



## **Nutrition: General Guidelines for Infants to Toddlers**

### Beginning at 12 months of age:

- Between 12 – 15 months of age, babies will master drinking from a cup and feeding himself/herself with fingers and a spoon.
- Stop formula and switch to whole milk, (they should drink between 16-24 ounces per day).
- After their first birthday, it is normal to see a decrease in appetite. This is because growth rate has slowed and they do not require as many calories.
- During this period, the child should be offered 3 meals and 2 snacks per day. Eating habits at this age are unpredictable. For example, the child may eat a large breakfast and only a bite at lunch, or everything they are given one day and essentially nothing the next.
- Mealtime should not be a battle. If the child does not eat at mealtime, do not offer non-nutritious foods like cookies or sweets. Save the meal for later.
- A one-year-old needs about 1000 calories each day. The amount varies with each child's build and activity level. The serving size should be about one quarter of the adult size. DO NOT restrict cholesterol or fat in the child's diet until age 2, (very important for growth and cognitive development).
- Avoid giving heavily spiced, salted, buttered or sweetened foods. Allow them to experience the natural tastes of food.

- The following foods are unsafe for children of this age: hard candies, chunks of peanut butter, popcorn, whole raw celery, raw green beans, large sections of hot dogs, meat sticks or any large chunks of food, (Think AIRWAY).



## **Nutrition: General Guidelines for Toddlers**

### **Toddlers: 15 through 18 months of age:**

- The child should continue to receive 16-24 ounces of whole milk each day until 2 years of age.
- Continue to offer a wide variety of food to the toddler. He/she should eat 3 meals and 2 snacks, prepared and served at regular meal times. Discourage grazing, as it will lead to over eating.
- By 18 months the child should be able to use a spoon and a fork.
- In general: *"It is the parents job to monitor what the child eats, while it is the child's job to decide how much to eat"*.
- Portion sizes for the toddler should be about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an appropriate adult serving., ([www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) is a website that discusses nutrition and serving sizes).
- Different children will need different amounts of food based on their age, weight, height and activity level. On average, between the ages of 12 and 36 months of age, a child will need 46 calories/pound of body weight. Children at this age tend to fluctuate in their daily intake. For example, a child may eat a lot for breakfast and then very little the remainder of the day.
- The best eating habit that can be taught to a child, is for them to continue to **follow their sense of hunger** rather

than relying on an external schedule to say, “it’s time to eat” breakfast, lunch, etc.

- The child should never be encouraged to, “clean your plate”. This can lead to overeating.
- In the first 2 years of life, **avoid placing ANY restrictions on the amount of fat the child consumes.** Children at this age need fat in their diet to ensure proper growth and brain development. During the first 2 years of life, about half of their calories should come from fat sources.
- The following are UNSAFE foods for toddlers: hard candies, nuts, chunks of peanut butter, popcorn whole grapes, cherry tomatoes (unless cut into quarters), seeds (e.g., pumpkin or sunflower), raw carrots, raw celery, raw green beans, large sections of hot dogs or any large chunks of food, (again, think AIRWAY).



## **Nutrition: General Guidelines for 2-year-olds**

### **Beginning at 24 months of age:**

- Continue to provide 16-24 ounces of milk each day; however, switch to low-fat milk, (2% or less).
- Offer the toddler 3 meals and 2 snacks each day. Eating habits at this age are unpredictable. For example, a toddler may eat a large breakfast and only a bite at lunch or everything given to them one day and very little the next. This is normal.
- One serving for a child this age is about **¼ of an (appropriate) adult portion.**
- Small children don't always chew before attempting to swallow; therefore, **the following foods are choking hazards and unsafe for 2-year-olds:** hard candies, nuts, chunky peanut butter, popcorn, seeds, raw carrots, raw celery, raw green beans, grapes and cherry tomatoes (unless cut into quarters), hot dogs.
- The role of the parent is to offer safe, nutritious foods and teach the child to follow their sense of hunger.
- Do not make mealtime a battle. If the toddler does not eat at mealtime, do not offer non-nutritious foods like cookies and/or sweets. Save the meal for later; they will eat when they are hungry.



## **Sample one-day menu for a One-Year-Old:**

### **Breakfast**

- ½ cup of iron-fortified breakfast cereal or 1 cooked egg
- ¼ - ½ cup whole milk (with cereal or without)
- Fruit can be added to cereal or on its own
- ½ banana, sliced
- 2 – 3 large sliced strawberries

### **Snack**

- 1 slice of toast or whole-wheat muffin with 1 – 2 tablespoons of cream cheese or peanut butter, or yogurt with cut-up fruit
- ½ cup whole milk

### **Lunch**

- ½ sandwich sliced turkey or chicken, tuna, egg salad, or peanut butter
- ½ cup cooked green vegetables
- ½ cup whole milk

### **Snack**

- 1 -2 ounces cubed or string cheese, or 2- 3 tablespoons fruit or berries
- 1 cup whole milk

### **Dinner**

- 2- 3 ounces cooked meat, ground or diced
- ½ cup cooked yellow or orange vegetables
- ½ cup pasta, rice or potato
- ½ cup whole milk



## **Healthy Snacks for Toddlers:**

### **Fresh Fruits:**

- apples, bananas, peaches, nectarines, pears (sliced)
- Cherries, grapes, plums (cubed or smashed and pitted)
- Orange or grapefruit sections (cut into pieces)

### **Dried Fruits:**

- apples, apricots, peaches, pears (cut-up)
- dates, prunes (pitted, cut-up)
- raisins

### **Vegetables:**

- carrots, green beans (well cooked, diced)
- steamed cauliflower, broccoli
- yams (cooked and diced)
- peas (smashed for safety; a child can inhale whole peas)
- potatoes (cooked and diced)

### **Dairy Products:**

- Cheese (grated or diced)
- Cottage cheese
- Yogurt, fresh or frozen
- Milk

### **Breads & Cereals:**

- whole wheat bread
- bagel (cut into small pieces)
- crackers (saltine, graham, whole grain)
- dry cereal
- pretzels

