

Healthy Eating Tips for Kids from the American Heart Association

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November 2020



What's a Serving



Healthy Kids™

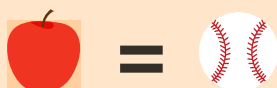
The good news is eating the right amount of fruits and vegetables doesn't have to be complicated. Find the approximate serving sizes for some of your favorites:

FRUITS

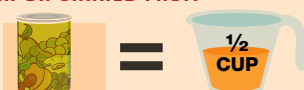
4-5 servings per day

● ONE MEDIUM FRUIT

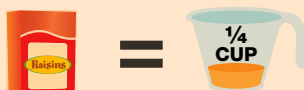
serving size



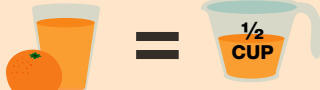
● FRESH, FROZEN OR CANNED FRUIT



● DRIED FRUIT



● FRUIT JUICE



VEGETABLES

4-5 servings per day

● RAW LEAFY VEGETABLE

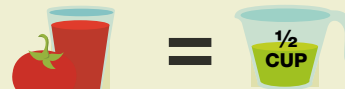
serving size



● FRESH, FROZEN OR CANNED VEGETABLE



● VEGETABLE JUICE



*based on a 2,000 calorie eating pattern

Fruits

Apple, pear, orange, peach or nectarine: 1 medium

Avocado: Half of a medium

Banana: 1 small (about 6 inches long)

Blackberry, blueberry: 8-10 medium to large

Grapefruit: Half of a medium (4 inches across)

Grape: 16

Kiwifruit: 1 medium

Mango: Half of a medium

Melon: Half-inch thick wedge of sliced watermelon, honeydew, cantaloupe

Pineapple: 1/4 of a medium

Plum: 1 large

Strawberry: 4 large

Vegetables

Bell pepper: Half of a large

Broccoli or cauliflower: 5-8 florets

Carrot: 6 baby or 1 whole medium (6-7 inches long)

Celery: 1 stalk

Corn: 1 small ear (6 inches long) or half of a large ear (8 to 9 inches long)

Cucumber: 1/4 of a medium (8 to 9 inches long)

Green bean: About 19-20

Leafy vegetable: 1 cup raw or 1/2 cup cooked (lettuce, kale, spinach, greens)

Potato: Half of a medium (2 1/2 to 3 inches across)

Squash, yellow: Half of a small

Sweet potato: Half of a large (2 1/4 inches across)

Zucchini: Half of a large (7 to 8 inches long)

Healthy Eating Pattern for Kids



Healthy Kids™

The American Heart Association recommends this eating pattern for kids:

Energy (calories) should be adequate to support growth and development and to reach or maintain desirable body weight.

Eat foods low in saturated fat, trans fat, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

Keep total fat intake between 30 to 35 percent of calories for children 2 to 3 years of age and between 25 to 35 percent of calories for children and adolescents 4 to 18 years of age, with most fats coming from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids, such as fish, nuts and vegetable oils.

Choose a variety of foods to get enough carbohydrates, protein and other nutrients.

Eat only enough calories to maintain a healthy weight for your height and build. Kids should be physically active for at least 60 minutes a day.

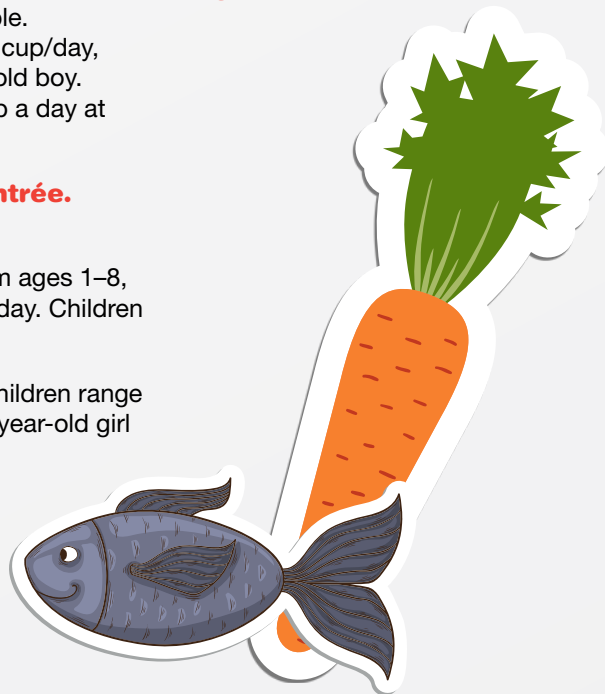
Serve whole-grain/high-fiber breads and cereals rather than refined grain products. Look for “whole grain” as the first ingredient on the food label and make at least half your grain servings whole grain. Recommended grain intake ranges from 2 oz./day for a one-year-old to 7 oz./day for a 14–18-year-old boy.

