

National Nutrition Month Grandparents Corner

Getting started on eating right- the choices parents make in feeding their infants can have a lifetime impact on your child's health and weight. The first year is when humans grow fastest. Most babies double their birth weight by five to six months and triple it by one year old.

Supporting normal eating and healthy growth- take a balanced approach to weight gain during your baby's first years. Parents should not put babies or children on diets or restrict their intake of nutrient-rich foods. Your goal is to help infants regulate their own food intake based on internal cues of hunger and fullness. This helps them eat what they need for healthy growth and development. Discuss your baby's weight gain pattern with your health-care provider at every check up.

Food Timeline for the First Two Years- all babies are unique individuals discuss with your doctor about the nutrient-rich foods your baby needs and when to introduce them. Below is a list of usual age ranges for moving infants from milk to table foods:

- **Birth to 6 months:** Babies get all the nutrients they need from milk: infant formula is an acceptable alternative to breast milk.
- **4 to 6 months:** Introduce iron-fortified infant cereal like rice and barley or pureed meats to help replenish iron reserves.
- **6 to 8 months:** this is an appropriate time to begin pureed or mashed fruits and vegetables. Gradually introduce single-item foods one at a time, watch carefully for any reactions such as diarrhea, vomiting or unusual rashes.
- **7 to 10 months:** Babies are usually ready to begin feeding themselves with finger foods, such as dry cereal or teething biscuits. They also can begin to use a cup for water.
- **8 to 12 months:** most infants are ready for soft, raw or cooked table foods. This includes finely chopped meats and egg yolks. To reduce the risk of food allergies, delay introduction of egg whites, fish, peanuts and tree nuts.
- **1 to 2 years:** babies are usually feeding themselves by this time and enjoy the same foods as the rest of the family. Caution: choking on firm, round foods is a risk, so cut these foods into smaller, ¼ inch squares.

Children and Teens need the right fuel for growing, learning and developing. They need food and beverages with plenty of nutrients such as; protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals. Not too many calories from fats and sugars.

For kids and adults alike, eating more fruits and vegetables at every meal is important for health. Encourage them to eat from the following food guidelines:

- **Whole-Grain Foods with Carbohydrates, Fiber, B-Vitamins and more:** choose items that list whole grains as the first or second ingredients on the label.
- **Fruits and Vegetables with Antioxidants, Vitamins A and C, Potassium and Fiber-** you can't go wrong with fruits and vegetables: fresh, frozen, canned dried and 100 percent juice.
- **Low-fat Dairy Foods with Protein, Calcium, Potassium, Magnesium and Phosphorus-** Low fat milk, yogurt parfaits, or string cheese
- **Lean meat/Poultry/Fish/Eggs/Beans/Nuts with Protein, Iron, Zinc and B-Vitamins**

Source: American Dietetic Association

"Services Provided on a Non-Discriminatory Basis"



QUICK QUIZ

Poor nutrition can affect a person's body and mind. Providing good nutrition takes planning and attention. Test your knowledge by answering True or False to the questions below.

1. Medications the person in your care is taking can have possible side effects that can interfere with appetite or affect the absorption of important vitamins and minerals. T F
2. Added weight can increase fatigue, further limit mobility, put a strain on the respiratory and circulatory systems (lungs, heart, blood, blood vessels), and increase the risk of other chronic illnesses. T F
3. Osteoporosis is a condition where bones can become thin and fragile. T F
4. Weight gain can result if eating habits remain the same while activity decreases. T F
5. Five to six smaller mini-meals throughout the day may be easier to manage and help keep energy levels high. T F
6. Depression does not affect a person's appetite. T F
7. Limiting fluids can cause problems such as dehydration, dry mouth, difficulty swallowing, loss of appetite, and constipation. T F
8. The ability of a person with Alzheimer's disease to make good food choices, to use utensils correctly, to chew and swallow his food, and to sit at the table changes over the course of the illness. T F
9. No need to provide extra time for meals for a person with Alzheimer's disease. T F
10. For good nutrition, limit fat, sugar and salt (sodium). T F

Answers: 1-T; 2-T; 3-T; 4-T; 5-T; 6-F; 7-T; 8-T; 9-F; 10-T

The Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. serves Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton Counties. For assistance from the Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc., please call 1-800-582-7277.