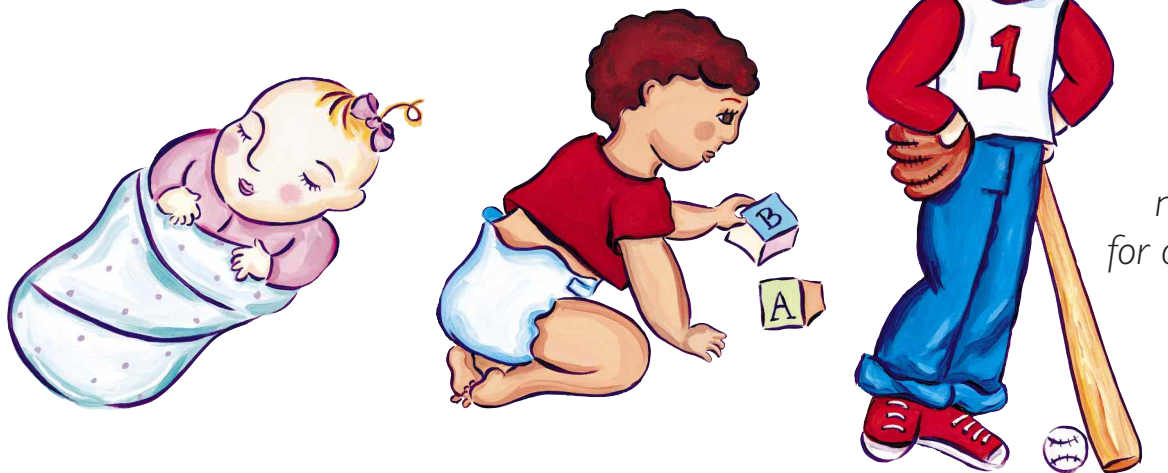


Good nutrition is essential for helping children grow in mind and in body. As children develop, it is important for them to eat a varied diet.

# CHILDHOOD NUTRITION



By offering an assortment of foods from each group of the Food Guide Pyramid, you can help ensure your child gets the 50 different nutrients needed for optimum health.

## NO ONE FOOD PROVIDES ALL THE NUTRIENTS YOUR CHILD NEEDS — OFFER A VARIETY OF FOODS EACH DAY

### FUNCTIONS — Of Key Nutrients

- **Carbohydrates**, like whole grain breads and cereals, as well as fruits and vegetables, provide energy and dietary fiber and aid in elimination!
- **Fats** are found in a wide variety of foods. They are essential for energy and to promote healthy skin, cushion organs, maintain body temperature and carry fat-soluble vitamins!
- **Protein** from meat and dairy products promotes growth and repair of body cells! One ounce of lean beef provides 60% of the protein needed by a seven- to twelve-month-old infant.<sup>2</sup>
- **Calcium** is necessary to build and strengthen bones and teeth! Be sure to offer a variety of dairy products every day.
- **Iron** is essential to help transport oxygen throughout the body, support the immune system and aid in brain development. The best sources of iron in the diet are lean meats and fortified grain products!
- **Zinc** plays a vital role in hundreds of functions in the body, including the ability to learn and remember! One ounce of lean beef provides 65% of the daily zinc requirement for children ages seven months through three years.<sup>2</sup>
- **Vitamin A** is found in deep green, yellow and orange fruits and vegetables. It prevents night blindness, promotes growth and bone development and keeps skin and mucous membranes healthy!
- **B-vitamins**, like vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, thiamin, niacin and riboflavin, help the body unleash the energy in food. Enriched grains, dairy products and meats are great sources of these essential nutrients! In fact, a

one-ounce serving of lean beef provides 83% of the vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, 21% of the vitamin B<sub>6</sub> and 20% of the niacin, a one-year-old child needs.<sup>2</sup>

- **Vitamin C** is essential to maintain bone, cartilage, teeth and skin! It's found in citrus fruits, berries, melons and broccoli. One-half cup of orange juice made from frozen concentrate provides 97% of the Vitamin C a seven- to twelve-month-old needs and 323% of the Vitamin C recommended for a one- to three-year-old.
- **Choline**, found in eggs, lean beef, oatmeal and iceberg lettuce, plays an important role in long- and short-term memory functions!

