



# A nutrition Fact Sheet



## Feeding My Preschooler

### Just try it!

It is very normal for young children to refuse some foods. Here are some ways to help your child accept different tastes and textures:

- Offer a new food along with a familiar food.
- Offer new foods first, at the beginning of a meal, when your child is most hungry.
- Let your child see you tasting and enjoying new foods.
- Ask your child to taste the new food.
- Allow your child to spit out a food he/she doesn't like.
- Try avoiding labeling foods as "foods my child likes" and "foods my child doesn't like."
- Keep trying! It might take up to 12 times before your child accepts a new food.

### Physically active kids...

- struggle less with maintaining a healthy weight
- learn good habits early in life
- have a positive outlet for their natural energy



### Family meals

Family meals help to create strong family bonds. Families feel more connected to each other when they eat together.

#### Make family mealtimes fun!

- Keep it simple.
- Enjoy positive table talk.
- Listen to your children.
- Turn off the TV, radio, computer, and phones.
- Remember, kids love to eat what they help to cook! Make preparing the meal a family affair.



2-year olds can:	3-year olds can:	4- to 5-year olds can:
<b>wash</b> veggies and fruit	<b>add</b> ingredients	<b>peel</b> bananas
<b>tear</b> lettuce	<b>stir</b>	<b>measure</b> dry foods
<b>practice wiping</b> tables	<b>spread</b> peanut butter	<b>set</b> the table
<b>place</b> things in trash	<b>name</b> and count foods	<b>mash</b> potatoes

Images from [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

## Eat safely

- Cut foods into small pieces – **no larger than ½ inch.**
- Cook vegetables until slightly soft.
- Spread nut butters thinly.
- Have your child sit while eating; stay with your child until he/she is finished.
- Show your child how to chew and swallow small amounts of food.

## Prevent choking!

**All children are at risk for choking**, but children under the age of 4 years are more likely to choke because they:

- Like to put objects in their mouths.
- Have narrow throats or airways.
- Cannot chew as well as older children – they may not have a full set of teeth.

### Foods that may cause choking:

- Apple chunks and slices
- Grapes (OK if cut into halves or quarters)
- Cheese sticks
- Hot dogs (OK if sliced length-wise)
- Sausage (OK if slices length-wise)
- Peanut butter (OK if spread thinly on a cracker)
- Popcorn
- All nuts and seeds
- Hard chunks of uncooked vegetables like carrots

## The Sweet Tooth

**It may seem impossible to get your kid to like broccoli but convincing them to eat sweets is as easy as pie.** Kids just tend to like sugary foods.

Unfortunately, too much sugar can cause cavities and weight problems in small children. Here are some tips to enjoy sweets in moderation:

- You've heard it before - out of sight, out of mind - the same thing is true for sweets!
- Enjoy eating smaller servings of sweet foods every once in a while.
- Offer nutritious snacks with a sweet taste.
- Save fruit drinks, soda, and caffeinated drinks for adults!
- Limit 100% fruit juice to 4 ounces or less each day - eat a piece of fruit instead.



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