

700 mg/day, and the recommendation for children 4 to 8 years old is 1,000 mg/day ([Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, 2011](#)). Milk and dairy products are excellent sources of calcium. Low-fat and nonfat milk may be substituted for higher fat choices, so the quantity of milk may remain the same while limiting fat intake overall.

Excessive consumption of fruit juices and other sugar-sweetened beverages has been associated with dental caries ([Marshall, 2013](#)) and adverse cardiometabolic effects ([Kosova, Auinger, Bremer, 2013](#)). The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting the intake of 100% fruit juice to 4 to 6 oz/day for children 1 to 6 years old ([Kleinman and Greer, 2014](#)). Parents should be educated regarding non-nutritious fruit drinks, which usually contain less than 10% fruit juice yet are often advertised as healthy and nutritious. While counseling parents regarding moderation in fruit juice consumption, providers should offer suggestions for more appropriate sources of nutrients, such as ascorbic acid, folate, and potassium. In young children, intake of carbonated beverages that are acidic or that contain high amounts of sugar is also known to contribute to dental caries; large amounts of nonnutritive calories in such beverages may also displace or preclude intake of nutrients necessary for growth.

In 2011, the US Department of Agriculture released a new food guide system called *MyPlate* ([US Department of Agriculture, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, 2011](#)). This system is comprehensive and provides information for developing a healthy lifestyle at an early age. Parents can develop customizable food plans created specifically for children 2 to 5 years old and access information on growth during the preschool years, healthy eating habits, physical activity, and food safety at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov/preschoolers.html. Parents can use this information to assist their children in making healthy lifestyle choices and to help prevent adverse health conditions secondary to poor nutrition. The importance of role modeling by parents cannot be overemphasized in regard to food intake and dietary habits; if parents will not eat a particular food or if their dietary habits are poor, children are likely to develop the same habits.

Nursing Alert