

Healthy Eating for Toddlers

Age 12 - 24 Months

A Guide for Parents and Caregivers



Introduction

It's never too early to help your child learn to enjoy a variety of foods. Part One of this guide gives you information on how to help your child develop positive attitudes about food and eating that will help them eat well for life. Find answers to questions from parents, just like you, about feeding your toddler. It may surprise you to find out that it's not your job to get your child to eat.

In Part Two of this guide, you will learn how to plan meals and snacks for your toddler.

We hope you will use this guide to help make mealtimes pleasant for the whole family.

Please note, in this guide eating refers to all foods and beverages.



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Part One

Making Mealtimes Pleasant

Mealtimes Roles

Adults and toddlers each have a role at meals and snack times. Let everyone involved in the care of your child know about the adult's role and the child's role, and encourage them to follow this approach when feeding your child.

Adults decide:

- What foods to offer
- When to offer them
- Where to offer them
- How to offer them

Toddlers decide:

- How much to eat
- What food to eat from the foods you offer



Adult's Role

What

You decide which foods to offer. Offer basically the same food you prepare for the rest of the family because toddlers do not need special foods. Preparing something different does not encourage them to try new foods or learn to enjoy what the family is eating.

When

Toddlers like a regular routine. Your child needs you to offer meals and snacks at about the same times every day. This will usually be three meals and two to three snacks each day. If your child doesn't eat a lot at one meal or snack, they will soon have another opportunity to eat.

Where

Include your child at the family table where they can see you eating and learn about foods and how to feed themselves.

How

Give your child time to explore foods in a calm pleasant setting, without any pressure to eat a particular food or to eat a certain amount. Offer familiar foods along with new foods. They may eat only one or two of the foods you have offered at a meal. That's okay. You do not need to prepare something different for them.

Toddler's Role

They decide if they will eat what you offer, and how much they will eat. They know how hungry they are. The amount of food your child eats at each meal and snack may change from day to day depending on their appetite, activity level and whether they are having a growth spurt. Their appetite may also change when they are excited or overly tired. Toddlers are easily distracted. When hungry, they will focus on eating. When satisfied, they will focus on something else.



Let yourself off the hook!

Remember that some issues will resolve themselves in a pressure-free environment. It's about not putting pressure on your child and also about not putting pressure on yourself. As a parent, you want what's best for your toddler. When you stick to your different roles, you give yourself permission to stop trying to get your child to eat. This is part of helping your child develop skills and positive attitudes about food. It also helps you enjoy mealtimes as a family.

Just One More Bite

Even with the best intentions, we sometimes put pressure on our children to eat. As a child, were you ever told you couldn't leave the table until you finished what was on your plate? Many of us were! However, information and guidelines about feeding children have changed.

What's a parent to do?

You can stop the pressure and everyone can be less stressed!
Isn't that great news?

What is pressure?

Pressure is trying to make a child eat something that they don't want. Pressuring your child to eat does not help them learn to enjoy eating, and may make them avoid some foods. Pressure can come in many forms, and can often be hard to identify. The following list describes different forms of pressure. Even things that seem encouraging or playful can be forms of pressure.

Avoid these Types of Pressure

Forcing

"You're going to stay in your chair until you eat three pieces of carrot"; or trying to feed a child after they have finished eating.

Punishing

"If you don't eat your meat you can't have any watermelon for dessert."

Lecturing

"Eat your orange, it's good for you."

