

## **Nutrition**

The eating habits your child is developing will likely stay with him for life. Parents need to be positive role models in both food selection and amount of food consumed. High-fat and high-sugar foods should be limited. Limiting high calorie foods begins in the grocery store. Avoid buying unhealthy food. Sugared beverages (liquid candy), sweetened cereals (breakfast candy), cookies, pastries, ice cream, and pizza are major contributors of empty calories.

Continue to have scheduled meal and snack times, typically 3 meals and 2 snacks a day. Parents should serve meals restaurant style (a parent should portion food onto the plates for the children) instead of family style (everyone serving themselves from food on the table).

Family meals, with everyone sitting together at the table, are important. Many families with children this age begin making separate meals for individual family members. This trend may be due to parents catering to children's food requests or be a consequence of frequent eating out where everyone orders different meals. Unfortunately separate meals do not help children learn to eat a variety of healthy foods. Prepare only one meal for all family members. Keep offering healthy food to your family. It can take up to 100 times of presenting a vegetable before a child will eat it. Never force a child to eat a vegetable. This will create a battle and control issue.

Take your time to eat. It takes your brain 20 minutes to receive fullness cues from your stomach. Aim for your child to take at least 20 minutes to eat their meals. If your child asks for more after a meal, wait the full 20 minutes, and if they are still hungry, offer them half portion seconds.

Remember the saying "Parents provide and the child decides." As the parent, continue to be responsible for what the family eats, when the family eats, and where the family eats. Your child's job is to decide how much of the correct portion to eat. You may see your child's food intake varies with meals, but in general it will be consistent over the course of 24 hours. Children are responsible for whether they eat what is offered or wait until the next meal/snack. Do not force your child to eat more or reward the eating of healthy fruits or vegetables with dessert. Do not cater to your child's likes and dislikes. Always serve well-balanced meals and snacks.

Do not use food as your only reward for good behavior. A trip to the park, playground, or some other special time spent together is alternative options your child may enjoy.

Parents should prepare snacks and have them ready for their child after school. Examples of nutritious snack foods include fruits, vegetables such as carrot/celery sticks with peanut butter, whole wheat toast or crackers with cheese, yogurt, low-fat cottage cheese, oatmeal cookies, and bran muffins. Try to include fruits and vegetables in snacks and include a protein (like peanut butter, milk, or low fat yogurt) to increase your child's fullness. Limit soft drinks, candy pastries, salty or greasy items for snack. Hungry children are not in a position to make good nutritional choices. Prepare their snack in advance or provide them with two healthy snacks from which to choose.

Avoid allowing your child to graze throughout the day. This leads to unhealthy habits that can contribute to overeating. If your child asks for a snack and it is not yet your scheduled time for a snack, talk or play with him as a method of distraction.

## **Healthy Habits Tips**

Remember the message "7-5-2-1-0" for what healthy habits are important for your child.

- 7: Eat breakfast daily. Eating breakfast prevents children from getting too hungry and overeating later in the day---habits that lead to weight gain. If serving cereal, provide a breakfast cereal with at least 2 grams of fiber and less than 9 grams of sugar per serving.
- 5: Eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day. By making half your child's plate fruits and vegetables at meals and including fruits and vegetables for snack, your child will get the needed amount of fruits and vegetables.
- 2: Do not to let your child spend more than 1 to 2 hours on total screen time (TV, video games, recreational computer time, iPad, iPhones). 12% of 4 year old children use a computer daily, and with the increased availability of mobile devices, parents have to monitor ALL screen time. Turn the TV off during meals and keep the TV and computer out of your child's bedroom. If there already is a television in their bedroom, remove it. These steps will not only decrease screen time, but also help increase parent-child communication, and decrease disordered sleep. Preschoolers are a major target of advertising, and limited screen time will decrease your child's unhealthy exposure to commercials and marketing to children that have been shown to influence and result in cravings for unhealthy foods, such as sugared-cereals, unhealthy snack foods, fast food, and sugar-sweetened beverages.
- 1: Have your child participate in at least 1 hour of physical activity per day. Many children under 5 fail to meet physical activity guidelines. Outdoor play in this age group naturally yields more physical activity. Plan for unstructured, outdoor play time every day.

