



Wee Learn

Wee Explorers
(18 months – 3 years):
Healthy Foods for Growing
Children: Feeding Your
Toddler



During your baby's first year, she grew quickly, probably tripling her weight in one year. She enjoyed trying new foods and learning to feed herself. Then, quite suddenly, her growth rate will slow down, and she will not be so hungry. She may develop strong likes and dislikes or lose interest in a food after only one bite. Your toddler can be very opinionated about food.

Now it is important for you to remember the division of responsibility. You are responsible for what your child eats and when and where she eats. Your responsibility is to establish a healthy pattern of meals and snacks. Your toddler decides how much and whether to eat. Her appetite will vary from day to day, but she will eat what she needs. An occasional skipped meal is not cause for concern.

Tips for Feeding Toddlers

- You decide on the menu. Don't ask your child what they want to eat ahead of time
- Offer regular meals and snacks. Offer only water in between.
- Once at the table, let your toddler decide how much to eat from what you are offering.
- Serve foods that are soft and easy for your toddler to eat. Do not feed your toddler. Let her feed herself, and drink from a cup herself. Expect her to be a messy eater.
- Offer new foods or foods your toddler didn't like the first time with something that she already likes to eat. Encourage her to try at least one bite of a new food.
- Don't try to get your toddler to eat more than she wants or try to get her to eat something she doesn't want to eat.
- Limit meal times to no longer than 20 to 30 minutes.
- Keep meal times relaxed and pleasant. It's best to turn off the television.
- Always stay with your child when she is eating to make sure she is safe.

Examples of Child-Size Servings

A child-size serving is anywhere from one-half to the full serving size for adults, for each of the food groups in Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. The serving size increases with age. For example, a two-year-old may eat half of a slice of bread, but a four-year-old is more likely to eat a whole slice. Both can be counted as one child-size serving of grain products.





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Daily Food Guide for Toddlers

Food Group	Example of one toddler-size serving
Grain Products	<p>1/2 to 1 slice bread</p> <p>125 to 250 ml (1/2 to 1 cup) flaked cereal</p> <p>250 to 500 ml (1 to 2 cups) puffed cereal</p> <p>75 to 175 ml (1/3 to 3/4 cup) hot cereal</p> <p>1/4 to 1/2 bagel, pita or bun</p> <p>1/2 to 1 muffin</p> <p>50 to 125 ml (1/4 to 1/2) cup pasta or rice</p> <p>4 to 8 soda crackers</p>
Vegetables and Fruits	<p>1/2 to 1 medium-size vegetable or fruit</p> <p>50 to 125 ml (1/4 to 1/2 cup) fresh, frozen or canned vegetables or fruit</p> <p>125 to 250 ml (1/2 to 1 cup) salad</p> <p>50 to 125 ml (1/4 to 1/2 cup) juice</p>
Milk Products	<p>15 to 50 g cheese</p> <p>75 to 175 ml (1/3 to 3/4 cup) yogurt</p> <p><i>(Preschoolers should consume a total of 500 ml (2 cups) of milk every day.)</i></p>
Meat and Alternatives	<p>25 to 50 g meat, fish or poultry</p> <p>1 egg</p> <p>50 to 125 ml (1/4 to 1/2 cup) beans</p> <p>50 to 100 g (1/4 to 1/3 cup) tofu</p> <p>15 to 30 ml (1 to 2 tbsp.) peanut butter</p>

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