Coaxing

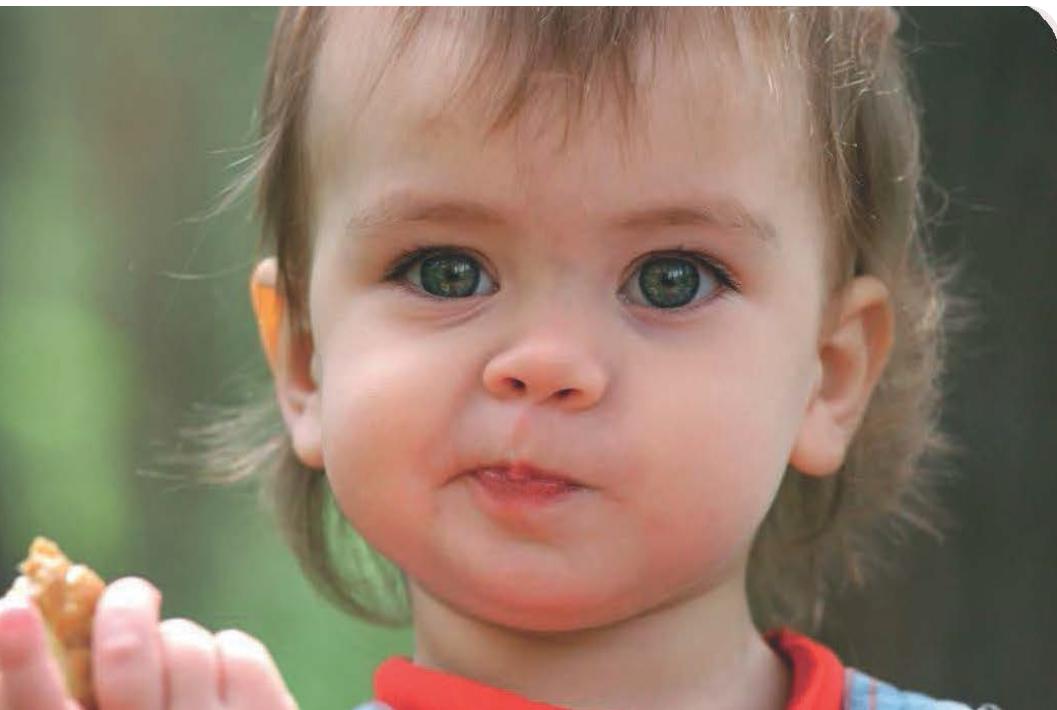
"Just taste it, you don't have to swallow it"; "just eat one bite"; "eat a bit to make Mommy happy."

Bribing and Rewarding

"If you eat another bite of chicken, then you can have an extra story at bedtime."

Food Games

Such as bringing the spoonful of food towards the child's mouth saying "here comes the choo-choo train into the station."



What's a Parent to Do?

Questions and answers about normal toddler eating

What parents sometimes see as “challenges” at mealtimes are usually normal child behaviours that are part of learning about food and eating.

My toddler plays with their food, sometimes making a mess or throwing it on the floor. Is this normal?

Yes, it's a perfectly normal way for a child to learn about new foods — how they look, feel, smell and taste. What appears to be “playing” may be part of your child learning to feed themselves. So be patient and avoid pressure to eat. It's okay to be messy! Know that your child is learning and developing.

My 18-month old often doesn't want what I make! Are they just a picky eater?

This is a tricky one, as it could be a number of things. Sometimes it's just a normal part of how toddlers learn to enjoy a variety of foods — it takes time.

Another reason may be that they are trying to see how you will react. Or they may simply not be interested in a food that day even if they have eaten it before. Maybe the portion is too big and they are overwhelmed. Or they might even be holding out to try and get a favourite food. Finally, they might just not be hungry — trust their appetite.

So what can you do?

It's not a good idea to prepare something different. They might continue a pattern of not eating what's on the table if you do. They need to learn how to enjoy what the family is eating. It's okay if they don't try every food on the table. If they are hungry, they will likely eat some of the family meal. Offer a small amount, and give more if they want more.

My one year old will eat a lot one day and only a little the next.

I'm afraid they are not getting enough to eat.

Changes in appetite are not unusual. Offer your child three meals and two to three snacks a day. If they don't want to eat one of them, they have another opportunity to eat within a few hours. It's okay to trust their appetite. Also, at 12 months they may start to eat less. This is because their growth rate slows down. Give them time to eat at their own pace. When they show they are no longer interested in eating you can remove their plate.

The different amounts a child eats from day to day tend to average out so that they get the calories and nutrients they need. This is especially true if the child is offered healthy foods at regular meals and snacks, and is allowed to eat the amount they want and stop when they are satisfied.

When my child doesn't want to eat what I've offered, they whine, cry and act out. I have no idea what to do!