- 0: Encourage your child to drink almost no sugar sweetened beverages. Soda, sports drinks, lemonade, fruit drinks, and even 100% fruit juice (collectively called sugar-sweetened beverages) all contain a large amount of sugar which contributes greatly to excess weight, so try not to buy or bring these beverages into your home. Water and low-fat (1%) or nonfat (skim) milk are the best drinks for you to drink. Remember 2% milk is not considered low-fat. Many parents assume that child care, preschool, and other caregivers, including family members are providing good nutrition and activity options for their child. It is important for families to ask about these options and provide healthy alternatives if needed.
- Examples of Healthy Snacks: Fruit, Low-fat/frozen yogurt, Celery stalks, cucumber slices, frozen banana slices, Bran muffins, Sugar-free cereals, Low-fat cheeses, Crackers or unsalted pretzels.

Food Group	Girls (4-8 Years)	Boys (4-8 Years)
Grains	4-5 ounces	4-5 ounces
Fruit	1 – 1 ½ cups	1 – 1 ½ cups
Vegetables	1 ½ – 2 ½ cups	1 ½ – 2 ½ cups
Protein	3-4 ounces	3-4 ounces
Dairy	2 cups	2 cups

What counts as an ounce of grain?

- 1 regular slice of bread = 1 ounce
- 1 cup of cold cereal = 1 ounce
- 1 cup of cooked rice = 2 ounces
- 1 small bagel or English muffin = the size of a yo-yo = 2 ounces

Aim to make ½ your grains whole grains such whole wheat pasta, whole wheat bread, and brown rice.

What does a cup of fruit look like?

- 1 cup = size of a baseball = 1 small apple
- ½ cup chopped fruit = 1 small computer mouse
- 1 cup = 8 large strawberries
- ½ cup 100% fruit juice = 4-6 ounces = size of a juice box

Try to limit 100% juice to 4-6 ounces/day for children up to 6 years of age.

What does a cup of vegetables look like?

- 1 cup = 5 broccoli florets
- 1 cup = 10-12 baby carrots
- 1 cup = 1 large, raw tomato
- 1 cup = 1 large sweet potato

What does an ounce of protein look like?

- 1 ounce = 1 (large) egg
- 1 ounce = 1 Tablespoon of peanut butter
- 1 ounce = 1 sandwich slice of turkey
- 3-4 ounces = 1 can of tuna/canned fish
- 4-6 ounces = 1 salmon steak

What counts as a serving of dairy?

- 1 cup = 1 (small) carton of milk
- 1 cup = 8 ounce carton of yogurt
- ½ cup = 1 slice of cheese

You can also find milk and yogurt substitutes like soy milk, almond milk, rice milk, and soy yogurt. Get the substitutions that are fortified with calcium.

## **Fiber**

Fiber comes from plants such as fruits, vegetables, and grains. Fiber is important in lowering blood cholesterol, reducing heart disease, and even preventing some cancers. A good rule for fiber intake is "Age Plus Five." Your child's age plus five equals the number of grains of dietary fiber he should eat daily. For example, a 5-year-old would need 10 grams of fiber a day

## **Is my child overweight/obese?**

According to a 2011 report from the Institute of Medicine, slightly over 20 percent of children aged 2 -5 are overweight or obese. Contrary to the belief that young children will "grow out it," excess weight persists into later life and increases the risk for weight-related diseases in both childhood and adulthood. Body Mass Index (BMI) is widely used to help categorize weight. BMI compares height and weight, and norms vary by age and sex. A BMI between the 85th and 95th percentile is defined as overweight and a BMI at or above the 95th percentile is defined as obese. If your BMI is in the overweight or obese zone, talk to your doctor about developing a healthy eating plan.