### INFANTS — Birth to One Year

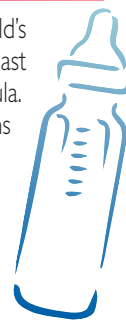
During the first year of life, your child's main source of nutrition will be breast milk or an iron-fortified baby formula. However, around four to six months of age you will start seeing some changes, indicating he is ready for solid foods.

When your baby starts getting teeth, sits up without support, makes chewing motions and grasps food with her hands, she is ready for solid foods.

#### Your baby will let you know when the time is right for solid foods.

- Start with an iron-fortified, single-grain infant cereal. Most experts recommend starting with rice cereal, and then adding oat and barley cereals to expand your baby's tastes.

- Next add strained baby meats, strained vegetables and fruits. By adding new foods one at a time, you will be able to identify the source of a possible food allergy.
- As your baby gets more teeth, encourage interest in food by offering foods cut into tiny pieces. Self-feeding helps develop eye/hand coordination.
- Introduce him to the challenge of drinking from a cup. Around six to nine months of age most children are ready to tackle taking formula, water or juice from a "sippy" cup. Remember to limit the amount of juice your baby drinks, as it tends to take the place of necessary foods that are more nutrient dense. The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend juice for infants under six months and no more than six ounces a day for older infants.
- Do not restrict your baby's fat intake. She needs the calories and other nutrients in fat to support her rapid growth. Lowfat and non-fat dairy products should not be offered until after her second birthday.
- As your baby grows, so will his appetite. Gradually increase the amount of food you offer.
- If your baby refuses a food, offer it again a few days later. It can take up to 10 attempts for him to accept a new food.
- Using baby-size utensils will make eating easier for your baby and may improve acceptance of new foods.
- Some infants are sensitive to wheat, citrus, cow's milk and egg whites. You should avoid offering these foods during your baby's first year.





## TODDLERS — One to Three Years

Throughout the toddler years, your child will become a more independent eater. Growth slows down during this period. Don't be alarmed if your child begins to eat less. Intake may vary from day to day and meal to meal. Children usually eat as much as they need. To ensure normal growth, monitor your child's height and weight curve with your pediatrician.

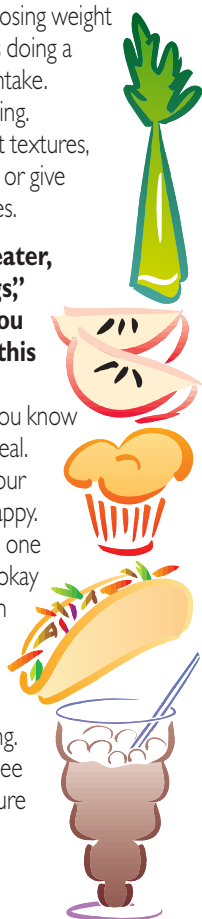
As your toddler continues to grow and develop, self-feeding skills improve. Routine becomes very important, interest in what others eat increases, and "food jags" — the desire to eat only one food or type of food — begin.

### What can you do to help supply your toddler with all the nutrients he needs to fuel growth and activity?

- Children often do best on a schedule. Offer meals and snacks around the same time each day.
- Keep serving sizes "child-friendly" — 1/2 to 1/3 the size of adult servings or one tablespoon of each food for every year of age.
- Let your child tell you when she has had enough. Appetites fluctuate as children grow. Unless your child begins losing weight or appears sluggish, she is doing a good job regulating her intake.
- Make meals more appealing. Offer foods with different textures, cut foods into fun shapes or give everyday foods silly names.

### If your child is a picky eater, or is prone to "food jags," try these tips to help you and your child survive this challenging phase:

- Serve at least one food you know your child likes at each meal.
- Offer new foods when your child is well rested and happy.
- If your child gets stuck on one food, or type of food, it's okay to serve that food at each meal. Also offer a variety of other foods and encourage your child to eat a little bit of everything.
- Try not to let your child see your frustration and be sure to focus on the positive aspects of his eating.



## PRESCHOOL — Three to Five Years

Preschool-aged children will continue to build upon the skills they have been learning. To help your child develop good eating habits, continue to offer a variety of foods from each food group to meet nutrient needs, and be sure to provide a positive environment for eating.

During the preschool years, children continue to have "food jags," begin to master the use of utensils and express interest in food selection and preparation.