Be firm about **not** giving them something different. Giving a different food will only reinforce that whining works. Over time, they might continue to whine and demand different foods, instead of learning to try the foods that you offer. Be patient and calmly tell them “we are having these foods for dinner today”, and then let them decide what and how much to eat from the foods already on the table.



My child is always asking for food, even when it's not a regular meal or snack time. Should I give it to them anyway?

You should avoid giving snacks when it's not a scheduled snack time. Extra snacks could spoil your child's appetite for their regular meals and snacks. Extra snacks can also increase the risk of cavities. At any time you can offer water if your child is thirsty. If they are still breastfeeding, let them nurse when they want. This cue-based feeding helps them maintain breastfeeding after 12 months of age.

My child often can't seem to calm down enough to eat. Help!

This may be normal behaviour for some children. There are things you can do to help. Try making sure there isn't too long a time between meals and snacks so they don't get extremely hungry and upset. Plan some quiet play time before meals and snacks, such as playing with blocks or reading a story. Avoid distractions at the table like TV, music or toys.

Lately my child turns down many foods I offer. It feels like they say "no" to just about everything. What should I do?

Remember, you have offered the food and your child's job is to decide if they will eat it, and how much. It's okay for them to say "no" to foods. Don't try to make them eat the food, and don't make something else. It's best not to argue over food, so mealtimes are pleasant.

My child often does not want to try new foods. What can I do?

Don't worry, be patient and keep offering the foods at other meals. Let them decide if they want to eat the foods or not. They may need to be offered a food 20 times or more before they learn to enjoy it. They may look at, touch, taste and spit out food. This is how a toddler gets to know a new food. Offer a variety of foods at each meal. Include foods that your child has eaten before. If they decide not to eat one or two foods, they can still get enough to eat from the foods you have offered. Be a role model by enjoying your own food. When toddlers see the rest of the family enjoying a food, they're more likely to try it.



Time Together

A big part of helping your child learn to enjoy a variety of foods is having pleasant mealtimes.

Be a Role Model

Eat meals together as a family, so you can be a role model. Children tend to copy what adults do. Offer food at the table. Help your child focus on eating by removing distractions. Turn off the TV and keep toys off the table.

Enjoy Mealtimes

Enjoy your time together. Simply by being at the family meal table, your child can learn about foods and learn to enjoy conversation and social time with the family. They can be included in the conversation at the meal, but should not be the centre of attention (for example, don't comment on what they are or aren't eating, and don't fuss over them).

No Special Foods Required

Offer your toddler the same healthy foods you offer the rest of the family (with the exception of choking hazards — see information on page 14). Your child doesn't need "toddler" foods.

Learning Takes Time

Don't worry if your toddler sometimes turns down what you've given them. That's normal for a toddler. It takes time to learn to enjoy a wide variety of foods. Just keep serving those foods over time, so your toddler can get used to them.

Signs that your toddler is developing positive attitudes about food and eating.

1. They are eating at the table with the family.
2. They are eating what the rest of the family is eating.
3. They are trying some new foods.
4. They stop when they have had enough to eat.
5. They show that they want more when they are hungry.

Limit Highly Processed Foods

Canada's Food Guide recommends that we limit highly processed foods. These are foods and beverages that are high in sodium (salt), sugars or saturated fat.

Highly processed foods can include:

- Sugary drinks
- Chocolate and candies
- Ice cream and other frozen desserts
- Cheese-flavoured and other salty snacks
- Fast foods like French fries and chicken nuggets
- Frozen or packaged entrées like pasta dishes, pizzas, and macaroni and cheese dinner mixes
- Baked goods like cookies, cakes, pastries and donuts
- Processed meats like sausages, wieners, bologna, pepperoni and other deli meats
- Processed cheese products like spreads and slices
- Jam, honey and other sweetened spreads like chocolate nut spreads
- Sweetened cereals

If they've never had it, they won't miss it!

Don't be eager to introduce highly processed foods to your toddler. Children don't miss what they haven't had yet.

Limiting some foods is not being "mean"

A toddler can only eat so much, so mostly they should eat foods that really nourish them. It's not being "mean" to a toddler if you do not offer them foods like cookies every day. It's very easy to like those types of foods. But if your child fills up on them, they may have little or no room left in their stomach to eat foods that are more nutritious.