Serve a variety of fruits and vegetables daily, while limiting juice intake. Each meal should contain at least 1 fruit or vegetable. Children’s recommended fruit intake ranges from 1 cup/day, between ages 1 and 3, to 2 cups for a 14–18-year-old boy. Recommended vegetable intake ranges from $\frac{3}{4}$ cup a day at age one to 3 cups for a 14–18-year-old boy.

Introduce and regularly serve fish as an entrée. Avoid commercially fried fish.

Serve fat-free and low-fat dairy foods. From ages 1–8, children need 2 cups of milk or its equivalent each day. Children ages 9–18 need 3 cups.

Don’t overfeed. Estimated calories needed by children range from 900/day for a 1-year-old to 1,800 for a 14–18-year-old girl and 2,200 for a 14–18-year-old boy.



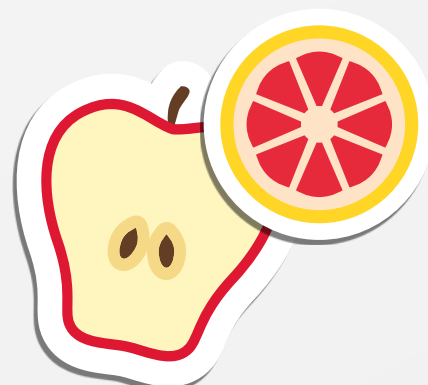
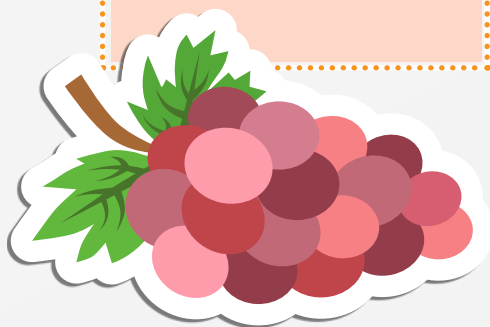
Healthy Post-Play Snacks

As nearly 1 in 3 kids and teens in the U.S. are overweight or obese, it's important for parents, coaches and others to make sure kids have access to healthier foods—including post-play snacks.

All too often, kids are rewarded with unhealthy foods and sugary full-calorie drinks, but there are lots of healthier choices that not only taste great, but are better for them too!

So, the next time your child finishes their football game, ballet class or playing outside with friends, try giving them one of these healthy post-play snacks.

Instead of...	Try...
Sugar-sweetened beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fat-free or 1% fat milk • 100% fruit juice • Low sodium vegetable juice • Water
Full calorie chips and crackers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsalted sunflower seeds • Whole-grain crackers (fat-free or low fat) • Fat-free, 1% fat or low-fat cheese sticks • Unsalted rice cakes • Apples or orange slices • Bananas • Carrot or celery sticks • Unsalted walnuts or almonds • Plain, fat-free, 1% fat or low-fat yogurt
Sweets and baked goods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned fruit in their own juice, with no sugar added • Fresh or dried fruit • Frozen bananas or grapes • Raisins • Baked apples • Fat-free, 1% fat or low-fat unsweetened fruit yogurt





For Kids



- About 90% of kids eat too much sodium.
- Kids' preferences for salty-tasting foods are shaped early in life.
- Parents and caregivers can help lower sodium by influencing how foods are produced, purchased, prepared and served.

