

GROWING LEAPS AND BOUNDS[®]

SERIES: 10 OF 12



A GUIDE TO HEALTHY FEEDING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FROM INFANCY TO PRESCHOOL YEARS

GO, GO, GO!

Your three-year-old loves being on the go: running, jumping, pulling a wagon, and maybe even riding a tricycle or bicycle with training wheels. She loves singing nursery rhymes, saying the ABCs, and reading books. Self-feeding comes more easily now, but remember that young kids still can be messy eaters.

Until Your Next Well-Child Visit...

- Continue to serve toddler-size portions at home, restaurants, and in childcare settings.
- Make sure your child gets several hours of playtime each day. Appreciate her boundless energy.
- Eat healthy and play hard; your child will copy you.



BY NOW, YOUR CHILD HAS SETTLED INTO A REGULAR FEEDING ROUTINE.

You know which foods he enjoys most, when he is the hungriest, and when he is likely to just pick at his food. Follow these general suggestions to foster a healthy feeding environment.

- 1 Be a role model for proper table manners by putting a napkin on your lap, wiping your mouth with a napkin when you're done eating, talking when you're done chewing, and using utensils (except for finger foods).
- 2 Make sure your plate contains a variety of healthy foods and that your toddler sees you eat them.
- 3 Permit your child to control his own food portions. If he takes an overly large portion, however, suggest that he start with less and take more later if he still is hungry.
- 4 Discuss with day care providers, teachers, and family members the importance of appropriate portion sizes.
- 5 Follow a set meal and snack routine whenever possible.
- 6 Keep your cool if your child argues about food or eating; this may help avoid feeding problems later on.
- 7 Don't worry if your child is not hungry and skips a meal. If he does not want to eat, clear his plate and wait until the next scheduled snack or meal to feed him.
- 8 Prevent your child from snacking on sugary foods by not buying them at all.

FIVE REASONS TO EAT TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

- 1 Allows children to learn healthy eating habits from parents.
- 2 Builds strong family bonds.
- 3 Provides opportunity to learn from each other.
- 4 Improves nutrition. Meals eaten at home tend to be more nutritious than meals eaten out.
- 5 Boosts communication among family members.



KID-FRIENDLY FAVORITES

Here are some creative kid-friendly, nutrition-packed foods to help your child meet recommendations for each of the five food groups. Keep portions small at each meal, about one tablespoon of each type of food per year of age.

Allow your child to stop eating when she is full rather than forcing her to finish everything on the plate. Generally, foods prepared at home are healthier than fast food or foods eaten out.

GRAINS (4 to 5 servings daily)

- French toast made with whole-wheat bread
- Oatmeal (child can top with chopped fresh or dried fruit)



- Whole-wheat pancakes
- Tortilla topped with melted, lowfat cheese
- Whole-wheat pasta with sauce

VEGETABLES (1 1/2 cups daily)

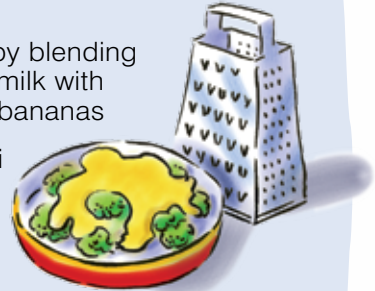
- Butternut squash soup
- Spinach- or broccoli-topped pizza
- Grilled vegetable kebabs (red pepper, mushroom, sweet potato)
- Roasted baby new potatoes
- Baked sweet potato

FRUITS (1 to 1 1/2 cups daily)

- Frozen pineapple chunks
- Kiwifruit slices
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup chopped or canned fruit
- Fresh strawberry smoothie or slush
- Baked banana slices
- Slivered dried apricots

MILK (2 1/2 cups daily)

- Oatmeal prepared with lowfat or fat-free milk
- Cream of tomato soup made with lowfat or fat-free milk
- Lowfat yogurt dip for fruit or steamed vegetables
- Smoothie made by blending lowfat or fat-free milk with frozen berries or bananas
- Steamed broccoli topped with shredded lowfat cheese



MEAT/PROTEIN (3 to 4 oz. daily)

- Ground turkey lasagna
- Hummus (chickpea) dip with pita bread and vegetables
- Scrambled egg
- Peanut butter or cheese sandwich
- Roast beef rolled in a tortilla and sliced
- Lowfat yogurt
- Fish



KIDS IN THE KITCHEN

When young children help prepare food at home or at preschool, they are more willing to try the foods that they have made!

Here are a few kitchen jobs for a three-year-old helper (remember to wash hands before handling food):

- Washing vegetables
- Putting away groceries
- Tearing lettuce and tossing a salad
- Mixing batter
- Unloading unbreakables from the dishwasher
- Helping to set the table by putting out napkins and utensils



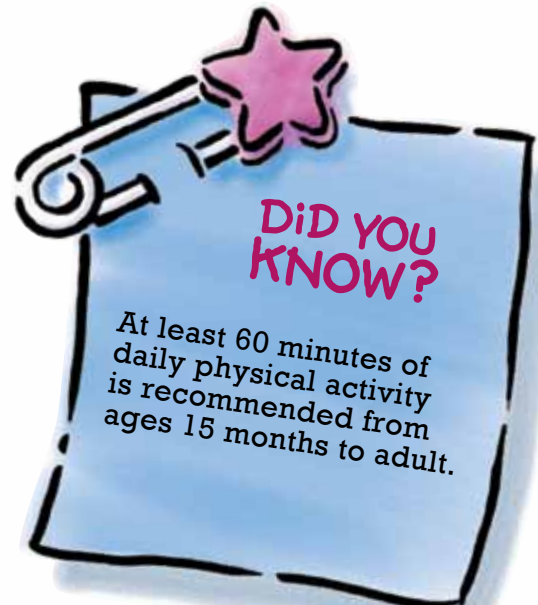
HELPFUL HINTS

- Offer your child two food choices at one or maybe two meals a day. Too many decisions can overwhelm a three-year-old.
- If you're not sure your child has eaten enough, remind her that she won't be eating until snack time or the next meal and give her a chance to eat a bit more.
- Don't criticize for accidents, messy eating, or pickiness. Watch how mealtime behavior improves!
- Give your child positive feedback like "You're holding your fork like a big girl," and "Thank you for sitting with us even though you are finished eating."
- Let your three-year-old serve himself, when appropriate.

