How to Feed Your Growing Child

Ages 2 to 5
Canada's Food Guide recommends...

One Food Guide Serving can be divided into smaller amounts and served throughout the day.

Children ages 2 and 3

- 4 Food Guide Servings of Vegetables and Fruit
- 3 Food Guide Servings of Grain Products
- 2 Food Guide Servings of Milk and Alternatives
- 1 Food Guide Serving of Meat and Alternatives

Children ages 4 and 5

- 5 Food Guide Servings of Vegetables and Fruit
- 4 Food Guide Servings of Grain Products
- 2 Food Guide Servings of Milk and Alternatives
- 1 Food Guide Serving of Meat and Alternatives
Be a good role model
When you eat well, your child will too.

Sample dinner plate
This is what a healthy adult meal could look like. Children typically eat 1/4 to 1/2 of an adult portion. Listen to your child. They can tell you if they are hungry or full.

Offer foods from the 4 food groups
Serve a variety of healthy foods. Meals should include foods from 3 or 4 food groups. Snacks should include foods from 2 food groups.

Keep offering new foods
Some children want to eat the same foods every day. This is okay. You may need to offer a new food 10 or more times before your child will try it.
Give regular meals, snacks and drinks

Feeding your child at about the same time each day is important. This is an example of meals and snacks for one day. It follows Canada’s Food Guide and the recommended number of servings for young children (see page 1). Children typically have 3 small meals and 2-3 snacks per day. Trust that your child can decide how much to eat and whether to eat.

**Breakfast:**
- Whole grain bread
- Banana
- Scrambled egg
- Milk

**Snack:**
- Sliced apple
- Sliced cheese

**Dinner:**
- Roasted chicken
- Brown rice
- Green beans
- Fresh fruit (berries)
- Milk

**Snack:**
- Fresh fruit
- Whole grain crackers
- Water

**Lunch:**
- Whole grain pasta with tomato and meat sauce
- Cucumber slices
- Milk

It is best to give your child water when they are thirsty between meals and snacks. Children also need a total of 500 mL (2 cups) of breastmilk, milk or fortified soy beverage every day. Breastfeeding your child up to two years and longer is healthy and is encouraged. Your child does not need juice. If you decide to offer juice, it should be limited to 125 mL (1/2 cup) per day and only offered in an open cup.
How much to eat?
Sometimes children are very hungry or not hungry at all. This is normal.

Your job is to decide what, when and where to offer food. Your child’s job is to decide if they want to eat and how much to eat.

May I have more?
Yes, you may.
I’m not hungry. That’s okay.
I am full.
Okay.

Prepare and eat meals together

Let your child help. Children can help measure, add and stir ingredients together. They can also slice soft foods, crack eggs, tear lettuce and peel bananas.

Wash hands.
Set the table.
Eat meals together.
Be careful with foods that can cause choking

Always watch children when they eat. Any food can cause choking.
Some choking hazard foods include:
• Raisins
• Popcorn
• Hard round candies
• Whole nuts and seeds
• Hotdogs

Hard vegetables and fruit like carrots and apples should be grated, chopped, mashed, sliced or cubed. Cut grapes in half and finely chop celery or pineapple.
Thinly spread nut butters (such as peanut butter or almond butter) on crackers or toast.
For more information on feeding your child and other related health topics, contact your local public health department or community health centre

OR

EatRight Ontario
1-877-510-510-2
www.eatrightontario.ca