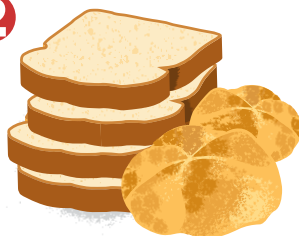
FOODS THAT ADD THE MOST SODIUM TO THE DIET, AGES 6-18:

1



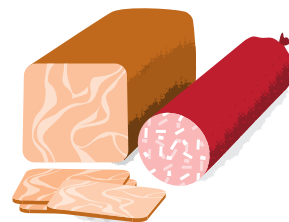
PIZZA

2



BREADS & ROLLS

3



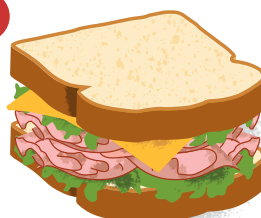
COLD CUTS & CURED MEATS

4



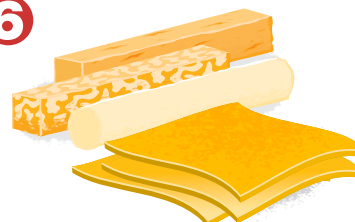
SAVORY SNACKS

5



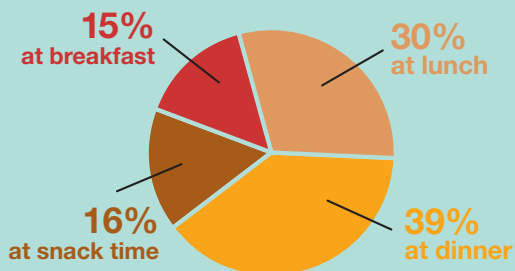
SANDWICHES

6



CHEESE

The sodium kids eat comes from every meal and snack:



Most of the sodium kids eat is already in the foods they get from:

GROCERY STORES



RESTAURANTS



SCHOOL CAFETERIAS



... and not from the salt shaker

Learn more at heart.org/sodium

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/children-sodium/>
Vital Signs: Sodium Intake Among U.S. School-Aged Children — 2009–2010

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Top 10 Tips for Dealing With a Picky Eater

When you get home from a long day at work, the last thing you want to do is wage war over broccoli at the dinner table. That's why it's so easy to fall into the trap of making mac-n-cheese or ordering pizza. It keeps you out of an "eat your vegetables" fight. The good news is, getting a picky eater to eat a nutritious meal doesn't have to be a battle.

Here are some tips for dealing with a picky eater:

1. Start by introducing healthier elements into foods that your child already likes.

For example, offer blueberry pancakes, carrot muffins, fruit slices over a favorite cereal, chunks of bell pepper in a potato salad, or shredded veggies over rice.

2. Include your kids in the prep work. By being involved in grocery shopping and food preparation, your kids will have more 'buy-in.' If they feel some ownership over the meal, they may be more likely to eat it.

3. Don't buy unhealthy foods. Out of sight, out of mind. If the chips and cookies aren't around, your kids can't eat them. They may resist at first, but when they get hungry, they'll start munching the carrot sticks. Keep healthy foods on hand — 100 percent juice instead of colas or sugary drinks, and a bag of apples instead of a bag of chips.

4. Schedule snack time and stick to it. Most kids like routine. If your kids know they will only get food at certain times, they'll eat what they get when they get it. Try to have snacks incorporate two food groups. For example, offer cheese and whole-grain crackers or apple slices with low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese.

5. Have healthy finger foods available. Kids like to pick up foods, so give them foods they can handle. Fruit and veggie chunks (raw or cooked) are great finger-food options.

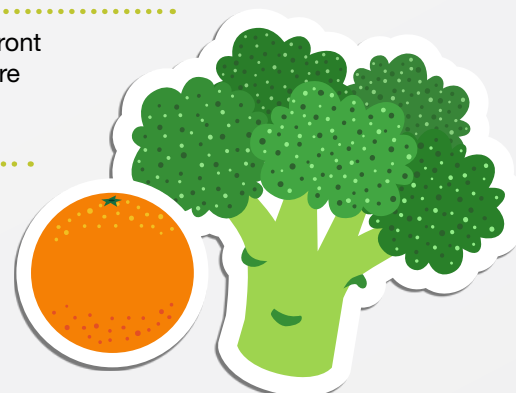
6. Repeal the "clean your plate" rule. Kids know when they're full, so let them stop. Over-eating is one of the major reasons we get too many calories.

7. Encourage kids to "eat their colors." This game works well with younger kids. Eating a variety of brightly colored foods provides more nutrients in greater variety.

