

KIDS

# Health wise

 Meal  
plan &  
recipes  
inside

**Pick n Pay**  
Inspired by you

# Nutrition for kids

Healthy eating is vital for children to help them reach optimum potential both mentally and physically. The earlier we instill good eating habits in children, the more likely it is that those habits will continue as they grow older. In this way, the risk of developing obesity, diabetes, heart disease and a variety of other serious illnesses in later life is significantly reduced.

## 7 steps to healthy eating for kids

### 1 Encourage children to enjoy a variety of foods

Children need large amounts of energy and nutrients to fuel their rapid growth as well as for the repair and maintenance of muscle, bones and tissues. Expose your children to as many different healthy foods as possible by offering them new foods regularly, one at a time and in small amounts – and remember to eat with them. Youngsters prefer familiar foods, so they are more likely to try (and to trust) foods that adults eat as well.

### 2 Provide plenty of vegetables and fruits every day

Different vegetables and fruits contain different nutrients, which is why it is so important to eat a variety each day – at least five portions of different vegetables and/or fruits a day.

### 3 Get them to drink lots of clean, safe water

Water is the cheapest yet best drink of all. Clean water needs to be part of our children's daily diets, so get them to drink water with meals when they are young and it will remain a good habit for the rest of their lives.

### 4 Ensure daily dairy intake

Both full-cream and reduced-fat dairy products (milk, cheese and yoghurt) are rich in calcium, a crucial mineral for the development of strong bones in growing children. Today there are so many forms of dairy that with some experimenting, there should be something for

every child: milk (maybe with a little added Nesquik), flavoured milks, dairy fruit blends, tub yoghurts, drinking yoghurts, maas and cheese, including cottage cheese and wedges.

### 5 Chicken, fish, meat or eggs can be eaten daily

And include regular helpings of dry beans, split peas, lentils and soy. These foods are important sources of protein for growth and for maintaining and repairing body tissue. Chicken, fish, meat and egg yolks are also good sources of easily-absorbable iron and other nutrients, which prevent anaemia. Fatty fish provide omega-3 fatty acids, so serve sardines, pilchards, salmon, herrings or mackerel at least twice a week.

### 6 Use fats and sugars sparingly

Children should not have a very low-fat diet; they need the same balance of fats as adults. That means you should restrict saturated fats (animal fats) in favour of unsaturated fats such as olive or sunflower oil, tub margarines, avocado, peanut butter and nuts. Sugar can be part of a balanced eating plan, but in moderation. Restrict sweets and chocolates to after-meal treats and provide milk, fruit juices or sparkling water rather than soft drinks.

### 7 Keep them active

Eating healthily must go hand in hand with exercising. Physical inactivity is an increasing problem in South Africa, so parents should encourage children to exercise. Best of all is when parents and children exercise together.

## HELPFUL GUIDELINES

- ★ Children learn by watching you, so set a good example. Share mealtimes as often as possible and eat the same healthy dishes as you offer your children.
- ★ Reward children with affection and attention, *not* food. Using food as reward or punishment promotes unhealthy attitudes.
- ★ Giving food funny names – calling brussels sprouts 'muscle sprouts', or potato and brussels sprout mash 'monster munch mash' – can encourage children to eat it.
- ★ Constipation is common in kids. Make sure your child drinks enough water. Rooibos tea is also good. All fruit, especially prunes and pawpaw, helps alleviate constipation. Dried fruit (dainties or plain) can be eaten whole or finely chopped into yoghurt, cereal or porridge.
- ★ Stir a teaspoon of oat bran into food whenever possible, and regularly use beans, lentils and chickpeas as meal ingredients.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

Pick n Pay Health Hotline:

0800 11 22 88

[healthhotline@pnp.co.za](mailto:healthhotline@pnp.co.za).

Low-GI recipe book *Sustained Energy for Kids* (Tafelberg) by dietitians

Steenkamp, Merlin and Wellmann.

To find a private dietitian in your area go to [www.adsa.org.za](http://www.adsa.org.za).



## Tips to get your kids to follow a healthy diet

- 1 Fish can be included into children's meals by using fish fingers, fish cakes and steamed fish flakes stirred into rice. Aim to have at least two fish meals a week.
- 2 The canned varieties of dried beans, peas and lentils can be added to soups, mince and stews. Or simply prepare baked beans on toast with a little grated cheese.
- 3 Sipahh straws are great for encouraging milk intake, each straw only provides 1 teaspoon of sugar.
- 4 Fruit kebabs are fun – use a variety of colourful fruit such as melon, strawberries, pineapple and grapes.
- 5 Dried fruit, such as raisins, guava roll and dried mango make for delicious additions to lunchboxes.
- 6 Blend fruit into a smoothie by whizzing up a banana, frozen mixed berries and yoghurt – a nutritious drink for children of all ages.
- 7 Children enjoy raw vegetables, such as carrots, baby tomatoes or sliced cucumber, particularly when supplied with a favourite dip, such as hummus or mashed avocado.
- 8 Disguise vegetables in food – add puréed carrots to tomato-based pasta sauces. Or finely chop a variety of vegetables and hide them in home-

baked pizzas, soups, mince dishes and casseroles.

