



Healthy Eating  
FOR  
4 YEAR OLDS



## DAILY Food Plan

Children can only eat a small amount at one time, so offer your child 3 meals and 2-3 snacks from the 5 food groups every day. Use this Food Plan as a general guide. Your child may need less or more. Children need more during growth spurts.



## servings OF FRUIT

### Fruit Serving Sizes

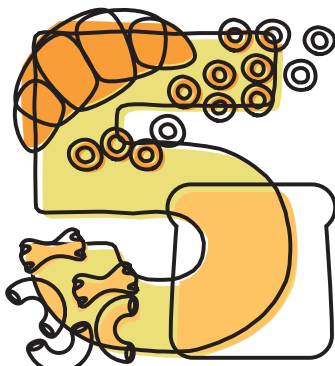
- 1/2 cup fruit
  - 1/2 cup 100% fruit juice\*
  - 1/2 medium banana
  - 4-5 large strawberries
  - 1/4 cup finely chopped dried fruit
- \*No more than 1/2 cup juice a day.



## servings OF VEGETABLES

### Vegetable Serving Sizes

- 1/2 cup vegetables
- 1/2 cup tomato or vegetable juice
- 1 cup raw leafy greens

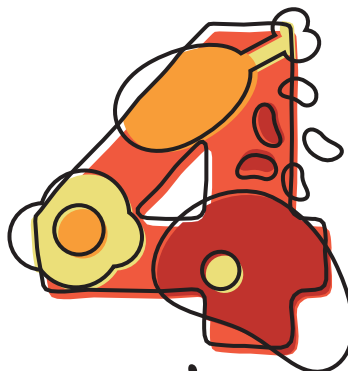


## servings OF GRAINS

### Grain Serving Sizes

- 1 slice bread or 1 small tortilla
- 1/2 cup cooked cereal, grits, rice, or noodles
- 1 cup dry cereal
- 5 to 7 small crackers

Make half your grains whole.



## servings OF PROTEIN

### Protein Serving Sizes

- 1/4 cup (1 ounce) lean meat, poultry, or fish
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 1/4 cup beans or peas (kidney, pinto)
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped nuts

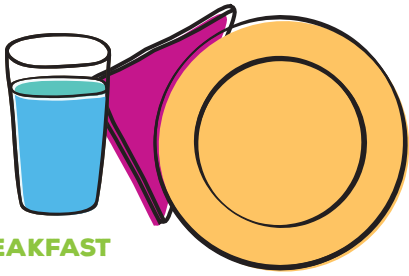


## servings OF DAIRY

### Dairy Serving Sizes

- 1/2 cup 1% low fat or fat free milk
- 1/2 cup low-fat yogurt
- 3/4 ounce (1 slice) cheese

WIC gives low-fat milk to children 2 and older. It's what they need.



# Sample MENU

## BREAKFAST

Peanut-ty toast

- 1 slice whole wheat toast
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 1/2 medium banana
- 1/2 cup low fat milk

## MORNING SNACK

- 1/2 small apple (1/2 fruit)
- 1 slice (3/4 ounce) cheese
- A few ounces of water

## LUNCH

Soft Taco

- 1 small whole wheat tortilla
- 1/4 cup cooked ground beef  
or 1/4 cup refried beans
- 1/2 cup salad greens
- 1/4 cup chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 cup low fat milk

## AFTERNOON SNACK

- Homemade trail mix
- 1/2 cup WIC cereal
- 2 tablespoons nuts, chopped
- 1/4 cup raisins
- A few ounces of water

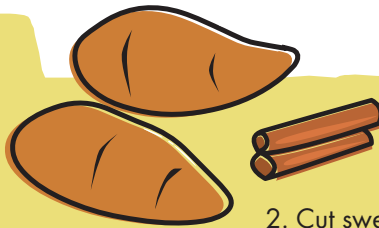
## DINNER

- 1 ounce baked salmon
- 1/2 cup baked sweet potato "fries"
- 1/4 cup cooked broccoli
- 1/4 cup petite baby carrots
- 1 small slice French bread
- 1/2 cup low fat milk

## EVENING SNACK

- Yogurt parfait
- 1/2 cup crushed pineapple
- 1/2 cup low-fat yogurt
- 1/2 cup WIC cereal

## Let's COOK



### Baked Sweet Potato Fries

- 1 sweet potato - about 5 inches long
- 1 teaspoon vegetable or olive oil
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- Cinnamon or ginger to taste

Preheat oven to 400° F.

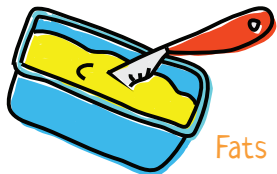
1. Wash and peel sweet potato.

