Did you know?

According to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture:
- In the last 20 years, the number of 2- to 5-year-olds consuming soft drinks has increased 21 percent.
- Simple, more healthful substitutions can reduce a child’s risk of becoming overweight. For example, trading a banana for 1 ounce of potato chips will contribute 12 percent less fat, 10 percent more fiber and 13 percent more potassium.

Filling the Gaps

A child’s small tummy usually cannot hold enough at meals to keep him or her satisfied until the next meal.

Kids younger than 6 may need to eat two to three snacks a day because they usually can’t meet their daily requirements in just three meals. Think of snacks as minimeals to help fill the gaps in their diets.

Keep track of what your child eats for a few days and compare that to the recommendations at www.mypyramid.gov. You can print out a sample plan based on age, gender and physical activity. Does your child’s diet have gaps? If you notice your child is lacking certain food groups, plan snacks that will help him or her meet his or her daily needs.

Sample MyPyramid Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Age: 3</th>
<th>Activity: more than 60 minutes/day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grain Group</td>
<td>.................. 5 ounces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable Group</td>
<td>.............. 1½ cups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit Group</td>
<td>.................. 1½ cups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk Group</td>
<td>.................. 2 cups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and Beans Group</td>
<td>.......... 4 ounces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a MyPyramid plan for your child, visit www.mypyramid.gov and fill in age/gender and physical activity information, or contact your local Extension office.

Portion Sizes

Starting at about age 2, children begin eating the same foods as the rest of the family. While they should be getting the same variety of foods, their portion sizes need to be smaller to suit their needs. Two-thirds of the adult portion is usually about right.

For example, an appropriate vegetable portion for a preschooler would be between 1/4 cup and 1/3 cup. With portions this size, small children need to eat more frequently to meet their daily calorie needs.

Preschool-age children need around 1,300 calories per day.

Children should be getting the majority of their calories from a variety of grains (preferably whole grains), vegetables, fruits, milk products and lean protein sources.
Kid-friendly Snacks

Use this checklist when planning snacks to help choose healthy snacks your kids will like.

- Does it taste good?
- Does it look appetizing?
- Does it provide vitamins and minerals?
- Can it be chewed and swallowed easily?
- Will it be a choking hazard?
- Is it a finger food?
- Is it different from yesterday’s snack?
- Can your child help prepare it?

Children under 5 years of age are at a risk of choking on food or other objects. Always supervise young children while they are eating. Remind them to chew food thoroughly, take small bites and eat slowly. (Toddlers usually can eat foods that are cut into ½-inch pieces.)

Tip:
Keep baggies of cut-up fruits and veggies in the fridge for a healthy grab-and-go snack.

Did you know?
According to the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, sweetened beverages contribute 8 to 9 percent of total calories for adults and children.

Beverages Count!

Liquid calories can add up quickly. One can of soda pop has up to 170 calories and no nutrients.

Low-fat/fat-free milk and 100 percent juice provide nutrients along with calories. Replacing soda with healthier options, such as water, milk and juice, can help children get more of the nutrients they need to grow and develop properly.

Make Fruits and Veggies Fun

Often times, getting kids to eat fruits and vegetables is challenging. Try making snack time fun. For example, provide a variety of cut-up fruits or vegetables and let them create their own kabobs with your assistance. You also may want to try serving vegetables with low-fat dip to make them more appealing.

Try these simple, healthy snack ideas from the MyPyramid food groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grain Group</th>
<th>Vegetable Group</th>
<th>Fruit Group</th>
<th>Milk Group</th>
<th>Meat and Beans Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cereal</td>
<td>Fresh veggies with low-fat dip</td>
<td>Fresh fruit, such as apple slices, with peanut butter*</td>
<td>Yogurt</td>
<td>Hard-cooked egg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat crackers with cheese</td>
<td>Celery with peanut butter* or sunflower seed butter</td>
<td>Dried fruit</td>
<td>String cheese</td>
<td>Peanut butter* or sunflower seed butter (on crackers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice cakes</td>
<td>Baby carrots</td>
<td>100% fruit juice</td>
<td>Pudding</td>
<td>Bean dip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail mix (cereal, nuts,* dried fruit)</td>
<td>100% vegetable juice</td>
<td>Applesauce</td>
<td>Flavored low-fat milk</td>
<td>Mixed nuts*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graham crackers</td>
<td>Sugar snap peas</td>
<td>Canned fruit (in juice)</td>
<td>Cottage cheese with fruit</td>
<td>Tuna salad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Be aware of potential allergies.
Fun and Easy Recipes

Here are some recipes your kids will have fun helping you make.

Guide to abbreviations:
c. = cup
Tbsp. = tablespoon
tsp. = teaspoon
g = gram

Yogurt Grahams
1 graham cracker (large rectangle)
2 Tbsp. low-fat fruit-flavored yogurt

1. Break graham cracker in half. Spread yogurt on one half and top with the other.
2. Wrap in plastic wrap and freeze.

Makes one serving, with 80 calories, 1.5 g fat, 14 g carbohydrate and 2 g protein.
Source: Colorado State University Extension Service

Chocolate Chip Banana Bread
½ c. canola oil
1 c. sugar
3 eggs, beaten
3 c. flour
4 to 5 medium bananas
½ c. chocolate chips
½ c. buttermilk
1½ tsp. baking soda
½ tsp. salt
½ c. walnuts or pecans, chopped (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Spray two loaf pans (7- by 4-inch) with canola baking spray.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients until just blended.
3. Pour batter evenly into pans and bake for one hour until top is lightly golden brown and the sides pull away from edges. Remove from oven and cool.

Makes 24 servings. Each serving has 210 calories, 8 g fat, 33 g carbohydrate and 4 g protein.
Recipe courtesy of Sheri Coleman, Northern Canola Growers, www.northerncanola.com

Waffle Snack
1 frozen waffle
1 Tbsp. low-fat cream cheese or peanut butter
1 tsp. jam

1. Toast waffle in toaster.
2. Spread cream cheese or peanut butter on top.
3. Top with jam.

Makes one serving, with 190 calories, 8 g fat, 22 g carbohydrate and 5 g protein.

Quick Tip:
Make this recipe on the weekend so it's ready for quick snacks.
Eat Smart. Play Hard.

Don’t forget to eat smart and play hard. Kids need 60 minutes of active play every day.

- To learn more about healthy eating, visit www.mypyramid.gov.
- To learn more about kids’ nutrition and physical activity, visit www.ndsu.edu/eatsmart.

“Eat Smart, Play Hard” is an initiative of the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

For more information on this and other topics, see www.ag.ndsu.edu