



Green Plate Kids
Yummy • Healthy • Plates to Go

Great Day Houston Show 8/5/10:
Tips on Preparing Healthy Meals & Snacks for Going Back to School

Overall Healthy Advise for Children all Ages:

- Get 30-60 minutes of physical activity daily.
- Provide a variety of foods for each meal and every day. Different foods provide different nutrients and a variety is needed to meet your child's nutrient needs.
- Need combination of Carbohydrates, Protein and Fat with every meal.
- Eat Real Food – If you can recognize the food as something from nature, it is a real food.
- The main beverages consumed should be milk or water. Milk should be counted as part of their daily needs. Juice consumption should not exceed 4 fluid ounces per day.
- Beware salt in children's food. All food contains some amount of salt but pre-packaged foods can often provide more than the recommended daily limit for children in one serving. Read labels to know what is going into your child's body.
- Most grains should be whole grains. Read the ingredient list. If the first ingredient is not a whole grain (i.e., *whole* wheat flour not just wheat flour), choose another product.
- Choose foods low in added sugar and sweeteners. Sugar is not only bad for teeth but it also does not provide anything but energy (also known as calories) to the nutritional value of a food. It can cause a spike in energy levels followed by an energy crash.
- Oil and fats are needed in small amounts. Between 1 tsp and 1 Tbsp per day is recommended. Beware of saturated fats, which are those that are solid at room temperature like butter. Also eliminate trans fats completely. Both saturated and trans fats are the bad, artery clogging types.

For children ages 2 to 5 years of age (Preschool)

- Serve small portions for scheduled snacks and meals. Only 1/3 to 1/2 the size of an adult serving is appropriate. Children's tummies are small and large portions will seem overwhelming and often lead to a lot of wasted food. You can always add more to their plate as you gauge their appetite for the meal.

For children ages 6 to 12 years of age getting (Elementary School)

- Serving sizes will start to get bigger; 1/2 to 3/4 of an adult portion. Let your child be in charge of their appetite and continue to provide healthful options.

For children 12 and up (Middle and High School)

- Serving size recommendations are in line with adult serving sizes. Continue to provide foods that provide the greatest nutritional impact and minimize processed foods that are high in salt, sugar and unhealthy fats.





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Daily Requirements

	Preschool (2-5)	Elementary (6-11)	Middle/High (12+)
Grains	3-5 oz	6 oz	6 oz
Vegetables	1-1.5 cups	2.5 cups	2.5 cups
Fruits	1 – 1.5 cups	1.5 cups	2 cups
Milk/Dairy	2 cups	3 cups	3 cups
Meat/Beans	2-3 oz	5 oz	5.5 oz
Fats/Oils	3-4 tsp	5-6 tsp	5-7 tsp

*Ranges are given to include children of different sizes in that age group. A small 2 year old will need less than a tall/large 4 year old.

Easy Guidelines for Single Servings

Grains	1 oz	1 slice bread, ½ cup cooked pasta (lightbulb)
Vegetables	1 cup	1 baseball
Fruits	½ cup	1 lightbulb
Milk/Dairy	1 serving	1 cup milk/yogurt, 1.5 oz cheese (2 - 9 volt batteries)
Meat/Beans	serving	3 oz (palm of hand), 1 egg, 1/4 cup dry beans, ½ cup nuts/seeds (lightbulb)
Fats/Oils	1 tbsp	1 adult thumb

A few Healthy Snack and Meal Suggestions:

Snacks:

- 1) Cheese, crackers and fruit
- 2) Apples with peanut butter or Nutella and glass of fat free milk
- 3) Veggies wrapped in turkey slice with ranch or honey mustard dipping sauce.
- 4) Yogurt, granola and fruit
- 5) Banana or celery stick with Almond butter and raisins (ants on a log)

Meals:

- 1) Stir-fried vegetables with tofu, chicken or shrimp over brown rice
- 2) Grilled salmon, steamed sugar snap peas and whole wheat pasta
- 3) Broiled flank steak with steamed asparagus and baked sweet potato

