

Feeding Your Toddler

Find these words in the puzzle:

ROUTINE
TUMMIES
MASH
HIGHCHAIR
REJECT
WAIT
NEW
FUN

E	T	H	U	M	M	N	G	T
W	A	I	T	G	I	U	E	N
T	U	G	M	F	R	M	U	O
U	W	H	W	U	R	N	T	R
M	C	C	E	N	E	W	C	I
M	N	H	F	N	J	T	F	T
I	M	A	S	H	E	H	N	R
E	J	I	C	I	C	E	W	A
S	R	R	O	U	T	I	N	E

- Toddlers need **ROUTINE**. Offer meals & snacks around the same time each day.
- Toddlers have small **TUMMIES**. They need to eat often. Offer something to eat every 2-3 hours. (3 meals and 2-3 snacks a day)
- You don't need baby food any more. Your toddler can enjoy many of the foods you eat. **MASH**, dice, chop, or shred your child's food. Make small pieces that are easy to chew and to swallow.
- Serve meals and snacks at the table or in a **HIGH CHAIR**.
- Your child may **REJECT** new foods. Try serving it again in a few days.
- If your child won't eat at meals, don't give snacks instead. Your child should **WAIT** until snack time. A schedule for meals and snacks is helpful.
- Don't cook something **NEW** when your toddler refuses to eat. Remind your child it will be a while before the next meal or snack. If your child still refuses, let him leave the table.
- Make meals and snack times a **FUN** time. Sit and eat with your child!

*Newest research tells us that waiting to introduce certain foods like cow's milk, dairy products, peanut butter, other nuts, and foods made from these products, may increase your baby's risk for food allergies. **Discuss the introduction of these foods with your Healthcare Provider before giving them to your child. Your Healthcare Provider will give you guidance on the safest way to proceed.**

Diet FAQs - Toddler

My son wants to eat the same thing every day. How can I feed him a balanced diet?

Offer lots of healthy foods. Let your child make some choices for himself. Don't worry if he chooses a strange-looking mixture of foods. He will enjoy making his own food choices.

Don't focus so much on what he eats each day. Look at what he eats over a week or two. His diet may be more balanced than you thought!

Some days my daughter eats a LOT! Other days she hardly eats at all. What's that about?

Your child's appetite may vary greatly from day to day. That's normal! Don't force her to eat more. Children should eat until they are full and then stop eating.

Look at how much water and juice she has during the day. Two cups of whole milk a day is enough. Children who drink more fill up on liquids. They lose their appetite for healthy solid foods.



Why does my daughter refuse to eat certain foods?

Toddlers go through phases. They often refuse certain foods. Even foods they liked a week ago!

Accept her refusals. Simply offer the food again a few weeks later. She may like it this time. Keep offering the food if you need to. It could take 10-12 tries before your child accepts a food.

When will my son be able to feed himself?

By halfway through the second year, he should be better at feeding himself. Let him practice using a spoon. It will be messy. You might want to put a plastic sheet under the highchair.

He can feed himself some foods. He may still need your help for others. Keep practicing and he'll get it!

Learning to Drink from a Cup

You can start teaching your child to drink from a cup as early as 4-6 months. Try to change from a bottle to a cup by your child's first birthday or soon after.

Soon, your child will be drinking 2-3 cups of whole milk each day.



Give me a cup with a small amount of water. Show me how to drink out of my cup.



I will be messy! Give me a bib and cover the floor.



Offer me the cup once a day at first. Let me get used to it. It may take me a while to learn to drink from a cup.



Get me a cup with a snap-on lid. A spout and handles also help.



Don't make me drink from a cup when I am tired or cranky.



Give me a blanket or a stuffed animal when I am missing my bottle.



Don't let me take a bottle to bed with me. It is bad for my teeth.

Making a Mess – But Making Progress!

Toddlers are learning to eat by themselves. They eat most foods with their fingers. But they want to be like you. They want to try using a spoon and fork.

Toddlers are messy eaters. A lot of food will end up on the floor. You can make clean-up easier. Try putting a sheet or piece of plastic under the highchair.

Things that make it easier for me to eat:

- A spoon with a short handle
- A bowl with deep sides
- A cup I can put both hands around and that won't tip over



I could choke! Please DON'T feed me:

Popcorn, peanuts, or other whole nuts, seeds,; jelly beans and hard candy; beef jerky; raw vegetables or pickles; hard unpeeled pieces of fruit; whole kernel corn; dried fruits, such as raisins, prunes, apricots, and banana chips; olives, whole grapes, cherries; Vienna sausage, hot dogs and toddler meat sticks; potato chips, corn chips, or Cheetos®.