## **Development**

- **Social.** Age five is a time of major social growth. Friendships and socialization are about to become a key component of your child's life. Issues of self-esteem and independence will be tested as your child develops a sense of place with friends and family. Five-year-olds are beginning to move away from the magical world of early childhood and into the logical world of older children. A major theme in the life of a five-year-old is "I can do it myself." This independence and the self-help skills that accompany this independence are very important in preparation for kindergarten. Most beginning kindergartners are able to:
  - Take care of toilet needs without help.
  - Be away from parents for a few hours at a time.
  - Speak to and be understood by other children and adults.
  - Play well with at least one other child.
  - Tell others his or her name.
  - Willingly engage in a new activity.
  - Listen quietly while being read to.
  - Carry out simple instructions.
  - Tell a simple story.

Being able to recite the alphabet or count is great, but readiness for kindergarten has more to do with being able to pay attention, follow instructions, and get along with other children. The following are ways to foster the kinds of skills that your child will need for kindergarten:

- Encourage self-care skills: Make sure your child knows basic hand washing and toileting routines. Encourage your child to hang up sweaters, jackets and rain gear. Make sure these items can be taken off and on with little or no help.
- Promote fine motor (hand and finger) skills: Scissor use (safety scissors), coloring within the lines, simple puzzles, and building blocks should all be incorporated in your child's play.
- Promote gross motor (movement) skills: Activities that involve running, jumping, hopping, skipping, and playing with a ball should be encouraged (i.e. playing catch with a large ball, hopping and broad jump games, learning to pump with legs on a swing, etc.)
- Foster communication skills: Talk about what you and your child are doing together. Encourage your child to tell you and other family members about events of the day. Listen carefully and show interest. Encourage and ask simple questions. While reading aloud, discuss the stories and illustrations.
- Develop social skills: Provide opportunities for supervised play with children his or her age. Help your child develop a vocabulary of politeness..."please, thank you, excuse me." Encourage kindness and respect by setting a good example and praising your child and other children when they are being kind and respectful. Establish specific rules at home that your child is expected to obey. For example, put toys away before bedtime and play with other children without hitting them. Most important, have fun with your child.
- Encourage lifelong learning: Show pleasure that your child is "grownup" enough for school. Self-reliance and independence is built up by separation experiences such as visits with friends, grandparents, birthday parties and even baby-sitters. Show enthusiasm for learning and new experiences. Make sure your child understands the pleasures of being able to read and write.
- Introduce your child to his or her school. Take your child to the school they will attend. Play on the playground. If possible, meet the teacher and visit the classroom. Be positive; your child will feel comfortable if he or she sees that

you are also. Encourage respect for teachers and school rules. Having rules at home, such as washing hands before meals, will help your child get used to following rules at school.

Finally, make sure your child is physically ready for school. Hearing and vision as well as general health needs will be assessed at the five year well visit.

- **Sleep.** Children this age require 10-12 hours of sleep a night. Make sure to provide enough time in the morning for a balanced breakfast.
- **Gross Motor (Movement) Skills.** At age five most children are mastering how to kick, hop, throw and catch. Unfortunately, most children in this age group still have to focus on keeping balance, so don't expect these skills to be perfect. Visual tracking skills are still quite immature at this age. You must toss the ball directly to your child in order for him or her to have a chance to catch it. Some children don't catch well until 7 or 8 years of age. T-ball is a sport that adapts well to this visual tracking deficit by providing a stationary ball to swing at. Complex team sports are not appropriate at this age unless proper modifications are made. Rules and at times, parts of the game, need to be simplified. Use of a T for batting in T-ball is a good example of how to make a sport both age and development appropriate. The goals at this age should be to learn how to play the sport, develop basic skills, and have a good time. Competitive sports at this age are unrealistic. A child must understand that their self-worth is not related to their athletic performance. All emphasis should be on learning the game and having fun.
- **Language.** Intellectually and verbally, a five-year-old's self-expression and vocabulary develop rapidly. Your five-year-old's speech should be completely understandable, although some articulation (pronunciation) problems may persist. He should be able to pronounce all vowels and the following consonant sounds: b, d, g, h, k, m, n, ng, p, w, y. The following consonant sounds may still be difficult, but should be mastered by age 6: f, l, sh, th, v. By age 7 all consonant sounds should be mastered. The following sounds may take until age 7 to be mastered: ch, soft g as in George, r, s, th, wh, z.
  - Tips:
    - Keep reading at least half an hour a day to your child. Children like books that tell stories, alphabet and counting books, books about families, friends, and going to school. Most of all, children like to be read a bedtime story. Often favorite books are funny stories or tales with animals in human situations.
    - Word play, especially silly rhyming songs or limericks, is a good way to practice language.
    - Listen to your child. Five-year-olds love to talk and share feelings. Encourage your child to tell stories and even act out situations or favorite parts of stories.
    - Your child may show signs of early reading skills such as recognizing or sounding out simple letter patterns. Reward and enjoy this, but there is no need to push reading now.

