: two- to six-year-old children need two daily servings of calcium-rich foods from the Dairy Group for strong bones and teeth. By four years of age, most children are ready for regular-size portions. Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.

Food Gives Energy

Kids need calories (energy) to fuel their activities. How many calories? That depends on age, body size and activity levels. A good gauge is whether your child is growing normally, has energy for play and feels healthy. To help you decide how much and what types of food to offer, go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov and enter your child's age, gender and activity level. MyPlate will recommend an appropriate daily amount from each food group.



Tips for "Serving It Up" to Young Children

- **Offer meals and snacks at about the same time each day.** Allow enough time between feedings for kids to become hungry.
- **Provide plenty of time for meals and snacks.** Children need time to eat and recognize their bodies' signals that they are satisfied.
- **Use child-sized plates and cups.** These keep portions in line with young appetites and are easier for children to handle.
- **Let your child's appetite guide you.** Offer small portions; let kids ask for more if they want. Urging children to finish everything on their plates can lead to less healthful eating over time.
- **Introduce new foods one at a time with "just a taste" portions.** It often takes a number of trials before a new food is accepted. If your child sees you eating a food, he or she is more likely to try it.
- **Plan on snacks to fill nutrient gaps and satisfy between-meal hunger.** Young children may need a mid-morning, mid-afternoon and small bedtime snack.
- **Offer kid-size snack portions.** Try two graham cracker squares

with a half-cup of orange juice, a cheese slice and a half-cup of applesauce, or a four-ounce container of yogurt.

- **Don't go it alone.** Check with a health professional if you are concerned that a child is eating too little or too much. Ask your pediatrician for a referral to a dietitian if your child is overweight or underweight or if his or her food habits are especially worrisome.
- **Supervise children when they eat.** This helps you deal with potentially dangerous situations such as choking, falls or spills.

Remember, feeding kids isn't an exact science. Experience, common sense and some expert advice will help you over the hurdles you're sure to encounter.

*Try these easy-to-prepare, child-pleasing recipes and see how appealing kid-friendly portions can be.**

Cheesy Macaroni & Veggies

Prep: 15 minutes
Makes: 6 servings

- 2 pkg. (7-1/4 oz. each) KRAFT Macaroni & Cheese Dinner
- 1-1/2 cups chopped carrots
- 1 cup peas
- 1/2 cup fat-free milk
- 2 Tbsp. spread or margarine

COOK Macaroni as directed on pkg., adding carrots and peas to the cooking water for the last 5 min. of the macaroni cooking time.

DRAIN macaroni; return to saucepan. Add milk, spread and contents of both Cheese Sauce Mix packets; mix well.

COOK until heated through, stirring occasionally.

Substitute:

Substitute small fresh broccoli florets for the peas.

Nutrition Bonus:

You can feel good knowing that this easy-to-make dish is rich in vitamin A from the carrots. As a bonus, it's also an excellent source of calcium from the KRAFT Macaroni & Cheese Dinner. Serve with a glass of fat-free milk and a crisp apple.

Nutrition Information Per Serving: 320 calories, 6g total fat, 2g saturated fat, 10mg cholesterol, 660mg sodium, 55g carbohydrate, 4g dietary fiber, 11g sugars, 11g protein, 90%DV vitamin A, 10%DV vitamin C, 25%DV calcium, 10%DV iron.

Exchange: 3-1/2 Starch, 1 Fat

Dietary Exchanges based on Choose Your Foods: Exchange Lists for Diabetes © 2008 by the American Diabetes Association and the American Dietetic Association.

Very Berry Pops

Prep: 10 minutes plus freezing

- 1 qt. ripe strawberries, washed, sliced
- 1/3 cup KOOL-AID Tropical Punch Flavor Sugar-Sweetened Soft Drink Mix
- 8 paper or plastic cups (5 oz.)
- 8 wooden pop sticks or plastic spoons

PLACE strawberries, drink mix and 1/4 cup cold water in blender container; cover. Blend on low speed 1-1/2 to 2 minutes or until smooth. Pour evenly into paper cups. Freeze 1 hour.

INSERT wooden pop stick into each cup. Freeze an additional 3 hours or until firm. Peel off paper cups to serve. Let stand a few minutes at room temperature to soften slightly before serving.

Makes 8 servings, 1 pop each.

Kraft Kitchens Tip

Size It Up: These small pops are a right-sized treat for children ages 2 to 6 years old. If you are making them for children over 6 years of age, divide the mixture between 6 paper cups instead of 8 for a slightly larger pop.

Nutrition Bonus:

When your kids come inside after active play, offer them a frozen strawberry pop. The strawberries are rich in vitamin C.

Nutrition Information Per Serving (1/8 recipe): 60 calories, 0g total fat, 0g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 0mg sodium, 14g carbohydrate, 2g dietary fiber, 12g sugars, less than 1g protein, 0%DV vitamin A, 80%DV vitamin C, 2%DV calcium, 0%DV iron.

Exchange: 1 Fruit

Dietary Exchanges based on Choose Your Foods: Exchange Lists for Diabetes © 2008 by the American Diabetes Association and the American Dietetic Association.

**Note: Some foods, including popcorn, carrots, celery, grapes, raisins, cubes of cheese, chunks of meat, hot dogs, nuts or peanut butter, and hard or sticky candies, may cause choking in children under 6 years of age. These types of foods should be chopped into small pieces or spread very thinly for young children.*

Source: National SAFE KIDS Campaign and International Food Information Council Foundation