- 9 At mealtimes, draw a picture out of fruit and vegetables for the younger children – use broccoli for trees, carrots and celery for flowers, cauliflower for clouds and a yellow squash for the sun. When it's done, have your child eat the masterpiece!

- 10 Vegetable kebabs, baked banana in their skins and mealies on the cob are a treat at braais.

- 11 Desserts can be healthy – serve frozen fruit yoghurts, fruit-enriched muffins or jelly made with fresh fruit.

- 12 Remember their water intake – freeze a bottle of water or diluted juice the night before packing their lunchbox and it should stay cold for most of the day.



## Meal-planning ideas

To make your menu planning easier, here are some meal suggestions. Choose one option per meal and one mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack.

### Breakfast

- Wholewheat ProNutro with milk and half a small pawpaw
- Boiled or scrambled egg on toast with a small glass of orange juice
- Baked beans on toast with a small banana
- Peanut butter and toast with a glass of milk
- Smoothie: blend low-fat vanilla yoghurt with 2 fruits and milk

### Snacks

Morning and afternoon

- A small tub of yoghurt or a carton of drinking yoghurt
- A carton of flavoured milk or Milo
- A few pieces of dried fruit
- Nuts or peanuts and raisins
- A fruit kebab made with melon, pineapple and strawberries
- Home-made popcorn or muffin
- Crackers or bread with peanut butter or cheese wedges
- Biltong or hard-boiled egg

### Light meals or lunchboxes

- A small roll with peanut butter and sliced banana/chicken mayonnaise/ham and cheese with baby carrots and an apple
- Mini pitas with egg mayonnaise and shredded lettuce or meatballs and tomato sauce with finger vegetables
- Cold pasta salad with tuna, sweetcorn and mayonnaise with a banana
- Cheese fingers wrapped in ham slices with a savoury cheese or bran muffin and strawberries/peeled orange
- Cream cheese on a slice of toast with a slice of ham with baby corn/ carrots and cucumber sticks to dip in hummus

### Main meal

- Pilchard fish cakes with pasta salad
- Beef stroganoff with rice and a carrot and pineapple salad
- Salmon pasta bake with vegetable sticks
- Chicken kebab and vegetables with a cheese sauce
- Spaghetti bolognese with a mixture of steamed baby vegetables

Note: portion sizes are estimated and are to serve as a guide only. Contact a private dietitian for an individualised meal plan and portion guide.



## Cheese and ham wraps

- Wrap each of the cheese sticks in a slice of ham and lettuce. Roll up in wax paper.

- \* 1 small, low-GI bran and banana muffin
- \* 1 nectarine
- \* 4 asparagus spears
- \* 4 baby carrots



- \* 1 banana, frozen
- \* 1 cup (125ml) frozen berries
- \* 1 cup (125ml) plain low-fat vanilla yoghurt
- \* 1 cup (125ml) ice cubes

Blitz the bananas, berries, yoghurt and ice in a blender and pour into a Thermos flask.



Low-GI sandwich fingers

- \* 2 slices low-GI bread
- \* avocado
- \* 4 slices smoked chicken
- \* 1 squeeze lemon juice

Slice the avocado, add a squeeze of lemon juice and place on a slice of bread. Top with the shaved chicken, close the sandwich and slice it into fingers.

Starchy foods that have a low glycaemic index (GI) are a better choice for children because they are slow release and keep blood glucose levels steady. This helps to improve concentration and energy levels, and prevents moodiness and irritability.

- \* 1 cup (125ml) or 2–3 small sticks lean biltong
- \* 1 apple
- \* 6 carrot balls
- \* 5cm cucumber
- \* 2 Tbsp (30ml) hummus
- \* 2 Tbsp (30ml) mixed nuts and raisins
- \* 1 cup (250ml) fresh milk
- \* 1 Sipahh straw
- \* 1 cup (250ml) air-popped popcorn

Cut the cucumber into strips and pack it with the carrot balls and hummus.





Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# 5-a-Day

## portions chart



### 1 Portion =

- \* ½ glass of fruit juice OR
- \* 1 medium sized fruit OR
- \* 1 cup of salad OR
- \* 1 handful of raisins OR
- \* ½ cup of corn

Eat plenty of  
vegetables and  
fruit every day  
for better health!

Portions	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
+							

This chart will help make 5-a-Day more fun for your kids. Simply mark the box with a sticker, a star or just a tick for each portion of fruit or vegetables eaten by your child. Do this every day and see if they can get to 5-a-Day. If they eat more than 5 in one day, tick the + box and they can use this portion to help fill in on days where they did not get to eat 5 portions. Above all, have lots of fun!