2. Cut sweet potato into 3 inch long strips, 1/4 inch thick and 1/2 inch wide. Cut into bite-sized pieces for younger children.

3. In a large bowl, mix oil, brown sugar, and cinnamon or ginger. Add sweet potato strips, and stir to coat in oil and sugar mixture.

4. Place coated strips on a baking sheet. Bake for 30 to 45 minutes, or until tender.

Makes 2 - 1/2 cup servings.



### Fats & Oils

It's okay to use a little fat or oil in cooking and at the table. To protect your child from heart disease, use fats that come from plant sources (soft tub margarine, vegetable oils, mayonnaise, salad dressing) instead of fats that come from animal sources (fat back, salt pork, lard, bacon, bacon grease, butter).



### Sweets

It's okay to use a little bit of sugar and a dessert a day. Don't let sweets take the place of foods your child needs from the 5 food groups. Make most desserts from the 5 food groups, such as fruit cobbler, pudding, cereal bar treats, and jello with fruit.

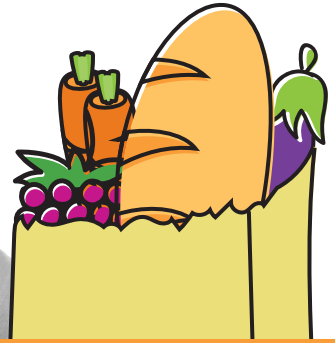


### Young children should not eat Shark, Swordfish, King Mackerel, or Tilefish.

They contain enough mercury to hurt a young child's nervous system. They can eat up to 2 servings of a variety of other fish and shellfish a week. Limit Albacore (white) tuna to 1 of the 2 allowed servings. Pay attention to local advisories about the safety of fish caught in local lakes, rivers, and coastal areas.

# Get your child on the path to

## HEALTHY EATING.



Now that your child is 4 years old, he can do so many things. You may hear “I can do it myself!” as he becomes more independent and self-confident. He can help more! He still needs your help.

**TEACH YOUR CHILD HOW TO CHOOSE HEALTHY FOODS.** He will need to know what to eat at school. Let your child make some choices. You know what foods he needs to be healthy. Offer them for meals and snacks. Let him choose which ones to eat.

**HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN TO EAT ONLY WHEN HE'S HUNGRY.** He knows if he is hungry or full. Offer him small amounts at meals and snacks and let him ask for more. Let him stop eating when he's had enough. Don't let him eat unhealthy foods between meals.

**TEACH YOUR CHILD HOW FOODS HELP HIM GROW AND LEARN.**

- + Milk builds strong bones and teeth.
- + Grains give you energy to grow and think.
- + Vegetables and fruits help you fight germs and stay healthy.
- + Meat and beans help you make strong muscles and blood.

**EATING BREAKFAST HELPS YOUR CHILD LEARN.**

- + Your child can listen and learn better when he eats breakfast.
- + Keep breakfast simple.
- + Keep foods on hand that you can easily put together in the morning: WIC cereal, low fat milk, whole grain toast or bagels, cheese, peanut butter, eggs, and fruit.
- + Eat breakfast with your child—he wants to do what you do.

**TEACH YOUR CHILD BASIC TABLE MANNERS.**

- + He can learn to hold a fork and spoon like a “grown-up”.
- + He can use a napkin to wipe his mouth and hands.
- + He likes to serve himself. He will learn how much to take.
- + Show him how to pass food around the table.
- + Teach your child not to talk with his mouth full.

**HELP YOUR CHILD TRY NEW FOODS!** Let's try a new food. We could make a veggie wrap. Would you like to wash the vegetables?

**YOUR CHILD CAN HELP YOU IN THE KITCHEN.**

- + Let him help make salads and sandwiches.
- + Can you help me measure dry ingredients? Crack eggs?
- + He can peel bananas and hard boiled eggs.
- + Let him wash fruits and vegetables.

It makes your child feel good when he helps you.

**OFFER SAFE FOODS.**

Cut your child's food into small bite-sized pieces that are soft enough for him to chew. Cut grapes in quarters. Cut hot dogs the long way.

**DON'T GIVE FOODS YOUR CHILD CAN CHOKE ON SUCH AS:**

Raw hard vegetables + Nuts unless finely chopped + Hard candy + Whole grapes + Hard round foods + Dried fruit unless finely chopped or soft cooked + Spoonfuls of peanut butter (*Spread thinly on a cracker or bread instead.*) + Whole hot dogs + Chunks of meat + Chips, popcorn

**AVOID DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO.**

- + Don't smoke around your child. Children of smokers have more coughs, colds, and ear infections.
- + Don't use alcohol or drugs—they can harm you and your child and affect everyone in the family.



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