



ARTICLE

## Right nutrition for kids

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Giving your kid the right kind of nutrition is very essential, especially when your toddler has started to develop food preferences. They might have developed some taste for a particular food that they love to eat. As a parent, you are responsible to provide the right nutrition for your kid to help them develop well-balanced eating habits. Although you might witness your kid turning into a fussy eater (it is a normal behavior in growing toddlers, if not excessive), managing their diet is a must for you to ensure the right and healthy growth for your kids.

Feeding the right food for optimum nutrition to your toddler can ensure protection from illnesses or infections which your kid might be prone to during the early years of growth and development. Some of the important nutrients to feed your toddler during these years include:

**Carbohydrates:**

Your growing toddler may be quite active. To keep up with the growing energy requirements for your little one, you must include carbohydrates in your child's diet. Also, the protein sparing function found in carbohydrates adds protein to the diet that is essential for your child's growth and development. Some of the rich sources of carbohydrate include cereals, rice, potato, yam etc.

**Protein:**

Protein helps in muscle building. It contains amino acids that help in the formation of cells and muscle tissues, thereby boosting the immune system of your toddler. Milk, eggs, chicken, fish, and beans are some of the good protein sources for your kids. You may also give them extra protein supplements, after consulting your child's pediatrician.

**Fats:**

Fats provide energy, and essential fatty acids are important for structure, composition and permeability of cell membranes. These are good fats that help in fighting infections. Fats also help in absorbing fat-soluble vitamins (vitamin A, D, E and K) in your child's body.

**Vitamins:**

Vitamins play a significant role in providing overall nutrition to your toddler's body. Vitamin D helps in absorption of Calcium that increases bone density. Vitamin A, B, C & E help to boost the immune system, thereby maintaining the fighting ability of your toddler's body.

**Minerals:**

Minerals are essential for the overall growth and development of your child. Iron induces the production of hemoglobin that supplies oxygen to body cells. Lack of Iron content in your kid's body can lead to irritability and anemic paleness. Spinach, refined lentils etc. are some Iron-rich foods that you can include in your toddler's daily diet.

Besides the above-mentioned nutrients, calcium is an essential nutrient for strengthening bones. Yogurt and paneer are also rich in calcium.

Toddlerhood is a growing period, ensure that your child gets the right nutrition during this time for proper growth and development, either from these food sources or an appropriate Health drink without any added sugar by consulting your Health Care Professional.