



Toddler Nutrition

Children naturally have a healthy sense of hunger and satiety. If not interfered with by parents, following the motto "Finish your plate or else the sun won't shine tomorrow," even the youngest ones can determine the right amount of food for themselves quite well.

It's completely normal for children to sometimes poke at their food disinterestedly and then dig in enthusiastically. Only if unusual eating habits persist and the child becomes either too thin or too overweight should a pediatrician be consulted for advice.

Basic tips:

Ensure regular meals.

Snacking should remain the exception.

Remember: You are a role model! It's hard to expect your child to eat vegetables and fruit if you're sitting next to them with a slice of cake.

How children eat healthily

In principle, from the first year of life, children follow the same principles of nutrition as teenagers or adults. Therefore, even the little ones can

participate in family meals. The Research Institute for Child Nutrition (FKE) has outlined three simple rules for children's nutrition:

Limit: high-fat foods and sweets

Moderate: animal products

Abundant: plant-based foods and beverages

Special considerations for toddlers

Avoid:

overly sweet and fatty foods

sugary tea drinks

strongly spiced and spicy foods

highly salted foods

juices, yogurts, and sweets enriched with extra vitamins and minerals.

These - usually expensive - foods are unnecessary for a balanced diet.

Breakfast

In the morning, milk, sandwiches, or a cereal dish with fresh fruit are suitable. Packaged cereal mixes often contain a lot of sugar and nuts. Nuts are not yet recommended for small children due to their potential allergenicity and the risk of choking. Fresh fruit, raw vegetables, whole grain cookies, or a small sandwich are optimal for snacks.

The main meal

A healthy lunch or dinner consists of pasta, potatoes, grains, or legumes. It should include salad and vegetables daily. About three times a week, a small portion of meat is recommended, and once a week, fish should be on the menu.

"My child doesn't like vegetables"

It's not uncommon for children to dislike vegetables. Here are some tips to help parents make vegetables appealing to their children:

Prepare vegetables in different ways - for example, as salads, soups, or side dishes. Try new varieties as well.

"Hide" vegetables in sauces and soups, such as grated zucchini or carrots in tomato sauce.

If your children reject cooked vegetables, there's no need to worry: offer them raw vegetables along with a tasty dip made from yogurt and quark with fresh herbs.

Healthy beverages

For toddlers, it's important to ensure an adequate intake of fluids. Here's what to consider when choosing beverages:

Tap water: Water from the tap is an ideal thirst quencher. If in doubt, inquire about the quality of the water from the waterworks.

Mineral water: As children get older, they can also be offered sparkling water. However, still water is recommended for small children.

Herbal and fruit teas: Tea without added sugar can be a welcome alternative to water.

Fruit juices: It's best to offer juices as spritzers. Pure fruit juices naturally contain about ten percent sugar of various kinds. Therefore, they should be diluted with water at least 1:1 for thirst-quenching. Vitamin juices are unnecessary with a varied diet.