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
USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
www.FloridaWIC.org DH 150-394, 4/14 Q7.14

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	popcorn, pretzels, and chips
marshmallows	raw vegetables such as carrots and celery
raisins and other dried fruit	fish, chicken, or turkey with bones
large chunks of meat	nuts, seeds, peanuts, and peanut butter
hot, sticky breads	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, and Orange Roughy.

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**

Daily Food Guide for Toddlers Ages 12 to 24 months

- Use this food guide to help you choose foods to serve to your toddler each day. The total amount your toddler eats will vary depending on his or her activity level and growth.
- Typical portion sizes for toddlers are shown in each food group below and in the meal and snack ideas. Portion sizes for toddlers are usually smaller than portion sizes for adults and older children.
- Toddlers should be offered 3 meals and 2 to 3 snacks per day.

Protein Foods

Total of 2 ounces every day

One ounce equals:

1 oz well-cooked and chopped meat, poultry, or fish; 1 cooked egg; or ¼ cup cooked beans

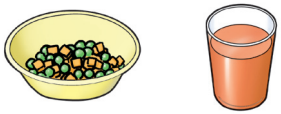
Vegetables

Total of 3 portions every day

One portion equals:

¼ to ½ cup cooked, chopped vegetables

½ cup 100% vegetable juice



Dairy

Total of 4 portions every day

One portion equals:

½ cup whole milk

1 oz cheese

½ cup yogurt

Toddlers under age 2 years old should drink whole milk. They need the extra fat in whole milk for growth. At 2 years old, begin 1% lowfat or fat free milk.

Grains

Total of 6 portions every day

One portion equals:

½ to 1 slice of bread

¼ to ½ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta

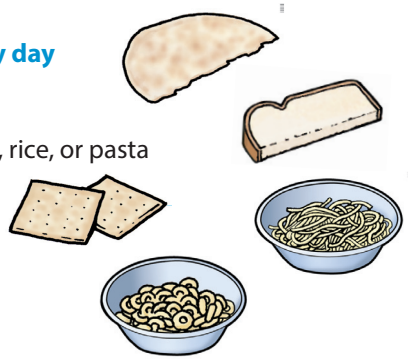
½ cup ready-to-eat cereal

2 small plain crackers

½ waffle or pancake

½ tortilla

½ hamburger bun, roll, or 3-inch bagel



Fruits

Total of 3 portions every day

One portion equals:

¼ to ½ cup chopped, cooked, or canned fruit

½ cup 100% fruit juice

Limit fruit juice to 4 to 6 oz per day.

Oils

Total of 3 teaspoons every day

One teaspoon (5 grams) oil equals:

1 teaspoon liquid vegetable oil

1 tablespoon low-fat mayonnaise

1 tablespoon salad dressing

1 teaspoon margarine with zero trans fat

Limit solid fats like butter, regular margarine, shortening, and lard, as well as foods that contain these ingredients.

Mealtime Tips

- Parents are responsible for offering toddlers healthy foods at regular mealtimes.
- Toddlers are responsible for how much food they eat at each meal.
- Toddlers should be encouraged to try at least one bite of a new food.
- Toddlers should not be forced to eat certain foods or to eat all of the food they are given at a meal.

Sample Meals for Toddlers

Breakfast 1	Breakfast 2
½ cup WIC cereal ½ cup whole milk ½ cup 100% fruit juice	1 cooked egg 1 slice whole wheat toast 1 teaspoon margarine ½ cup 100% fruit juice
Lunch 1	**Lunch 2**
½ hamburger on roll ½ cup cooked green beans ¼ cup chopped peaches ½ cup whole milk	½ cup macaroni and cheese ½ cup cooked, chopped broccoli ¼ cup chopped grapes ½ cup whole milk
Dinner 1	**Dinner 2**
1 ounce chopped chicken ½ cup noodles ½ cup cooked green peas ¼ cup chopped oranges ½ cup whole milk	¾ cup rice and beans ½ cup cooked, chopped carrots ¼ cup applesauce ½ cup whole milk

Snack Ideas

4 animal crackers ½ cup whole milk	2 graham crackers ½ banana
½ cup yogurt ½ cup chopped strawberries	2 whole grain crackers 1 slice cheese

½ cup soft-cooked carrots with 1 tablespoon salad dressing

Feeding Tips for Your Toddler