

NUTRITION

On Your
Own



Self-Paced Lesson

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Growing Up from a Baby to a Toddler

At around 1 year old, your baby is changing from an infant to a toddler. The way your baby eats will also change during this period. Your baby will gradually give up the bottle. He will feed himself more and more. You can help your baby through the process by understanding how your baby grows and how to keep meals healthy and pleasant.

Expect mealtimes to be messy. It will take years before your child eats like an adult. During the toddler years, your child will spill food, send it flying, and drop it around his chair. Try putting newspapers or a shower curtain under your child's place at the table. It will make cleaning up easier. Put a bib or a towel over your child's shirt to protect his clothes. When you start your child on a spoon after 1 year of age, get one with a curve in the handle. It will keep your child from turning the spoon upside down on the way to his mouth.



Some children will not try new foods.

Most children do not eat new foods the first time they are offered. Do not force your child to eat. You may have to offer a new food 15 or 20 times before your child will eat it. Just keep trying. Let your child look at it, smell it, play with it. Over time he will learn more about it and will finally taste it. He may not like it at first, but keep giving it to him. With time he will eat it on his own, especially if he sees others around him eating it.

Your child may eat very small amounts at meals.

At around 1 year old, children stop growing as fast as they did as babies. Their appetites go way down. Do not worry about how little your child is eating at a year. He will make sure that he gets enough. To help him out, offer three meals

and two or three snacks at about the same time each day. Serve very small portions and give him more if he wants it.

Your child will eat more just before a growth spurt. After that his appetite will decrease again.

Do not fix your child special foods at meals. If he refuses to eat the meal you serve the rest of the family, just let him wait for the next meal or snack. He will be hungry the next time you feed him, but he will not starve. If you continue to let him skip meals and then give him what he wants to eat, he may become a picky eater. Some children also learn to refuse meals to get junk foods.

One day he likes a food. The next day he won't touch it. Toddlers change their tastes often. Just accept the daily changes. What he says no to today, he may want tomorrow.

You determine what and when your child eats. You help your child grow and be healthy by giving him regular, healthy meals, and snacks. The meals and snacks you offer your child keep him from getting too hungry and becoming cranky.

Serve your child healthful foods. Do not serve sweets, sodas, Kool-Aid, and junk foods.



Many toddlers enjoy drinking milk and juice. Your child needs about 16 ounces of milk a day, and 4 ounces of juice. Too much milk and juice will keep your toddler from eating the other healthy foods his body needs to grow.

Offer plain water when your child is thirsty. It is a healthy drink for children.

Be a role model for your child. Your child learns to eat by watching you. Help your child by eating healthy foods.

Have family meals. Your child likes to eat with you. Be sure to keep mealtimes fun and pleasant. One important way to do this is to offer healthy foods and let your child decide what and how much to eat.

Keep the focus on your family at meals. Turn off the TV and the phone and enjoy your meal. Keep the setting happy and relaxed.

Make eating interesting. Your child will enjoy meals that have many colors. Colorful foods such as fruits and vegetables not only look good, they contain many important nutrients for your child.



Growing Up from a Baby to a Toddler Take-Home Sheet

Toddlers eat very small amounts of food at meals and snacks. Here are the amounts to serve your toddler. If he wants more, he will tell you.

Meat, poultry, fish..... 1–2 tablespoons
Pasta, rice, potatoes ... 1–2 tablespoons
Vegetables..... 1–2 tablespoons
Fruits 1–2 tablespoons or ¼ piece
Egg ¼
Bread ¼ slice
Milk or juice..... 4 oz.

Put What You Know Into Practice

For each of the following examples, write an X in the blank next to the **one wrong** statement.

1. Your friend Irma calls you for advice. She is having trouble feeding her 15-month-old son Alexander. She has tried giving him spinach, squash, tomatoes, and other vegetables. He made faces and did not eat any of them. She has decided that he does not like vegetables. She stopped giving them to him. Mark the statement you would not tell her.

- _____ She needs to make Alexander eat his vegetables.
- _____ Keep offering the vegetables without any comment.

_____ Alexander may be offered a food 20 times before he will eat it.

_____ Eat the vegetables at the table, so that Alexander will see how much you enjoy them.

2. Your sister Lateefa's 2-year-old son Isaac will not eat most of the food she puts on his plate. Then he begs for candy and soda after his meal. Lateefa is so worried that he is hungry she gives it to him. But she is also worried that he is not getting the foods he needs to grow. She asks you what you would do. Mark the statement you would not tell her.

_____ Isaac may have learned that refusing meals is a way to get treats.

_____ Set mealtimes and snack times and stick to them.

_____ Serve healthy foods at meals and snacks.

_____ Make Isaac's favorite foods at every meal.

_____ Letting Isaac go hungry a few hours will not hurt him. If Isaac refuses a meal, let him wait until the next scheduled meal or snack time.

3. Your friend Chris is serving her 18-month-old daughter Brianna the same amount of food she eats. She also expects Brianna to finish everything on her plate. Chris has tried to feed Brianna with a spoon after she stopped eating. Brianna cries and yells, but Chris will not stop. Chris is really worried that Brianna cannot grow if she does not get enough to eat. But Chris is really tired of the daily battle with her daughter. She wants to know what her friends do. Mark the statement you would not tell her.

- Serve smaller amounts.
- Let Brianna decide when to stop eating.
- Get Brianna a bigger spoon so she can eat faster.
- Toddlers eat very small amounts of food at a time.
- Give Brianna snacks between meals to help her get all the healthy foods she needs.

Answers

1. Do not "make Alexander eat his vegetables." This can set up a power struggle over eating. It could make mealtime unpleasant for Isaac and his family. All the other answers are correct.
2. Do not "make Isaac's favorite foods at every meal." This could encourage Isaac to be a picky eater. The other answers could work.
3. Do not "get Brianna a bigger spoon so that she can eat faster." Let Brianna decide when she has had enough. The other answers could work.