Beverages that are not recommended for toddlers

Sugary drinks may fill your child up and keep them from eating other foods they need. Most sugary drinks don't help your child grow well, and may increase the risk of cavities.

Sugary drinks include soft drinks, fruit drinks, fruit punches, 100% fruit juices, sweetened milks like chocolate milk, sports drinks and sweetened flavoured waters. These drinks are not good choices for your toddler.

- Be aware of food marketing. Some of these drinks may look healthy because they contain one or more added nutrients like vitamin C, but this still does not make them healthy drinks.
- Toddlers do not need juice. Even 100% fruit juice does not have the fibre that fruit does, and is a source of sugar that your toddler does not need.
 - Too much juice leaves less room for other foods.
 - Too much fruit juice may lead to diarrhea.
 - Sipping fruit juice over a long time could increase the risk of cavities.
- Sports drinks are sometimes seen as "good" because they are associated with sport and exercise, but basically they're sugar water with some minerals and vitamins added.

Avoid beverages containing artificial sweeteners and other sugar substitutes, as these might take the place of foods that your toddler needs.

Avoid hot or iced tea, coffee, cappuccinos and other caffeine-containing beverages. Some of these drinks are also high in sugar.

Energy drinks should never be offered to children as they contain caffeine, sometimes at high levels, and other ingredients of possible concern. Labels carry warnings that they are not recommended for children.

Food should not be a pacifier or a reward

Do not use food to soothe an upset child unless they are upset from being overly hungry. Figure out if your child is actually hungry, or if they are sad, frightened, tired, or not feeling well. If they are not hungry, soothe them by giving them attention, hugs or a nap.

Do not use food as a reward for good behaviour, as this does not teach a healthy attitude towards food and eating.

Food Choking Hazards

Children younger than four years are most at risk of choking on food because they are still learning to chew and swallow effectively. All foods have the potential to cause choking. Certain foods are more of a risk for choking than others. These include hard foods, foods that are hard to chew, foods that have a shape and size that can block the airway of a young child, and foods that are both smooth and sticky. There are various ways to reduce a child's risk of choking on food.

Help keep your child safe while eating and drinking:

- Always stay with your child when they are eating because a child who is choking may not be able to make noise or attract attention. Coughing is a sign that a child is removing the food naturally.
- Make sure your child is sitting upright when eating or drinking, not lying down, walking, running, jumping or laughing.
- Do not allow an older child to feed a younger child.
- Encourage your child not to speak with food in their mouth, not to put too much food in their mouth at one time, and to chew food well before swallowing it.
- Do not allow your child to eat or drink in a moving vehicle. If your child starts to choke, it is hard to help them right away, especially because they are in a car seat and in the limited space of a vehicle. Also, there are safety risks in getting the vehicle off the road to help your child, especially in busy traffic. Eating or drinking in a moving vehicle increases the risk of choking if it stops suddenly.
- Always use metal or thick plastic cutlery, and non-breakable plates and cups. Do not use thin plastic cutlery or foam plates and cups, as these are easily broken and children can choke on the pieces.
- Do not serve food on toothpicks or skewers, or foods that are on wooden or plastic sticks, such as frozen treats.
- Consider learning choking first aid for infants/children.

Do not offer these to children under the age of four years:

- popcorn
- hard or gummy candies, marshmallows
- peanuts or other nuts, seeds, crunchy peanut butter
- fish with bones, foods on toothpicks, skewers or sticks
- cough drops, gum, chewable vitamins

Be careful that your child does not get these items by mistake — for example, from items dropped on the floor, from a candy dish on a coffee table, between couch cushions, etc.