8. Don't cut out treats altogether. Think moderation. A scoop of ice cream or a cookie is all right occasionally. If you cut out all the goodies, your kids will be more likely to overeat when they do get them. Make sure to moderate the treat consumption.

9. Veg out at the dinner table, not the TV. Eating in front of the TV is distracting, and kids may not notice that they're full because they're wrapped up in the show. Eating as a family is a great time to catch up.

10. Be a good role model. The best way to influence kids is by example. Don't expect them to eat spinach if you won't touch it.



Fun Facts Monthly Calendar



Healthy Kids™

Got the broccoli blues? Bored with bananas? The good news is there are many different fruits and vegetables that can help you get the recommended daily amount. Use this calendar to try new fruits and vegetables every month. Talk with your family and come up with your own ideas to add!

	Fruits	Vegetables	Fun Fact and Tip
January	Kiwifruit Pear	Celery Spinach	Kiwifruit was named by the people of New Zealand after their national bird the kiwi. Try adding kiwifruit to fruit salad.
February	Orange Tangerine	Carrot Turnip	Turnips were carved and used as lanterns before pumpkins became the Halloween tradition. Try adding turnips and carrots for a new take on mashed potatoes.
March	Apricot Avocado	Corn Swiss Chard	The avocado is actually a large berry and is sometimes called an alligator pear. Add avocado slices to your sandwich, or scoop it right out of the peel with a spoon!
April	Banana Mango	Asparagus Snow Pea	A less sweet type of banana often used in cooking is called a plantain. Make fruit kabobs with bananas, mangos and your other favorite fruits.
May	Honeydew Melon Strawberry	Artichoke Green Bean	The average strawberry has more than 200 seeds. Add strawberries to a salad for a hint of sweetness.
June	Blackberry Watermelon	Cucumber Summer Squash	Squash is actually a fruit, not a vegetable, because it contains the seeds of the plant. Try growing summer squash in your garden.
July	Cantaloupe Plum	Sugar Snap Pea Tomato	Tomatoes are eaten more than any other fruit or vegetable in the United States. Tiny cherry or grape tomatoes are a fun and delicious snack.
August	Cherry Peach	Okra Zucchini	Peaches are botanically related to almonds. They both make a great addition to whole-grain cereal or oatmeal.
September	Pineapple Pomegranate	Bell Pepper Butternut Squash	The pineapple got its name because it looked like a pine cone. Make a healthy pineapple salsa to serve with fish or chicken.
October	Apple Grape	Brussel Sprouts Cauliflower	Brussels sprouts are named for the capital of Belgium. Try roasted Brussels sprouts chips for a healthy, crunchy snack.
November	Cranberry Pear	Broccoli Cabbage	Not all pears are pear-shaped; some types look more like apples. Add sliced pears to sandwiches and salads.
December	Clementine Grapefruit	Kale Sweet Potato	A sweet potato is not a potato at all; it's more closely related to a carrot. Try baked sweet potato fries for a healthy side dish.

Fruit and Veggie Challenge



Healthy Kids™

Keep track and see how many fruits and veggies you're eating. If you're not meeting the recommended daily amounts, try to improve your record or challenge your family to a weekly competition! Make copies of this chart and use it to track your success by listing the fruits and veggies you eat each day.

Week	Fruits	Vegetables
	Goal: at least 4 each day	Goal: at least 4 each day
Monday	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Tuesday	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Wednesday	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Thursday	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Friday	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Saturday	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Sunday	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
WEEKLY TOTALS:	_____ fruits	_____ vegetables

Kid-Friendly Cottage Cheese Very Blueberry Pancakes



Healthy Kids™

Serves 4
\$1.61 Per Serving

Ingredients

- 3 large egg whites OR 2 large eggs
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup low-fat 33 percent less sodium cottage cheese
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup skim milk
 - 1 cup whole-wheat flour
 - 1 tsp. baking soda
 - 2 tsp. sugar
 - 1 12-oz. packaged, frozen blueberries (with liquid), thawed
- Cooking spray



Directions

1. Let kids crack eggs into a medium bowl. Then, let them measure and add cottage cheese and milk into the bowl, using a spoon to mix wet ingredients together.
2. Let kids measure and add the dry ingredients of flour, baking soda, and sugar into the wet ingredients. Have them stir with a spoon just until ingredients are combined having some lumps is ok.
3. Let kids gently stir in blueberries into the batter.
4. Spray a large nonstick pan with cooking spray and warm over medium-high heat. Portion $\frac{1}{4}$ cup amounts of batter into the pan adding 3 to 4 pancakes without overcrowding. When bubbles appear on the edges of each pancake after about 2-3 minutes, flip over with spatula and slightly flatten each pancake with the back of a spatula. Cook until that side is browned, another 2-3 minutes.
5. Transfer cooked pancakes to a plate. Continue making pancakes with remaining batter, coating the pan with cooking spray between each batch, until all the batter has been used. Serve pancakes.

