

Feeding Your Toddler

Ages 12 to 24 months



These are general guidelines for feeding healthy toddlers. Talk with the nutritionist or health care provider for more information on feeding your toddler.

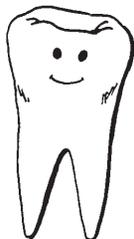
What should my toddler eat and drink?

Your toddler needs to eat a variety of foods every day using the **Daily Food Guide for Toddlers Ages 12 to 24 months** shown on the other side of this pamphlet. Make sure you limit high sugar and high fat foods so your toddler has room for healthy foods. Too much milk, juice, or sugary drinks can “fill up” a toddler. Your toddler may then have a poor appetite and not eat other important foods that would help him or her to grow and be healthy.



Prevent Tooth Decay

- Let your toddler begin to drink from a small cup with a spill-proof top. Later, let your toddler practice drinking from a small cup without the spill-proof top. Remember, spills are normal.
- Toddlers should stop drinking from a bottle by the time they are 12 to 14 months old. Ask your nutritionist for ideas on how to wean your toddler from the bottle.
- Do not let your toddler sip juice, milk, or sweet drinks frequently during the day or at bedtime. Instead, you can give your toddler water when he or she is thirsty between meals or at bedtime.



Breastfeeding



- Breastfeeding is recommended and is healthy for toddlers.
- Continue to breastfeed your toddler as long as you both enjoy it.
- The nutritionist or breastfeeding educator can help you with questions about breastfeeding or weaning your toddler.

Be Wise...Immunize!

- Children need shots to protect them from disease.
- Bring each child's shot record each time you come to WIC.



Florida Department of Health, WIC Program

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Physical Activity

- Toddlers should play actively each day. Active play includes: running, skipping, climbing, hopping, jumping, throwing a ball, dancing, playing with riding toys, and playing with push/pull toys such as wagons or strollers. Toddlers should not sit still for 1 hour or more at a time, except when sleeping.



Television

- Children under 2 years of age should not watch any television.

Prevent Choking

- Toddlers should always sit up while eating.
- Toddlers should be told to take small bites and completely chew food before swallowing.
- Cut soft fruits and cooked vegetables into small pieces—not in round, coin-shaped slices. Remove seeds, pits, and tough skins. Make sure grapes, cherries, and berries are cut into small pieces.
- Cut hot dogs and sausage-shaped meats into small, thin pieces—not in round, coin-shaped slices.
- Mash cooked beans.
- **These foods can cause choking and should not be given to your toddler:**
 - ice cubes
 - marshmallows
 - raisins and other dried fruit
 - large chunks of meat
 - hot, sticky breads
 - popcorn, pretzels, and chips
 - raw vegetables such as carrots and celery
 - fish, chicken, or turkey with bones
 - nuts, seeds, peanuts, and peanut butter
 - gum drops, chewing gum, and round-shaped candies



Eat Fish, Choose Wisely

Young children can eat **2 meals a week** of a variety of fish and shellfish that are lower in mercury. Each meal can be a **portion size of 2 to 3 ounces**.

Some fish low in mercury are: canned light tuna, catfish (farm-raised), pollock, salmon, scallops, shad, shrimp, tilapia, whitefish, and whiting.

Due to their mercury content, do not eat the following: Shark, King Mackerel, Swordfish, Tilefish, Orange Roughy, Blackfin Tuna, Little Tunny, and Cobia.

Check local advisories about the safety of fish caught by family and friends in your local lakes, rivers, and coastal areas. For more information about mercury in fish, visit: www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/prevention/healthy-weight/nutrition/seafood-consumption/index.html