Prepare foods so they are less of a choking risk:

- Cut large chunks of food into small pieces or thin strips.
 - for example, fruit, vegetables, and especially foods that are harder to chew such as meat, poultry and some shellfish.
 - this includes chunks of food in mixed dishes such as soups, stews, salads, casseroles and toppings on pizza.
- Grate cheese or cut into small thin strips.
- Break up clumps of raisins or dried berries into individual pieces, and chop large dried fruits (such as apricots, dates and prunes) into raisin-size pieces.
- Cut foods with a large round shape into quarters lengthwise and then cut into smaller pieces as needed.
 - for example, grapes, cherry tomatoes, whole cooked carrots, etc.
 - the size and shape of wieners and sausages makes them a choking hazard, so they would need to be cut the same way. They are high in sodium, so they are not good choices for your toddler.
- Spread smooth peanut butter or nut butter thinly on crackers or toast — do not serve peanut butter or nut butter spread thickly on something, or alone in a lump or on a spoon. It could get stuck and block your child's airway.
- Remove all bones from fish, meat and poultry before serving.
- Remove the pits from fruits.
- Grate hard raw vegetables such as carrots, and any hard raw fruits, or cook them until soft but not mushy.
- Finely chop foods with fibrous or stringy textures such as celery or pineapple.

Part Two

Foods to Offer

Using Family Foods for Your Toddler

The foods that you offer your toddler can be many of the same foods enjoyed by the family. Use Canada's Food Guide, (canada.ca/foodguide) to help plan meals and snacks for your family.

Nutrition Label Reading

Use nutrition labels to compare similar foods. This can help you make healthier choices for the whole family. For information on food labels, visit canada.ca and search for "[how to use food labels](#)".

What about packaged toddler foods?

This includes things like toddler entrees, fruit squeezable pouches, and grain-based puff snacks. These packaged "toddler foods" are not needed and don't provide much opportunity to help your child learn to chew. Also, if you give your child toddler foods, it won't help them learn to eat the foods the rest of the family is eating. Simply make some changes in the size of pieces or texture of some family foods for your toddler, to reduce the choking hazard. For example, you will need to cut meats, fish and poultry or other large chunks of food into small pieces, and cook hard vegetables like carrots, instead of serving them raw.



Foods for Your Toddler

To help ensure your toddler gets the variety of foods they need:

- Offer your child three meals and two to three snacks each day.
- From 12 to 24 months of age, offer iron-rich foods at each meal. Meats, poultry, fish, eggs, legumes (such as beans), tofu, peanut butter, other nut butters, iron-fortified infant cereals and iron-fortified ready-to-eat breakfast cereals are all iron-rich foods. To see if a cereal is iron-fortified, check the ingredients list on the label for the word “iron”, or an ingredient that includes the word “ferrous” or “ferric” (both terms refer to iron).
- Offer at least one vegetable or fruit at every meal and snack. Lunches and suppers should generally include at least two. Vegetables and fruits have important nutrients like fibre, vitamins and minerals.
- Offer whole grain foods every day. They have important nutrients like fibre, vitamins and minerals.
- If your child is not receiving breastmilk, offer 500 mL (2 cups) of whole milk (3.25% M.F.) every day to help meet protein, calcium and vitamin D needs. Yogurt and cheese can be offered in addition to milk. Soy, rice, and other plant-based beverages (like almond, cashew, oat or coconut beverage), even if they are fortified, do not have the same amounts of nutrients as whole milk, to meet a toddler’s needs. They should not be given to children 12-24 months of age in place of whole milk.

How much food should I offer?

Trust your child’s appetite to be your guide. Serving too much food at once can make a child feel like not eating at all, so start with a small amount.

- If they finish it and want more, give them more.
- If they don’t want to eat it or finish it, that’s okay. Don’t pressure them to eat it.

Tips for Choosing Foods

Vegetables and fruits

- Fresh, frozen and canned are all good choices.
- Dried fruits can be a part of healthy eating, but they can stick to the teeth and increase the risk of cavities. If you offer dried fruits, offer them with meals and brush your child's teeth after. To reduce the risk of choking, cut large dried fruits into small raisin-size pieces.
- When using canned foods:
 - Cut down on sodium (salt) by rinsing canned vegetables before use, or by choosing “less salt” or “no salt added” vegetables, when available.
 - If you buy vegetable or tomato juice, look for lower sodium choices.
 - Choose fruit packed in juice (packed in syrup has more sugar).
- Offer vegetables in different ways – cooked, grated, in leafy green salads, or in mixtures such as soups and casseroles. Some popular books recommend “hiding” grated or pureed vegetables in recipes like baked goods. Although there’s nothing wrong with trying new ways to include vegetables in your meals, it shouldn’t be about tricking your child. You should also offer those vegetables “as is” so your child can learn to enjoy their unique tastes and textures.
- You can offer local wild berries such as blueberries and raspberries.
- Fruit juice is not recommended for toddlers (see p. 13).