Additional Tips:

- **Not over-mixing the pancake batter is the key to light and fluffy pancakes. Some small lumps in a pancake batter are okay because it means you haven't over-mixed.**
- **Using a nonstick pan to cook food like pancakes, along with cooking spray, helps keep your pancakes from sticking.**
- **Use the liquid from the thawed frozen blueberries to make the pancakes a fun blue color. Fresh blueberries will be just as tasty but may not make the pancakes as vibrant blue.**

Keep it Healthy: Before you grab the syrup bottle, try these first! They're so moist we don't think you'll need any. If you do add syrup, keep it light by adding just one tablespoon.

Recipe copyright © 2015 American Heart Association. This recipe is brought to you by the AHA's Simple Cooking with Heart Program. The Simple Cooking with Heart program empowers and excites families to come together in their home kitchens to enjoy simple, quick and affordable meals while learning basic cooking skills. Visit heart.org/simplecooking.

Kid-Friendly Light King Ranch Chicken Casserole

Serves 6

\$3.35 Per Serving



Healthy Kids™

Ingredients

Cooking spray

2 lb. boneless, skinless, uncooked chicken breast cutlets OR
4 cups cubed, cooked chicken breast

10.75 oz. canned, low-sodium, condensed Cream of Mushroom
soup (1 can 25% less sodium)

14.5 oz. no-salt-added, diced tomatoes (1 can)

15.25 oz. canned, no-salt-added corn kernels (1 can), drained, rinsed

1 Tbsp. no-salt-added chili powder

14.4 oz. packaged, frozen pepper stir-fry (onions and peppers),
thawed and drained of any liquid (1 bag)

8 6-inch tortillas, cut into 1-inch strips

½ cup shredded, fat-free cheddar cheese

4 oz. canned, diced green chiles (1 can), drained, rinsed, optional



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Coat a large nonstick pan with cooking spray and warm to medium-high heat. Add chicken cutlets and sauté until fully-cooked, about 7 to 8 minutes per side depending on thickness. Transfer chicken to a plate and cut chicken into a few pieces to cool quickly. When able to handle, cut chicken into cubes.
3. In a large bowl, add condensed soup. Into the bowl, let kids add drained tomatoes, drained corn, and chile powder, along with thawed stir-fry vegetables (and drained green chiles if using). Add cooked chicken and let kids use a spoon to stir mixture until combined.
4. Coat a 9-inch by 13-inch Pyrex or baking dish with cooking spray. Cut the corn tortillas into 1-inch strips. Pour ⅓ chicken mixture on the bottom of the dish, using a spatula to make into an even layer. Have kids layer half the tortillas strips on top of chicken mixture. Repeat once more with ⅓ chicken mixture in an even layer and remaining tortilla strips. Then, have kids top with remaining ⅓ chicken mixture in an even layer. Have kids sprinkle cheese on top.
5. Bake in oven until warmed through and bubbly, about 30 to 40 minutes. Remove from oven and let sit 5 minutes. Then, cut and serve.

Additional Tips:

- No time to thaw the bag of frozen stir-fry vegetables? No problem. Just put them in a colander and rinse with cold water for a few minutes until thawed. Then, press vegetables down against the colander to squeeze liquid from them to use in recipe.
- Turn this recipe into a healthy dip for gatherings. Just omit the tortillas from the recipe. In a large bowl, add all the ingredients except cheese, plus 1 or 2 chopped fresh jalapenos (if you like it spicy) and 1 can rinsed and drained low-sodium black beans or pinto beans. Pour into the greased 9-inch by 13-inch baking dish, sprinkle with cheese and bake for 30 minutes. Top with avocado chunks and serve with whole-grain pita chips.

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