

Preschoolers

Focus on the meal and each other. Your child learns by watching you. Children are likely to copy your table manners, your likes and dislikes, and your willingness to try new foods.

Offer a variety of healthy foods. Let your child choose how much to eat. Children are more likely to enjoy a food when eating it is their own choice.

Be patient with your child. Sometimes new foods take time. Give children a taste at first and be patient with them. Offer new foods many times.

Let children serve themselves. Teach children to take small amounts at first. Let them know they can get more if they are still hungry.

Go to MyPlate.gov for more information about healthy eating, meal planning, food safety, and physical activity.

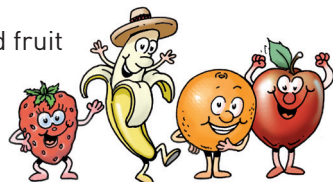
Daily Food Guide for Children Ages 2 to 5 years

These are general guidelines for healthy children, ages 2 to 5 years. Use these daily amounts to serve 3 meals and 1 to 2 healthy snacks to your child each day. Talk with the nutritionist or health care provider for more information on feeding your child.

Fruits 1 to 1½ cups daily

½ cup fruit equals:

- ½ cup chopped, cooked, or canned fruit
- ¼ cup dried fruit*
- ½ cup 100% fruit juice



Limit 100% fruit juice to:

- ½ cup per day for children 2 to 3 years of age
- ½ to ¾ cup per day for children 4 to 5 years of age

Vegetables 1 to 2 cups daily

½ cup vegetables equals:

- ½ cup cooked vegetables
- ½ cup chopped raw vegetables*
- 1 cup raw leafy vegetables*
- ½ cup 100% vegetable juice



Dairy 2 to 2½ cups daily

1 cup dairy equals:

- 1 cup milk or yogurt
- 2 slices or 1½ ounces natural cheese
- 1½ slices American deluxe cheese



Grains 3 to 5 ounces daily

1 ounce grains equals:

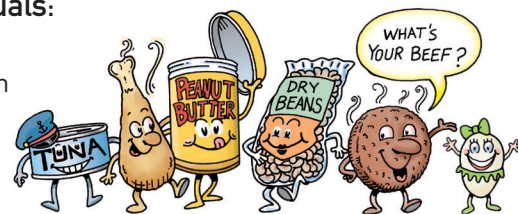
- 1 slice of bread
- ½ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta
- 1 to 1¼ cup ready-to-eat cereal
- 5 whole wheat crackers
- 1 4½-inch pancake
- 1 6-inch tortilla
- ½ hamburger bun or English muffin



Protein 2 to 5 ounces daily

1 ounce protein equals:

- 1 ounce cooked, lean meat, poultry, or fish
- 1 cooked egg
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter*
- ¼ cup cooked beans
- ¼ cup tofu



Choose Healthy Fats

UNSATURATED fats are healthy fats.

Foods high in unsaturated fats include:

- vegetable oils such as canola, corn, olive, peanut, safflower, soybean, and sunflower
- avocados and olives
- fatty fish such as salmon, canned tuna, mackerel, sardines, and herring



Limit foods high in SATURATED FATS such as butter, cream, lard, fatty meats, bacon, sausage, whole milk, cheese, coconut, coconut oil, palm oil, and palm kernel oils.

*Be careful. These foods may cause choking, especially in children under 4 years of age.



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Tips for Active Play

Children should be physically active for 1 hour or more every day. In general, preschoolers should not be sitting still for 1 hour or more at a time, except when sleeping.

Here are some examples of the activities children can do:

- walking
- playing ball
- riding a tricycle
- dancing to music
- swimming
- running and skipping
- jumping and hopping
- playing outside

Set aside time each day for the family to do some type of physical activity together.

Screen Time: Television, Smart Phones, Video Games & Computer Use

- For children 2 to 5 years of age, limit screen time to 1 hour per day of educational, non-violent programs. Parents should watch with children to help them understand what they are seeing.
- Do not allow your child to have a television, computer, or video games in his or her bedroom.

Tips for Healthy Eating

- Avoid oversized portions.
- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.
- Switch to fat-free or lowfat (1%) milk.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

Prevent Choking

Do not give children under 4 years of age the following foods: popcorn, nuts, seeds, large chunks of meat or cheese, hard pieces of vegetables or fruits (fresh or dried), hard candies, marshmallows, chips, whole grapes, and fish or meat with bones. Peanut butter or nut butter should only be given when spread thinly on crackers or toast; or thinned and blended into foods.

Your Child's Growth

- The preschool years are an important time for developing healthy habits for life.
- From the ages of 2 to 5 years, children's bodies grow and develop in ways that affect the way they think, eat, and behave.
- There are behavioral milestones to expect at each age. The timing of these milestones may vary with each child. For more information about developmental milestones for different ages of children, go to cdc.gov/MilestoneTracker.
- Discuss your child's growth and development with your child's health care provider.

Choose and Prepare Foods Lower in Salt and Sodium

- Use the Nutrition Facts label to compare the sodium in packaged foods and beverages.
- Buy low-sodium, reduced sodium, or no-salt-added products; look for fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables without added sauces or seasonings.
- Choose fresh or frozen poultry, seafood, and lean meats instead of prepared or ready-to-eat products.
- Cook more often at home to control the sodium in your food.
- Add herbs and spices instead of salt to recipes and dishes.

WIC has nutrition and cooking information on the Internet!

Go to wichealth.org. Sign up and complete your profile using the **Family ID** on your WIC Verification of Certification card. Click **Begin** and then choose a lesson. There are a wide variety of lesson topics. Also see **Health eKitchen** for new recipes.



Cook together. Eat together.
Talk together.
Make meal time family time.