### **Electronics and Media in Your Home**

Video Games/The Internet Studies of interactive media indicate that the effect of interactive "virtual violence" may be more harmful than passive media, like television. Studies show that after playing violent video games, young people show a decrease in helpful behaviors and an increase in violent behavior when provoked. Video games are an ideal environment in which to learn violence and in some people, can be addictive. Parents need to monitor and help their children with media choices. Sports and non-violent strategic video games are preferable to games that glamorize carrying and using weapons.

### **Television/Entertainment Media ALERT!**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) wants all parents to be aware that television viewing can contribute to:

- Violent and aggressive behavior
- Obesity
- Poor body concept and self-image
- Substance abuse
- Early sexual behavior

Monitor the shows that your child watches. Most programs should be informational, educational, and nonviolent. View television with your child. Encourage alternative entertainment for your child, such as reading, athletics, or other forms of exercise.

### **Safety**

Accidents are the greatest threat to life and health of your child. More children die of injuries than of all diseases combined. Most injuries are preventable. At age 5 your child is learning to do many things that can cause serious injury, such as riding a bicycle. Although children learn fast, they still cannot judge what is safe. You must protect your child.

- **Street Safety.** Your child is in danger of being hit by a car if he or she darts out into the street while playing. Take your child to the playground or park to play. Show your child the curb and teach her to always stop at the curb and never cross the street without a grown-up.
- **Water Safety.** Swimming and playing in the water is fun and good exercise.
  - Teach your child water safety to prevent drowning.
  - Make sure your child is able to swim.
  - Only let your child swim while supervised by an adult who knows CPR.
  - If you own a pool, be sure it is enclosed in a fence with a self-closing, self-locking gate. Keep a life preserver and shepherd's hook available.
  - Use a life vest when boating.
- **Bike Safety.** Make sure your child always wears a helmet while riding a bike. Parents must wear helmets also. Never let your child ride a bike in the street. A 5 year old is too young to ride in the street safely. Be sure that your child's bike is the right size. Your child must be able to place the balls of both feet on the ground when sitting on the seat with hands on the handlebars. Your child's bike should have coaster brakes. Five year olds are often not able to use hand brakes correctly.
- **Car Safety.** Most children this age need to use a booster seat. Safety experts now realize that children have been switching to seatbelts too early. Children 40 to 80 lbs. and up to 4'9" need to be in a restraining booster seat. Always check that he or she is correctly restrained in the booster seat. Set a good example by making sure that you and other adults buckle up. The safest place for children, even though school age is in the backseat of a car. Children should not sit in the front seat of a car until 13 years of age.
- **Sun Exposure.** Use a sunscreen with SPF 30 or greater when your child is outside for more than a few minutes during the day. Minimize sun exposure during the hours of 10 am to 4 pm. Sun exposure during childhood increases your child's chance of having skin cancer later in life.
- **Fire Safety.** Household fires are a threat to your child's life, as well as your own. Install smoke detectors in your house and test the batteries every month to make sure they work. Change the batteries at least twice a year on dates that you'll remember, like the day that time changes for daylight saving and standard time. Teach your child not to play with matches and lighters, and keep matches and lighters out of your child's reach. Also, do not smoke in your home. Most fires are caused by a lit cigarette that has not been put out completely.
- **Gun Safety.** It is best to keep guns out of your home. If your family chooses to keep a gun, store it unloaded in a locked place, separate from the ammunition. Children in a home where guns are present are more likely to be shot by themselves, their friends, or family members than an intruder. Handguns are especially dangerous. Teach your child to leave a house or situation immediately if they see a gun.