### How do you create opportunities out of the challenges of feeding your preschooler?

- Encourage him to get involved in meal preparation. Even small children can help wash fruits and vegetables or make sandwiches.
- Let her help select what will be on the menu.
- Continue to manage "food jags" by offering a variety of foods at each meal and snack.
- Remember, your child learns by watching the people around him. Be a positive role model. Your food choices influence his.
- Talk about new foods before your child tastes them. Encourage her to try at least one bite, and make sure you do too!

**Kid-Friendly Snack Ideas** — Most young children need to eat 4-6 times each day to meet growth demands. Nutritious snacks are essential. Be sure to include lots of colors, textures, and shapes at snack time.

- Fresh vegetables\* — slice and serve with cottage cheese or salad dressing for dipping
- Beef and cheese roll-up — roll a slice of roast beef with cheese and lettuce
- Bananas and sliced apples\* — dip in fruited yogurt or spread with peanut butter\*
- Quick bread or muffins — make with fruits or vegetables like carrots, zucchini, and raisins
- Fruit shake — blend milk with fresh or frozen fruit (banana, berries, or a peach), add a dash of cinnamon
- Flour tortillas — spread with refried beans or ground beef crumbles, then top with cheese
- Parfait — make with layers of yogurt, fruit and granola.

\*These foods are only appropriate for children four and older. They may present a choking hazard in younger children.

As your child grows, encourage good nutrition, which combined with regular physical activity, becomes the foundation for a healthful adult lifestyle.



## Cheesy BBQ Beef & Oven Fries

Total preparation and cooking time: 35 minutes

- 1 pound ground beef (85% lean)
- 4 small baking potatoes (about 1 1/4 pounds), cut lengthwise into 1/2-inch wide wedges
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 red or green bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 cup frozen corn
- 1 cup prepared barbecue sauce
- 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar and Monterey Jack cheese blend

1. Heat oven to 450°F. Spread potatoes in 15 x 10 x 1-inch baking pan; spray lightly with nonstick cooking spray; sprinkle with salt. Bake in 450°F oven 25 to 30 minutes or until potatoes are tender and lightly browned.
2. Meanwhile brown ground beef with bell pepper in large nonstick skillet over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes or until beef is not pink, breaking up into 3/4 inch crumbles. Pour off drippings. Stir in corn and barbecue sauce; heat through.
3. Serve beef mixture over potatoes. Sprinkle with cheese.

Makes 4 servings.

**Nutrition information per serving: 529 calories; 31 g protein; 57 g carbohydrate; 20 g fat; 963 mg sodium; 83 mg cholesterol; 7.9 mg niacin; 1.0 mg vitamin B<sub>6</sub>; 1.8 mcg vitamin B<sub>12</sub>; 5.0 mg iron; 5.6 mg zinc.**

**This recipe is an excellent source of protein, niacin, vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, iron and zinc.**

### Shortcut Variation

One package (12 ounces) frozen or refrigerated fully-cooked original-flavor, ground beef crumbles and 12 ounces frozen, crinkle-cut French fries may be substituted for ground beef and fresh potatoes. Spread French fries in 15 x 10 x 1-inch baking pan. Place pan under broiler so surface of potatoes is 4 to 5 inches from heat. Broil 11 to 13 minutes or until golden brown. Meanwhile combine ground beef crumbles, bell pepper, corn and barbecue sauce in large nonstick skillet. Cook over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes or until pepper is tender and mixture is heated through. Serve as above.

**Nutrition information per serving: 475 calories; 29 g protein; 40 g carbohydrate; 23 g fat; 1,364 mg sodium; 74 mg cholesterol; 7.3 mg niacin; 0.4 mg vitamin B<sub>6</sub>; 2.0 mcg vitamin B<sub>12</sub>; 4.3 mg iron; 5.0 mg zinc.**

**This recipe is an excellent source of protein, niacin, vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, iron and zinc.**

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1. Duyff, R.L. The American Dietetic Association's Complete Food & Nutrition Guide. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1998.
2. US Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, 2001. USDA Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 14. Nutrient Data Laboratory Homepage [www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp). Institute of Medicine, Food and Nutrition Board, Standing Committee on the Scientific Evaluation of Dietary Reference Intakes. National Academy Press; 1998-2001. National Research Council, Food and Nutrition Board, Recommended Dietary Allowance, 10th ed. National Academy Press; 1989.

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