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Child Nutrition


A healthy diet helps children grow and learn. It also helps prevent obesity [<https://medlineplus.gov/obesityinchildren.html>] and weight-related diseases, such as diabetes. To give your child a nutritious diet:

- Make half of what is on your child's plate fruits and vegetables
- Choose healthy sources of protein, such as lean meat, nuts, and eggs
- Serve whole-grain breads and cereals because they are high in fiber. Reduce refined grains.
- Broil, grill, or steam foods instead of frying them
- Limit fast food and junk food
- Offer water or milk instead of sugary fruit drinks and sodas


Learn about your children's nutrient requirements. Some of them, such as the requirements for iron and calcium, change as your child ages.

NIH: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases


Start Here

- **Healthy Eating** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/habits.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/habits.html>]
- **Healthy Eating for Families** [<https://www.myplate.gov/life-stages/families>] (Department of Agriculture)
- **Helping Your Child: Tips for Parents and Other Caregivers** [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/weight-management/healthy-eating-physical-activity-for-life/helping-your-child-tips-for-parents>]
 **Easy-to-Read** (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/control-de-peso/alimentacion-saludable-actividad-fisica-vida/ayudar-ninos>]
- **Nutrition** [<https://girlshealth.gov/nutrition>] (Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)
- **Nutrition for Kids: Guidelines for a Healthy Diet** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/nutrition-for-kids/art-20049335?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)

Diagnosis and Tests

- **Prealbumin Blood Test** [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/prealbumin-blood-test/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/prueba-de-sangre-de-prealbumina/>]


Related Issues

- **10 Things To Know About Dietary Supplements for Children and Teens** [<https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/tips/things-to-know-about-dietary-supplements-for-children-and-teens>]  (National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health)
- **Are Sugar Substitutes Safe for Kids?** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/sugar-substitutes.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/sugar-substitutes.html>]

Avoiding Food Hassles with Kids [<https://familydoctor.org/avoiding-food-hassles-kids/?adfree=true>]

(American Academy of Family Physicians)

Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/como-evitar-problemas-con-la-comida-de-los-ninos/?adfree=true>]

- **Better Nutrition Every Day: How to Make Healthier Food Choices** [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2019/07/better-nutrition-every-day>]  (National Institutes of Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://salud.nih.gov/recursos-de-salud/nih-noticias-de-salud/una-mejor-nutricion-todos-los-dias>]
- **Feeding Your Child Athlete** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/feed-child-athlete.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/feed-child-athlete.html>]
- **Healthy Breakfasts for Kids: It's All about Balance** [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/healthy-breakfasts-kids-its-all-about-balance>] (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/desayunos-saludables-para-ninos-todo-es-cuestion-de-balance>]
- **Healthy Snacks: Quick Tips for Parents** [<https://odphp.health.gov/myhealthfinder/healthy-living/nutrition/healthy-snacks-quick-tips-parents>] (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion)
- **How to Add Balance to a Favorite Meal** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/balance-favorite-meal.html>]
Easy-to-Read (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/balance-favorite-meal.html>]
- **How to Make a Healthy Snack** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/make-healthy-snack.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/make-healthy-snack.html>]
- **Nutrition Facts -- Read the Label: Tips for Parents** [<https://www.fda.gov/media/128913/download>]
Infographic (Food and Drug Administration) - **PDF**
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/media/128914/download>]

Specifics

- **Caffeine (For Parents)** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-caffeine.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/child-caffeine.html>]
- **Calcium** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/calcium.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/calcium.html>]
- **Carbohydrates and Sugar** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/sugar.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/sugar.html>]
- **Cholesterol (For Parents)** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/cholesterol.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/cholesterol.html>]
- **Fats (for parents)** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/fat.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/fat.html>]
- **Fiber and Your Child** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/fiber.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/fiber.html>]
- **Iron** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/iron.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/iron.html>]
- **Life Stages: Preschoolers** [<https://www.myplate.gov/life-stages/preschoolers>] (Department of Agriculture)
- **Protein Foods for Your Vegetarian Child** [<https://www.eatright.org/food/food-groups/protein-foods/protein-foods-for-your-vegetarian-child>] (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics)
- **Vitamin D** [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/vitamin-d.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/vitamin-d.html>]



Test Your Knowledge

- **Healthy Eating for Kids** [<https://www.myplate.gov/life-stages/kids>] (Department of Agriculture)

Statistics and Research

- Beverage Consumption Among Youth in the United States, 2013-2016
[<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db320.htm>] (National Center for Health Statistics)

Clinical Trials


- ClinicalTrials.gov: Child Nutrition [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=nutrition%2C+healthy&aggFilters=ages:child,status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Child Nutrition Disorders [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=nutrition+disorders&aggFilters=ages:child,status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles


References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Host-microbiome determinants of ready-to-use supplemental food efficacy in acute childhood malnutrition.
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40693466>]
- Article: Prevalence of malnutrition and associated factors in Chinese children and adolescents...
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40689479>]
- Article: Brazil's Bolsa Família conditional cash transfer and child malnutrition: a nationwide...
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40685158>]
- Child Nutrition -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Adolescent+Nutritional+Physiological+Phenomena%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Child+Nutritional+Physiological+Phenomena%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Child+Nutrition+Disorders%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]


Reference Desk

- Definitions of Health Terms: Nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/definitions/nutritiondefinitions.html>]  (National Library of Medicine)

Find an Expert

- Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/>] 
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.nichd.nih.gov/>]
- Find a Nutrition Expert [<https://www.eatright.org/find-a-nutrition-expert/>] (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics)
- Food and Nutrition Service Programs Contacts by State [<https://www.fns.usda.gov/contacts/contact-map>]
(Food and Nutrition Service)
- KidsHealth [<https://kidshealth.org/>] (Nemours Foundation)

Children

- From the Label to the Table! [<https://kids.niehs.nih.gov/topics/healthy-living/food/food-labels>]  (National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences)
- Why Drinking Water Is the Way to Go [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/water.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/water.html>]


Teenagers

- Figuring Out Fat and Calories [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/fat-calories.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/fat-calories.html>]
- Guide to Eating for Sports [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/eatnrun.html>] (Nemours Foundation)

Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/eatnrun.html>]

- MyPlate Food Guide [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/myplate.html>] (Nemours Foundation)

Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/myplate.html>]

- Take Charge of Your Health: A Guide for Teenagers [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/weight-management/take-charge-health-guide-teenagers>]  (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)

Also in Spanish [<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/control-de-peso?dkrd=/health-information/informacion-de-la-salud/control-de-peso/hazte-cargo-salud>]

Patient Handouts

- Eating extra calories when you are sick - children [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000034.htm>]

(Medical Encyclopedia)

Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000034.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Cow's milk and children [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001973.htm>]

Eating extra calories when you are sick - children [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000034.htm>]

Food jags [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002425.htm>]

Kwashiorkor [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001604.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Children's Health [<https://medlineplus.gov/childrenshealth.html>]

Food Allergy [<https://medlineplus.gov/foodallergy.html>]

Infant and Newborn Nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/infantandnewbornnutrition.html>]

Toddler Nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/toddlernutrition.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Child Nutrition* is the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/Pages/index.aspx>]

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