

RAISING ADVENTUROUS EATERS

with first foods

During your baby's first year, growth is fast so they are very hungry. However, after age one, growth and metabolism slow down. You might notice your baby, now a toddler, is less hungry and not as interested in every meal. They may not enjoy foods that they once liked. Be patient as toddlers may need the same kind of practice with foods, like veggies, as they did when they first started solids.



What to Eat & How Much

- Offer 3 meals (¾-1 cup of food per meal) and 2 snacks. Continue to share family meals with your toddler.
- Start with small portions, such as 2 tablespoons of each food, and offer more if they are still hungry. Some days they may eat very little, and some days they may eat a lot. This is normal, so try not to pressure your child to eat more.
- Aim for at least three food groups at meals and at least two food groups at snacks. Prioritize meals/snacks that include protein or dairy (which contain healthy fats) and fiber-rich carbohydrates (veggies, fruits, and whole grains) to help kids get a variety of nutrients and feel fuller, longer.
- Limit use of toddler prepackaged snacks like yogurt melts, crackers, and puffs which may have too much added salt or sugar.
- Continue to prepare food safely to avoid choking hazards: chop or grind up whole nuts, cut hard uncooked veggies into thin strips or cook until soft (carrots, celery), slice tiny round foods in half (blueberries) and larger round foods in quarters (grapes, cherry tomatoes), cut hot dogs into thin half moon slices, thinly slice hard fresh fruit (apple), shred or thinly slice cheese, thinly spread nut and seed butters onto toast or other foods, avoid popcorn and some types of candy (hard candy, jelly beans, fruit snacks, gummy or sticky candy).

**If your child requires an alternative milk, talk to your pediatrician about what choices are available and how to make sure there is enough fat and nutrients in their diet.*



Fill half your plate at each eating opportunity with vegetables and fruits

FOR EACH MEAL OR SNACK...

CHOOSE 1 - 3:

- **VEGGIES:** Offer a rainbow of colors every day for maximum exposure to flavors and nutrients. Set a family goal to try a new veggie each week!
- **FRUITS:** Fresh, frozen, or canned in juice all count! Aim for a variety of whole fruits for maximum fiber and nutrients, not juice.
- **WHOLE GRAINS:** Aim for at least half of grains to be whole grains each day (oats, whole wheat bread, brown rice, whole grain pasta, corn or whole wheat tortillas, whole grain pita or naan).

CHOOSE 1 - 2:

- **PROTEIN:** Eggs, ground or shredded meats (turkey, beef, chicken, pork, lamb), fish & shellfish, tofu, beans & lentils, nut or seed butter
- **DAIRY*:** milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, cheese

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Toddler Beverages

- Around 12 months, your child should transition from breast milk or formula to whole cow's milk.* Fat is important for brain development until 24 months. Alternatively, you can continue to offer breast milk through breastfeeding or from a cup.
- Use cups instead of bottles by age 12 months. Straw cups are great for exercising important facial muscles that are used for eating and speaking. Sometimes toddlers will drink less milk when they transition to a cup. Toddlers should be getting most of their nutrition from solid foods, and less from milk. Limit milk intake to 16-24 ounces per day.
- Encourage drinking plain water. Juice is not necessary at this age. Even if diluted, it introduces unnecessary calories and can contribute to cavities. It may also encourage a strong preference for sweet foods. If you do decide to offer juice occasionally, offer no more than 4 ounces (½ cup) of 100% juice.



Approaches to Toddler Eating

- Remember parents and caregivers decide “when,” “what,” and “where” to eat. Your toddler decides “if” they are going to eat and “how much.” Offer a meal with a variety of foods, including something you know they will eat and a few new foods to try.
- Sometimes toddlers will show new preferences and may stop eating foods they once enjoyed. It's important to keep rotating foods, like veggies, onto their plate so they can learn to accept them again.
- If your toddler won't touch their veggies, it's okay to “hide” them in some favorite foods such as blending spinach into pasta sauce or butternut squash into mac & cheese. But also keep them in plain sight on the plate so that over time they will feel more comfortable exploring them by touching, smelling, playing, and then finally eating them!
- When possible, stick to a schedule of eating, and limit additional snacking or “grazing” between set eating times. Allow 2-3 hours between each meal and snack so your child can develop hunger for the next eating opportunity.



REMEMBER to share this information with anyone in your household or support system who will also be responsible for feeding your child.



