

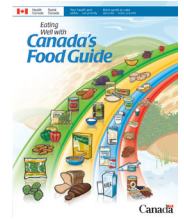
# How to Build a Healthy Toddler (18-35 months)

- A** A healthy toddler starts with healthy eating, physical activity and positive self-esteem.
- B** Breastfeeding is recommended until age two or longer.
- C** Cow's milk can be offered in an open cup. Until 24 months of age, serve homogenized (3.25% M.F.) milk. At 24 months, switch to skim, 1% or 2% milk.
- D** Don't pressure or bribe your child to eat. The more a parent pushes foods, the less likely a child is to eat them.
- E** Eat with your toddler at the table. Set a good example by eating a variety of foods.
- F** Food jags are periods when children will only eat certain foods. Be patient and try not to worry, especially if your child is active, growing and healthy.
- G** Growth is affected by many things. Each child is different and can grow at different rates. It is important to watch your child's own growth pattern.
- H** Healthy bodies come in different shapes and sizes. Celebrate your child's unique qualities. Teach them to love and value themselves.
- I** Iron is important for growth. Offer a variety of iron-rich foods at each meal such as meats, fish, eggs, tofu, legumes and iron-fortified cereals.
- J** Juice should be avoided or limited to no more than 125-175 mL ( $\frac{1}{2}$  -  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup) a day. Offer water to quench thirst.
- K** Keep Canada's Food Guide in mind. Try to include at least three of the four food groups when planning meals.
- L** Limit screen time to less than one hour a day after two years of age. Screen time is not recommended for toddlers under two years.
- M** Milk is nutritious. Offer toddlers 500 mL (2 cups) each day. More than 750 mL (3 cups) each day can be filling and leave little room for other foods.
- N** New foods offered many times without pressure will encourage children to try them. It may take 10 - 15 times before they actually eat them!
- O** Offer at least one food your child likes as well as other familiar and new foods at meals.
- P** Playing actively indoors and outdoors should be a fun and regular part of every day. Try walking, skipping, running or climbing.
- Q** Quality time with children includes playing active games and eating meals together as family, without TV or other distractions.
- R** Respect your child's appetite. Let your child decide how much food to eat from the healthy choices you offer.
- S** Small stomachs mean portion sizes need to be small. As children grow, portion sizes can grow.
- T** Tooth brushing is important. Brush your child's teeth two times a day for two minutes with a soft bristle tooth brush.
- U** Use meal and snack times as a chance to teach your children about different foods, preparing foods and good table manners.
- V** Vitamin supplements are usually not needed. Toddlers who are breastfed or receiving breastmilk need a daily vitamin D supplement of 400 IU until 24 months of age.
- W** Weight and height measurements should be taken regularly and plotted on a growth chart by your health care provider.
- X** Expect your toddler's appetite to vary from day to day. Schedule meals and snacks 2½ - 3 hours apart so they come to the table hungry.
- Y** Your child should be able to feed himself by 12 months of age. Let him explore food. Expect a mess at mealtimes.
- Z** Zest for life is a toddler! They will explore and play, but they also need rest. Toddlers need 10 - 13 hours of sleep each day.





# What Should My Toddler Have Each Day?

**For toddlers 12 - 24 months**, offer a variety of foods from each of the four food groups in Canada's Food Guide every day. Let your toddler decide how much to eat from what you provide at meal and snack times. Offer small portions (about  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a Food Guide serving) and let them ask for more if they are still hungry.

**For toddlers 24 months and older**, Canada's Food Guide gives recommendations on the number of servings for each food group each day. Food Guide servings can be divided into smaller amounts that are offered at different meal and snack times. Continue to offer your child small portions (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  to one Food Guide serving) and let your toddler decide how much to eat.



Continue to breastfeed your toddler until age two or longer. Use the chart below to help plan meals and snacks.

Food Group	Age 24-36 Months	What Is One Food Guide Serving?
<p><b>Vegetables and Fruit</b> Offer one dark green and one orange vegetable each day.</p> 	4 Food Guide servings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 medium vegetable or fruit</li> <li>• 125 mL (<math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup) of fresh, frozen or canned vegetables, tomato sauce</li> <li>• 250 mL (1 cup) of leafy raw vegetables or salad</li> </ul>
<p><b>Grain Products</b> Offer whole grain products each day.</p> 	3 Food Guide servings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 slice of whole grain bread</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> bagel or small whole grain muffin</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> pita or large tortilla</li> <li>• 125 mL (<math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup) of cooked rice, bulgur, quinoa, pasta or couscous</li> <li>• 175 mL (<math>\frac{3}{4}</math> cup) of hot cereal</li> <li>• 30 g of cold cereal</li> </ul>
<p><b>Milk and Alternatives</b> Offer skim, 1%, or 2% milk each day.</p> 	2 Food Guide servings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 250 mL (1 cup) of cow's milk or fortified soy beverage</li> <li>• 175 g (<math>\frac{3}{4}</math> cup) of yogurt</li> <li>• 50 g (1 <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> oz) of hard cheese</li> </ul> <p><i>Plant-based beverages other than fortified soy beverage (e.g. rice, almond, coconut) are low in nutrients required for a child's growth and are not part the Milk and Alternatives food group</i></p>
<p><b>Meat and Alternatives</b> Offer alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often.</p> 	1 Food Guide serving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 eggs</li> <li>• 30 mL (2 Tbsp) of peanut butter or other nut butters</li> <li>• 60 mL (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup) of shelled nuts or seeds</li> <li>• 125 mL (<math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup) of cooked fish, shellfish, poultry, lean meat or game meat</li> <li>• 175 mL (<math>\frac{3}{4}</math> cup) of hummus, tofu or cooked legumes such as kidney beans, chickpeas and lentils</li> </ul>

## GOOD TO KNOW!

Fish is an excellent source of protein and healthy fats. Serve fish at least twice a week. Some types of fish are high in mercury, which is harmful to a child's developing brain. Serve fish that are lower in mercury and have omega-3 fats such as char, herring, mackerel, rainbow trout and salmon. To find out more about choosing fish, visit Unlock Food: <http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Food-safety/Fish-and-Mercury.aspx#.Ui3dL9JwqSo>

## Tips for Feeding Toddlers

A healthy snack should include at least two of the four food groups. This helps your toddler to meet her nutrient needs.