Good snacks and finger foods for me:

- Canned fruit cut into cubes
- Soft fresh fruit, peeled and cut up
- Pudding
- Fruit-flavored yogurt
- Popsicles made from juice
- Frozen yogurt
- Cheese cubes
- Sliced, hard-cooked eggs
- Unsweetened dry cereal



Making a Mess – But Making Progress!

Sample Menu

Breakfast

- *Scrambled egg*
- *Toast with butter*
- *Juice*

Snack

- *Yogurt*
- *Banana*
- *Jell-O® with fruit added*
- *Milk*

Lunch

- *Cheese sandwich*
- *Canned peach cubes*
- *Juice in a cup*

Snack

- *Dry Cheerios®*
- *Cheese cubes*
- *Milk*

Dinner

- *Baked chicken*
- *Cubed boiled potatoes*
- *Cut, cooked mixed vegetables*
- *Milk*

Snack

- *Fruit yogurt*

Toddlers should have whole milk until the second birthday!

Toddlers should have no more than 4 oz of fruit juice per day

Mealtime Routines

Mealtime Routines – What are you doing now? What would you like to do?

Try to eat at about the same time each day.

Have a special place for eating meals and snacks. The kitchen table or a high chair work well.

Avoid eating meals or snacks in front of the TV.

Washing your hands and your child's hands before eating keeps everyone healthy.

Remember! Toddlers need healthy snacks between meals.

Talk with your child during meals. Make this a family time.



Mealtime Routines

Don't be a short-order cook...

If your child doesn't eat the meal you prepared, wait until the next snack or mealtime to offer food again.

Sometimes, children refuse to eat. A healthy child will not starve from missing just one meal. The child will be more willing to eat at the next meal.

Do not offer sweets or candy to make up for food not eaten.



When offering new foods...

Let your child see you eating and enjoying the food.

Place a teaspoonful of the new food on the plate. Offer it along with foods your child already likes.

Toddlers may not trust new foods. A child may need to see the new food a few times before eating it. Offer it again in a week or two.

You may want to go easy on the spices at first. Spicy food can be too much for a child.

Unsafe Foods for Toddlers



These foods could hurt my mouth.	These foods could cause me to choke.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrot or celery sticks • Popsicles or any food on a stick • Bread or pretzel sticks • Long pieces of candy or hard candy • Apple slices • French fries • Chicken drumsticks • Large corn chips • Drinks with straws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts and seeds • Hard candy or suckers • Popcorn • Corn chips • Olives • Whole grapes & Cherries • Cherry tomatoes • Hot dogs • Raisins • Unpeeled fruits (like apples) • Raw vegetables (like carrots) • Hard crackers

Preventing Choking

Toddlers are learning how to eat. They can choke easily. Here are some common foods they could choke on. Do any of them surprise you?



hard candy / suckers



cherries



nuts



corn chips



raw veggies
(like carrots)



popcorn



olives



raisins



unpeeled fruits (like apples)



hot dogs



hard crackers



whole grapes

Unsafe Foods for Toddlers



I should stay seated when I'm eating. Teach me to eat at the table or in the highchair.

Cars and strollers are for riding, not eating. If I choke, you cannot help quickly enough

Running and playing is fun, but not a good time to eat. I could fall or inhale quickly. That could make me choke!

Water is the best thing for me to drink between meals. Too much milk or juice might mean I'm not hungry for the healthy foods I need.

Too much fruit juice might make me gain more weight than I should. It can cause cavities in my teeth.



How Can I Help Feed My Child? (for Dad)



Sometimes I feel like I don't help feed my child. My child's mother does the cooking. She helps my child eat. What's left for me to do?

Be an example

What's good for you is good for your child. Eat the same things your child eats.

You want your son to eat carrots? Put carrots on your plate. And eat them!

You don't want your daughter to eat junk food? Don't put junk food on your plate.

Clean up at the end of the meal. Your child can help, too. Teach your child to do simple chores. A toddler can take a plate to the sink. Or put silverware in the dishwasher.

Be a teacher

Talk to your child about the food. Point to each item. Say what it is. Your child will learn the names of the foods. You can teach them more about new foods. Your child might even decide to eat something new!

Spend time together

You might not get enough time with your child. Mealtime is a chance to spend time together. You can talk with your child. You can have fun eating together.

What are your ideas?