

# Feeding your school age child

Your child is getting more independent. Regular meals and snacks are still important. Use these ideas to help your child start learning to manage meal and snack times.

- Have 3 meals a day at set times. Meals should last only 20 to 30 minutes.
- Let your child start to choose snacks with some rules. For example, snacks should be at set times and at the table.
- Try to keep your child from eating and drinking between meal and snack times (grazing). Try to have your child drink water between meals and snack if they are hungry.
- Set a good example. Eat regular meals that include a variety of foods.
- Try to keep meals and snacks pleasant and stress free.
- Have your child help with grocery shopping and cooking. Let your child pick out fruits and vegetables with you!
- Make eating fun and be creative. Cut foods into shapes with cookie cutters or eat breakfast foods at dinner.
- Be patient with new foods and keep offering them. It can take up to 12 tries for a child to accept a new food.
- Do not use food as a bribe or reward for your child.
- Add colorful veggies like broccoli and carrots to sauces, casseroles, or soups.
- Add bright fruits such as berries to cereal or yogurt.
- Don't be a short order cook. Have your child try what the rest of the family is eating. Let them try a small portion first.



\*\*If your child is a picky eater, talk to your doctor or dietitian about giving them an appropriate complete multivitamin.

## How much should my child eat?

Use the MyPlate method to learn portion sizes.



## Recommended Daily Amount from Each Food Group

Daily intake from each food group varies based on each child's age.

Food Group (recommended serving)	Serving Examples
Vegetables (1½ to 4 cups per day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup cooked or raw vegetable</li> <li>• 2 cups raw leafy greens</li> </ul>
Fruit (1 to 2½ cups per day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cup cut up fruit</li> <li>• 1 piece fresh fruit (equal to the size of a baseball)</li> </ul>
Milk/Dairy (2½ to 3 cups per day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 ounces of cow's milk, enriched soy milk</li> <li>• 1 cup yogurt</li> <li>• 2 slices of cheese or 1/3 cup shredded cheese</li> </ul>
Grains (4 to 10 ounces per day)	1 ounce equals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 slice of bread</li> <li>• ½ cup cooked cereal, rice or pasta</li> <li>• 1 cup breakfast cereal</li> <li>• 1 regular pancake or waffle</li> </ul>
Meat/protein (3 to 7 ounces per day)	1 ounce equals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 ounce cooked meat, poultry, fish or seafood</li> <li>• ¼ cup cooked beans</li> <li>• 1 egg</li> <li>• 1 tablespoon nut butter</li> <li>• 1/2 ounce of nuts or seeds</li> </ul>

**ALERT:** Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

**This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.**