YOUR THREE-YEAR-OLD IS BECOMING MUCH MORE SOCIAL NOW AND INTERACTS MORE WITH OTHER CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY HIS "BEST" FRIENDS.

Body movements are much more coordinated. Your three-year-old walks and runs well without falling. He can throw, kick, and catch. Jumping, hopping on one foot, and galloping are all fun, physical activities he can do. He tries to copy circles and will soon be able to draw capital letters and simple shapes. Encourage him to tell you what he drew – his answers may be quite creative!

- Make sure your child gets several hours of playtime each day.
- Be a role model by being active with your child and letting your child see you being physically active.
- Make up stories and pretend to be the characters in the story. Keep a basket of old clothing for dressing up.
- Have your child practice jumping up and down on both feet. Help your child count his jumps.
- Play catch with a big ball and practice kicking with a smaller ball. Remember to praise your child's efforts with comments like "That was a great throw."
- Visit a playground that is designed for three-year-olds and is safe and well maintained.
- Enroll your child in a gymnastics, tumbling, or dance class for preschool-age children.
- Play simple games that get kids (and adults) moving – hide and seek; red light, green light; duck, duck, goose; and mother, may I.
- Enjoy a before-or after-dinner family activity like walking to the mailbox, walking the dog, or biking/tricycling in the neighborhood. Try to make it part of your evening routine.
- Help your child transition to quiet activities like looking at picture books, drawing with crayons, building with blocks, or listening to music if he is too "charged up."

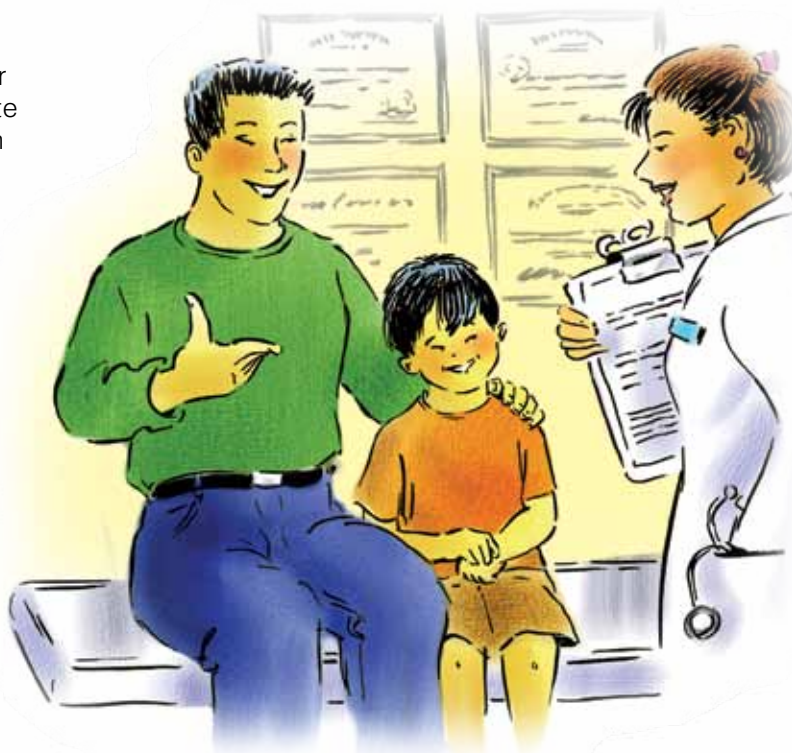


IS YOUR FAMILY AT RISK?

Do you know which diseases run in your family? Many common conditions, including heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, and diabetes, are influenced by genetics but triggered by environmental factors like diet and exercise.

To start, write a list with the names of the child's close family members – parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and siblings. Then write down whether they have been affected by any major or long-term diseases and conditions. Note whether each family member is/was normal weight or overweight, a nonsmoker or a smoker, active or inactive. Look for patterns – for example, heart disease at an early age or high blood pressure on one side of the family. It's never too early to start taking preventable measures to decrease your family's chances of developing these conditions.

- Maintain a healthy weight. Your doctor can give you appropriate weight ranges for your children and yourself.
- Be physically active every day. This is not hard when you have an active three-year-old in the house!
- Eat a balanced diet.
- If you drink alcohol, do so only in moderation.
- Get preventive screenings.
- If you smoke, try to stop as soon as possible.



Always talk with your baby's doctor when you have questions about your baby's growth, development, and overall health. Ask which situations should prompt an immediate phone call, a visit to the office, or a trip to the emergency room.

The Dannon Institute is a non-profit foundation dedicated to promoting research, education, and communication about the link between nutrition and good health. "Growing Leaps and Bounds™" was created to help build a solid foundation of healthy eating and activity for your child, now and for the future. The Dannon Institute is supported by The Dannon Company, Inc.

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