

Nutrition Nuggets

Food and Fitness for a Healthy Child

April 2016

Palmyra-Eagle Area School District



BEST BITES

Free samples

Borrow an idea from food warehouse and specialty stores: Offer your child “free samples” of the (healthy) foods you’re preparing. When you’re slicing carrots or breaking cauliflower into florets, put some on a small plate or in cupcake liners. Your youngster will enjoy the tiny tastes, and they will whet his appetite for what’s to come.



Be safe outdoors

As the weather warms up, review outdoor safety tips with your children. They need to use helmets when biking, scootering, or skating. Also, they should wear sneakers or other closed shoes, and they shouldn’t have drawstrings or necklaces dangling. Finally, be sure they apply sunscreen and wear hats, even on cloudy days.

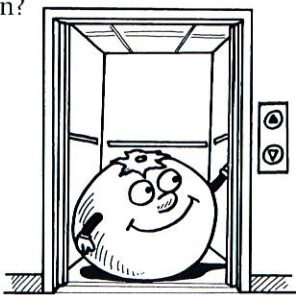
Recipe math

Invite your child to cook and bake with you, and put her in charge of doubling or halving recipes to fit the number of people you’re serving. She’ll get comfortable with adjusting recipes as she works on multiplication (2×1 lb. pasta = 2 lbs. pasta), division ($16 \text{ oz.} \div 2 = 8 \text{ oz.}$), and fractions ($2 \times \frac{3}{4}$ cup cheese = $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups cheese).

Just for fun

Q: What’s round and red and moves up and down?

A: A tomato in an elevator!



Make snacks count

Did you know that frequent snacking is tied to obesity? In fact, today’s kids average nearly three snacks a day and get about a quarter of their daily calories from between-meal eating. Use these strategies to keep your youngster’s snacking under control.



Add nutrients

Encourage snacks that will contribute to your child’s nutrient intake, rather than her sugar or salt intake. For instance, swap a banana for cookies, sugar snap peas for chips, and fat-free milk for juice. To motivate her to choose healthy snacks, speak her language: Try offering “strong snacks for your muscles” or “smart snacks for your brain.”

Avoid grazing

Eating all day long makes it hard for your youngster to burn off fat. Together, decide when she’ll snack (perhaps after school and an hour before bed). Then, have her sit down instead of eating on the

run and—most important—keep the television and other electronics off. “Distracted eating” causes kids to eat more, since they’re not paying attention to how much they put in their mouths.

Watch serving sizes

Keep snacks a reasonable size. Pick up little bowls at a discount store, and use them for small servings of vegetable or miso soup, whole-grain cereal, or unsweetened applesauce (sprinkled with cinnamon). Or make your own “snack packs” by putting tangerine sections, a handful of nuts, or grape tomatoes into snack-size baggies. ♥

Pre-diabetes: A plan

If your child is diagnosed with pre-diabetes, take heart. There are steps you can take to try to prevent him from developing full-blown type 2 diabetes.

1. Be active. Exercise lowers blood glucose levels as well as body fat. He should aim for 60 minutes a day of physical activity.
2. Eat a healthy diet with lots of vegetables, high-fiber foods, and whole grains. Stay away from foods with added sugar.
3. Maintain a healthy weight. Work with a registered dietitian, a nutritionist, or another health professional on ways to shed pounds.

Note: Diabetes warning signs include increased thirst, frequent urination, unusual tiredness, and blurry vision. If you notice any of these problems, consult a doctor. ♥