### Examples include:

- Whole grain crackers and cheese
- Hummus with cucumber strips and shredded carrots
- Apple slices and cheese
- Yogurt and banana slices
- Whole grain toast with thinly spread peanut butter or avocado

### Your not-so-hungry toddler

Your toddler's growth may slow down between 12 - 24 months of age. This may decrease her appetite. It is normal for a toddler's appetite to go up and down. Start with small portions and work towards bigger portions as your child gets older.

### Choking

Cut your child's food into bite size pieces to avoid choking. Avoid hard, small and round foods, and smooth and sticky foods.

- Cut grapes and cherry tomatoes into quarters
- Cut hard raw vegetables into narrow strips.
- Thinly spread peanut or nut butters on toast.
- Avoid hotdogs, candies, popcorn and nuts.

Always supervise young children when they are eating.

### Allergies

Your toddler should be able to enjoy a variety of flavours and foods from Canada's Food Guide. You don't have to delay giving your toddler certain foods.

### To learn more about allergies, visit Unlock Food:

<http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Food-allergies-intolerances/Food-allergies--Intolerances.aspx>

## Sample Meal Plan

This menu is only a guide. Offer your child healthy foods from your family meal. Eat together as a family as often as you can. Let your child decide how much they want to eat from the foods offered.

### Breakfast

- Cooked egg
- Whole grain toast
- Sliced strawberries
- Breastfeeding or cow's milk (in open cup)

### Morning Snack

- Graham crackers
- Yogurt
- Orange slices
- Water

### Lunch

- Whole grain pasta and tomato sauce
- Cooked sweet potato pieces
- Leftover chicken
- Breastfeeding or cow's milk (in open cup)

### Afternoon Snack

- O-shaped cereal
- Pear slices
- Water

### Supper

- Baked salmon
- Brown rice
- Cooked broccoli
- Breastfeeding or cow's milk (in open cup)

### After Supper Snack

- Grapes cut into quarters
- Breastfeeding or cow's milk (in open cup)

### GOOD TO KNOW!

**What about physical activity? Eating well is important, but so is being active.**

Toddlers should get at least 180 minutes of physical activity every day. Try playing outside, walking, running or dancing.

### GOOD TO KNOW!

Offer water to drink at and between meals and snacks, especially when toddlers are active, and when the weather is hot. Breastfeeding is recommended until age two or longer.

**For toddlers 12 - 24 months:** If your child is not breastfed and cannot drink cow's milk, offer a soy formula or fortified, full-fat goat's milk.

**For toddlers over 24 months:** If your child is not breastfed and cannot drink cow's milk, offer a fortified soy beverage.

## Want More Information?

### Telehealth Ontario

Call and speak to a Registered Dietitian about nutrition and healthy eating at 1-866-797-0000

### Dietitians of Canada

For nutrition information created by Registered Dietitians visit: [UnlockFood.ca](http://UnlockFood.ca)

To find a Registered Dietitian in your community visit: [www.dietitians.ca/Find-A-Dietitian](http://www.dietitians.ca/Find-A-Dietitian)

### Books

- *Child of Mine: Feeding with Love and Good Sense*. Ellyn Satter, 2000.
- *Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family: How to Eat, How to Raise Good Eaters, How to Cook*. Ellyn Satter, 2008
- *Your Child's Weight ... Helping Without Harming*. Ellyn Satter, 2005.
- *Better Food for Kids: Your Essential Guide to Nutrition for all Children from Age 2 to 10*. Second Edition. J. Saab and D. Kalnins, 2010.

### Websites

- Canada's Food Guide: [www.canadasfoodguide.net](http://www.canadasfoodguide.net)
- Unlock Food: [www.UnlockFood.ca](http://www.UnlockFood.ca)
- Dietitians of Canada: [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)
- Healthy Canadians: [www.healthycanadians.gc.ca](http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca)
- Ellyn Satter Institute: [www.ellynsatterinstitute.org](http://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org)
- Anaphylaxis Canada: [www.anaphylaxis.ca](http://www.anaphylaxis.ca)
- Canadian Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines: 0-4 years. [www.csep.ca/guidelines](http://www.csep.ca/guidelines)
- Caring for Kids - Canadian Pediatric Society: [www.caringforkids.cps.ca](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca)
- Best Start Resource Centre: [www.beststart.org](http://www.beststart.org)
- Videos - Raising Our Healthy Kids: <https://vimeo.com/raisingourhealthykids/channels>
- Video - Trust Me. Trust My Tummy. Feeding Cues: 6-24 months: <https://youtu.be/vQvElsIQLOO>

### Contacts

Contact your local public health unit or community health centre for:

- More information about feeding your toddler and;
- Parent education workshops and other nutrition related supports in your community



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