The information contained in this guide should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

Contributors: Carmen Berry, MPH, RD, LD; Kofi Essel, MD, MPH, FAAP; Nimali Fernando, MD, MPH, FAAP; Rupa Mahadevan, MD, FAAP, ABOIM; Melanie Potock, MA, CCC-SLP

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Positive Mealtime Environment

- Help kids develop a mindful way of eating by not using electronic devices during mealtime. Use this time to have conversations and focus on family and food. If toddlers are not interested in eating, connect with them through conversation and enjoy the family time! If they'd like to get down, they can always do so and wait until the next meal or snack.
- Toddlers are watching YOU and what you eat so make sure to include a lot of variety in your diet. Now is the time to practice foods that may not be your favorites and show them that even adults can learn to love new foods, like veggies.
- Your toddlers are also listening. Set the stage and create a positive food environment, which includes a neutral approach to all foods and body shapes and sizes. Your attention and positive reinforcement can be as effective as offering treats as rewards.

I love that you are touching and tasting your food. You are a true food explorer!!



Boosting Feeding Development

1. **ORAL MOTOR SKILLS:** Stop using bottles and pacifiers completely at one year. Prolonged bottle use puts children at higher risk for ear infections, cavities, and delayed oral motor skills.
2. **GROSS MOTOR SKILLS:** By 12 months of age, some children are walking but don't rush it. Crawling and/or cruising along furniture helps them develop the tiny muscles in the hands that allow them to hold utensils.
3. **FINE MOTOR SKILLS:** Food placed into partitioned plates and ice cube trays can help children develop spoon and fork skills because the edges of the partitions provide a barrier as they scoop or pierce soft foods. Use a small child's safety fork with rounded tips.
4. **COGNITIVE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS:** At this age, children can imitate gestures and may be able to communicate back to you in their own way. When talking to your child, remember to pause after each question for at least 3 seconds to allow them time to process the information and attempt to respond. For example, ask if they want more food. Even a smile is a response, so never withhold food if they cannot gesture or talk yet.

**If your child requires a non-dairy alternative, talk to your pediatrician about what choices are available and how to make sure there is enough fat and nutrients in their diet.*

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Dr. Yum's Favorite Recipes

chicken veggie meatballs

Prep 20 minutes, Cook 30 minutes, Yields 48 1-inch Meatballs

ingredients

- ½ sweet onion, very finely chopped
- ½ yellow squash, very finely chopped
- ½ zucchini, very finely chopped
- 1 carrot, grated
- 1 cup baby spinach, very finely chopped (fresh)
- 2 pounds lean ground chicken
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- 2 teaspoons yellow mustard
- ½ tablespoon worcestershire sauce (omit for fish allergies)
- 1 cup rice cracker crumbs



method

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Saute vegetables in a pan with a small amount of olive oil. When vegetables are soft, add chopped spinach and stir until wilted. Remove vegetables from heat and allow to cool a bit. In a large mixing bowl, place 2 pounds of lean ground chicken. Season with 1/2 teaspoon each of salt, pepper, and garlic powder. Add ketchup, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, and rice cracker crumbs. Add vegetables and gently mix everything together using your hands or a potato masher. Using a small scoop, form meatballs and place on a baking sheet sprayed with non-stick spray. Bake meatballs for 15 minutes, then turn them and bake for an additional 15 minutes.

Add to your favorite sauce or eat plain. They also taste great cold and can easily be packed for lunch.

BABY FRIENDLY TIP: Break the meatballs into small pieces or make teeny tiny meatballs to help your baby practice self-feeding and perfect the pincer grasp.

broc and cara treats

Prep 15 minutes, Cook 15 minutes, Yields 20 Treats

ingredients

- 5 cups broccoli, chopped
- 3 carrots, grated (1/4 cup reserved)
- 1 onion
- 4 eggs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs (substitute ground cashews for gluten-free)
- 1 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons olive oil (coconut oil as an alternative)

method

Steam broccoli in a steamer basket or an inch or so of water until fork tender. Pulse broccoli, grated carrots (minus 1/4 cup), onion, egg, salt, cumin, panko, and parmesan cheese in a food processor. Pulse just till chopped finely. Mix in the remaining 1/4 cup of carrots. Using 1 tablespoon of the mix at a time, form 2 x 1 inch nuggets. Heat oil in a skillet. Flatten each nugget and sauté on one side until crispy and then flip. Serve warm.

BABY FRIENDLY TIP: Cut into smaller pieces so they are easy for your baby to pick up and chew. If serving larger pieces, always supervise to make sure your baby is taking small, comfortable bites for their stage of eating.