Whole grain foods

- Check the ingredients list on the label and choose foods with the words “whole grain” followed by the name of the grain (e.g., wheat, rye, corn) as one of the first ingredients. Brown rice, oats and oatmeal are by nature whole grains, even if the label doesn’t say “whole grain”.
- Offer whole grain foods that are lower in sodium, sugars and saturated fat (for example, offer plain brown rice rather than a packaged seasoned rice mix, and plain rather than sugar-coated cereals).

Meats, poultry, fish, eggs, and plant-based protein foods

- Select lean meats and prepare them with little or no added salt or saturated fat.
- Offer fresh meats instead of processed meats like sausages, wieners, bologna, pepperoni and other deli meats, because processed meats are usually higher in sodium and saturated fat.
- You can include traditional foods such as trout, partridge, seal, and game meats such as moose, rabbit and caribou.
- Some children find meat hard to chew. If this is a problem, cook it until it is softer. Cooking in liquid is a good way to make meat tender.
- Offer fish, which are sources of healthy fats.
- Offer plant-based choices, which are sources of fibre. This includes legumes like dried peas in pea soup and peas pudding, baked beans, kidney beans in chili, lentils in soup, and chick peas in hummus.

Cautions:

- Spread smooth peanut butter or smooth nut butter (like almond butter) thinly on crackers or toast – do not serve these foods alone in a lump, as they could get stuck in the throat and block air flow.
- Do not give nuts, seeds, or crunchy peanut butter, as these are choking hazards for toddlers.
- For toddlers and everyone else in the family, do not offer the liver or kidneys of moose or caribou, as they are too high in cadmium (a mineral that is harmful to health).
- Health Canada provides advice for limiting exposure to mercury from these fish: canned albacore tuna (this refers to white tuna, not light tuna), fresh or frozen tuna, shark, swordfish, marlin, orange roughy and escolar. If you decide to feed your toddler any of these fish, ensure that the amount is no more than 75 g **per week** of canned albacore tuna and no more than 75 g **per month** of the other types of fish listed. For more information see “Mercury in Fish” at canada.ca.

Milk, yogurt and cheese

Health Canada recommends breastfeeding up to two years of age and older, with the addition of solid foods at six months. When your baby continues to breastfeed after 12 months of age you should continue to give them a daily supplement of 400 IU (10 mcg) of vitamin D, up to 24 months of age, even if they also drink some whole cow milk. If you completely stop breastfeeding before 24 months, stop giving the vitamin D supplement. Your baby will get vitamin D from whole cow milk (which has vitamin D added during processing).

- If your child is not receiving breastmilk, offer them 500 mL (2 cups) of whole milk (3.25% M.F.) every day to help meet protein, calcium and vitamin D needs. Do not give them 2%, 1%, .5% or skim milk. Health Canada recommends whole milk for children under two years of age.
- In addition to the recommended 500 mL (2 cups) of milk, you can also offer small amounts of milk products such as yogurt, cottage cheese, and hard cheeses. They provide different tastes and textures for your child to enjoy. Choose hard cheeses over processed, since processed cheese slices and spreads have more sodium.

Cautions:

- A child needs milk every day, but too much may interfere with eating other foods. Don't give them more than 750 mL (3 cups) of milk a day.
- Sweetened milk, such as chocolate milk, has added sugar that your toddler does not need. It is not a good choice for your toddler.
- Soy, rice, and other plant-based beverages (like almond, cashew, oat or coconut beverage), even if they are fortified, do not have the same amounts of nutrients as whole milk, to meet a toddler's needs. They should not be given to children 12-24 months of age in place of whole milk.



Oils and Fats

Healthy fats (unsaturated) are important for brain development and help meet your toddler's nutritional needs. Include some unsaturated fat in your child's meals and snacks, such as:

- Vegetable oils like canola, olive and soybean
- Salad dressing and mayonnaise
- Soft non-hydrogenated tub margarines that are low in saturated fat

Caution: For toddlers and everyone else in the family, you should limit butter, hard block margarine, lard, shortening and coconut oil as these are higher in saturated fat.

