



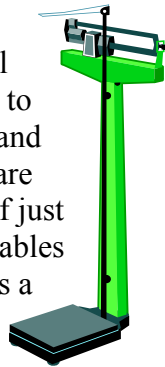
Food For Thought

Healthy Ideas for Preschoolers

Low-Fat Diet Good for Kids

The picture is getting clearer: what our children eat while growing up can have dramatic consequences for their health in adult life. Children over the age of 2 years should follow the same healthy guidelines as adults. This doesn't mean special meals or special diets—just try to eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and the recommended amounts of meats and dairy products.

The most important goal of the diet of children is to achieve normal growth and development. Children are not able to eat enough of just low-calorie fruits, vegetables and grains at three meals a day to be sure they grow and develop as they should.



Snacks are one way to help children get the calories they need. Choosing low-fat snacks can keep the total daily fat intake within the recommended amount. Adults sometimes have the idea that snacks are bad for children. Especially young children with little stomachs can't eat huge quantities of food at any one time. They need mini-meals to get enough calories each day.

If the term "snack" means potato chips and soft drinks, then some change is needed. Graham crackers, cut-up fruits and vegetables, low-fat yogurt, whole-grain cereal with skim milk give children the calories they need without a lot of extra fat.

Remember when making changes in the family's diet:

- Don't go overboard in limiting children's fats. If you chose to cut way back on the fats you eat, don't do so with your children. Children need some fat in their diet, but not large amounts.
- There should be no fat restrictions whatsoever on the diets of children under age 2. The fast growth of infants requires an energy-dense diet with a higher percentage of calories from fat than is needed by older children.



When a child turns two, it is time to begin building a life-long pattern of eating smart. A heart-healthy diet should not be something you start in middle age or that you go on and off.

It should be the way you eat all the time and the way children always remember eating.

New Year's Resolution

Did you make a resolution to exercise more this year? How are you doing? Now is a good time to think about exercise and start or continue your exercise program.

Here are some ideas of exercises that can be done in the house with your kids. Once you start, you will think of other things you can do.

Rabbit and Turtle

Stand at attention. Jog in place very slowly, pretending to be a turtle. Have someone call out "rabbit." Now run faster pretending to be a rabbit. Faster. Lift your knees up high. When someone calls out "turtle," slow down. Slowly. More slowly.

Frog on a Log

Start from a squatting position, hands on the floor, fingers forward, elbows pressed inside of knees. Lean forward very slowly until your full weight is on your hands, lifting your feet off the floor if you can. See if you can balance your body. Keep your head up. Hold for a couple of seconds.



Gorilla Walk

Spread your feet apart, bend from the waist and grab both ankles. Keep knees and legs straight. Now walk forward. GRRRRR!



Green is the theme of this Irish holiday that is celebrated on March 17. Do something special for your family for the holiday. Here are some ideas to get you started. Talk to your kids. I'm sure that together you can think of some other things.

Saint Paddy's Fruit Platter

Kiwi fruit
Honeydew melon
Green seedless grapes

Peel the kiwis, and slice them into 1/4-inch slices. Remove the seeds from the honeydew, peel and slice into wedges. Arrange kiwi, melon and grapes on a serving plate.

Green Salad

Toss a salad of all-green vegetables. Suggested ingredients include lettuce, spinach, cucumbers, celery, green peppers, broccoli, green onions, zucchini, and sprouts. Serve with a low-fat salad dressing.

Other Green Ideas

Add green food coloring to milk.

Green pudding for dessert.
Green gelatin with fruit.

Add green food coloring to pancake batter, shape pancakes like shamrocks. Top with applesauce.



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