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## What should my child's meal plan consist of?

Early childhood, which includes the preschool stage (2-5 years), is the phase of physical, emotional, and mental development and forms the foundation

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## Balanced and Healthy Diet for Kids

## A balanced and healthy diet for kids with interesting foods

Early childhood, which includes the preschool stage (2-5 years), is the phase of
physical, emotional, and mental development and forms the foundation for the child's future well-being. A balanced diet for kids plays a vital role during this stage. A balanced diet for kids based on the food or beverage a preschooler consumes affects his/her health, which hence leads back to the conversation of healthy meals for kids. Children in the age range of 2-5 years have a daily energy requirement of approximately 1000 to 1400 calories per day, which is the mark of a healthy diet for kids.

To help support the child's growth \& development during this phase of life, needs to consume healthy meals for kids. i.e. nutrient dense foods, hence, healthy recipes for kids should comprise of all the below mentioned food groups in the right amounts. Healthy diet for kids will substantially contain:-

## Cereals, millets and pulses

a. These are needed as they are an important source of energy and nutrients.
b. Try and include whole grain products as part of their diet like multigrain cereals, whole wheat rotis, etc.

## Milk, egg and fish

a. Milk and milk products are an important source of calcium and protein. While the egg \& meat products are a good source of protein \& micronutrients too.
b. The diet can comprise of some crud based smoothies, fruit yoghurts, egg rolls or sandwiches, lean meats like chicken and fish can be there as well as part of the diet.

## Vegetables and fruits:

a. Give your child fresh, seasonal and locally available fruits and vegetables
b. Leafy green vegetables need to feature too as part of the diet may be in the form of spinach paratha, soups, add your veggies to the cereal preparations, like vegetable upma, pulao, khichdi etc.
c. Carrots, cucumber, beetroot can form excellent finger food as salad sticks can be served to the child with exciting dips.

## Oils and fats:

a. Include vegetable oils, butter and ghee in small amounts in your child's diet. b. Nuts like walnuts, almonds need to be added to the diet. These can be in the form of crushed nut with milk or added to fruit custard to provide some crunchy texture.


The right plan for healthy recipes for kids
The below table illustrates the food portions that are recommended for children between 2-5 years of age which will enable you to better understand \& plan the healthy recipes for kids that you need to incorporate in your child's diet in the appropriate amounts, for a balanced diet for kids.

Also remember the key to get all the food groups as part of your balanced diet for kids is to include 3 main meals \& 2 small meals as part of their diet. Use a variety of cooking methods like boiling, roasting, baking and steaming in order to introduce variety of foods to your child.

SERVINGS SERVINGS<br>FOOD GROUPS REQUIRED/DAYREQUIRED/DAY (2-3 YEARS) (4-5 YEARS)

|  | SERVINGS | Servings | SUGGESTED 1 SERVING OF FOOD |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| FOOD | REQUIRED/DAY | required | 1 small chapatti/1 small slice of |
| GROUPS | (2-3 YEARS) | 5 years) | bread/2 tbsp. of raw rice/2 tbsp. of |
| Cereals | 2 | 4 | raw pasta/2 tbsp. of raw dalia/2 tbsp. of sooji/2 tbsp. of raw oats | important sol energy, carbc protein and fi vell as conta range of micronutrient vitamin E , sor B vitamins, magnesium a

Nutrients
Pulses are so protein, with fiber content seed/legumes much easier t and assimilat sprouted.

Nutrients
Milk and milk are rich sourc calcium- gooc bones, muscl teeth

| FOOD | SERVINGS | Servings | SUGGESTED 1 SERVING OF FOOD |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| GROUPS | REQUIRED/DAY | required/Day (4- |  |
|  | (2-3 YEARS) | 5 years) | 1 cup chopped raw potato/ |
| Roots and |  |  | beetroot/carrot/ turnips/onions etc |

tubers

1
instead of frie ensure their benefits.

Nutrients
SUGGESTED 1 SERVING OF FOOD

| FOOD | SERVINGS |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| GROUPS | REQUIRED/DAY |  |
|  | $(2-3$ YEARS $)$ | 5 |
| Green | $1 / 2$ |  |
| leafy | $1 / 2$ |  |
| vegetables |  |  |


| FOOD | SERVINGS |
| :--- | :--- |
| GROUPS | REQUIRED/DAY |
|  | $(2-3$ YEARS $)$ |
| Other |  |
| vegetables |  |

FOOD REQUIRED/DAY required/Day (4-
GROUPS (2-3 YEARS) 5 years)
Fruits

SUGGESTED 1 SERVING OF FOOD Nutrients

Include seaso colorful veget enjoy benefit antioxidants.

Nutrients
SUGGESTED 1 SERVING OF FOOD

1 medium banana/1 apple/ pear/ orange/ 1 katori chopped papaya/ pineapple etc.

Try to incorpo Green leafy vegetables e Spinach/fenugreek/bathua/mustardin different fo leaves etc.
keep your chi healthy.

Go for a varie
seasonal fruit sources of antioxidants, vitamins and

FOOD SERVINGS Servings SUGGESTED 1 SERVING OF FOOD Include health GROUPS REQUIRED/DAY (2-3 YEARS) 5 years)
Fats and vegetable ba
1 tsp of vegetable oil/ ghee/butter/ as olive/must mayonnaise/ cheese spread etc. bran/soybear

Avoid trans fa
oil

5

SERVINGS Servings
FOOD REQUIRED/DAY required/Day (4GROUPS

Sugar

5
(2-3 YEARS)
3

5 years)
4

Nutrients
1 portion of pulse/legume exchanged w portion of me

| FOOD | SERVINGS | Servings | SUGGESTED 1 SERVING OF FOOD |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| GROUPS | REQUIRED/DAY | required/Day (4- |  |
| Meat/ | $(2-3$ YEARS) | 5 years) | 1 egg/ 1 piece of fish/2 small |
| chicken/ |  |  | pieces of chicken/meat go for more |

fish/ eggs

SUGGESTED 1 SERVING OF FOOD
1 tsp of table sugar/jaggery powder/ honey/jam/ etc.

Nutrients
Try to limit st foods rich in $t$ and low in nu saturated oils
chicken/fish/є Animal foods in B-complex iron, iodine a Try to have e baked/grilled roasted chick or fish to enjo maximum he benefits.

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