Nutritious foods that contain fat are also important to help meet your child's energy and nutrient needs, so it is important not to restrict these foods because of their fat content. Examples of higher fat nutritious foods include:

- Whole (3.25% M.F.) milk or breastmilk
- Yogurt (with more than 2% M.F.)
- Avocado
- Hard cheese
- Smooth peanut butter and nut butters (thinly spread)
- Fatty fish (like salmon and rainbow trout)

Water

Offer water for thirst. When the weather is hot or your child is very active, offer water more often. You don't need any special water for your toddler. Municipal tap water is fine as long as there is no water advisory in place,

Sodium (Salt)

On average, toddlers get double the sodium they need. A toddler who learns to like a salty taste at a young age may have a life-time preference for this taste. Eating too much sodium can cause high blood pressure, which could lead to stroke, heart disease and kidney disease.

Most sodium we eat is found in highly processed foods like canned or dry soups, canned pasta, packaged noodle mixes, rice mixes, potato mixes and macaroni and cheese dinner mixes, canned meats, packaged deli meats, canned and frozen dinners, other ready-to-eat foods, fast foods, and restaurant meals. Limit these foods for your toddler. Compare the Nutrition Facts table on similar foods to help choose lower sodium products (see p.18 for a link to more information on nutrition label reading).

Sugar Substitutes

Children do not need artificial sweeteners and other sugar substitutes. These products include aspartame, sucralose, acesulfame potassium and stevia. Beverages containing these products might take the place of foods that your toddler needs. Thus, you should not give these types of beverages to your toddler.

Your toddler does not need other artificially sweetened foods. Let your toddler enjoy the flavour of foods without added sweeteners.

Food Allergies

If your family has no history of allergies, there is no need to delay the introduction of any particular food. If your family does have a history of allergies, speak with your doctor about any concerns you may have.

Keep Food Safe for Your Toddler

For information about safe food handling and cooking, see “Safe Food Handling for Children Ages 5 and Under” at canada.ca/foodsafety.

Sample Meal Plan

Breakfast

Iron-fortified ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (see p. 19)

Whole (3.25% M.F.) milk*

Small bowl of blueberries, fresh or frozen (thawed)

Snack

Yogurt with chopped banana

Water

Lunch

Small egg salad sandwich on whole grain bread with soft

non-hydrogenated margarine and mayonnaise-type dressing

(younger toddlers might have the same foods separate: chopped

boiled egg, and whole grain bread with soft non-hydrogenated margarine)

Thin strips of green pepper

Whole (3.25% M.F.) milk*

Thin apple slices

Snack

Whole grain toast with smooth peanut butter

Grated carrot

Whole (3.25% M.F.) milk*

Supper

Home cooked spaghetti with meat sauce

Garden salad made with romaine lettuce, with salad dressing

Canned peaches (packed in juice, cut in small pieces)

Whole (3.25% M.F.) milk*

Some children may need a snack between supper and bedtime.

* See page 22 for tips and cautions about recommended milk intake for toddlers.

Your toddler does not need a sippy cup

Sippy cups with no-spill valves do not help your toddler develop mature drinking skills. An open cup is the best choice to help your toddler develop these skills.

Do not allow your toddler to carry around a bottle, cup or sippy cup. They can get hurt if they fall with the bottle or cup in their mouth. Also, they can get into a habit of sipping on fluids other than water throughout the day. This can make them less interested in their meals and snacks, and can be harmful to their teeth.



Looking for More Information?

Talk to your health care provider, public health nurse or registered dietitian.

If you have questions about healthy eating contact Dial-a-Dietitian. This is a free service that lets you talk to a registered dietitian in NL. Call 811 or visit 811healthline.ca/healthy-eating to send an email.

For information on Canada's Food Guide visit
canada.ca/foodguide

For more healthy eating resources visit
gov.nl.ca/healthyeating

For information and tips on eating more vegetables and fruits visit
gov.nl.ca/healthyeating/veggiesandfruit/

For information on breastfeeding visit
Baby-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador
babyfriendlynl.ca

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