



TIPS FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES: more and less

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Americans are not getting enough potassium, dietary fiber, calcium, and vitamin D in their diets and consume too much sugar, sodium (salt), and fat. Here are tips to help you and your family make **more** healthy choices and **less** unhealthy choices. Start with small changes. Remember that parents are important role models and what children learn early on can carry through adulthood.

more Calcium and Vitamin D

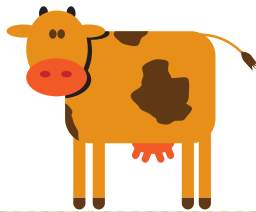
Calcium is a mineral that is needed to build strong bones and teeth. Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium.

Good sources of calcium include fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products, such as milk, yogurt, cheese, or fortified soy beverages.

Other sources of calcium include dark-green, leafy vegetables such as kale and turnip greens (not spinach); broccoli; tofu; chickpeas; lentils; split peas; and canned salmon and sardines (and other fish with bones).

Switch From Whole Milk to Lower Fat Versions

Switching from whole milk to lower fat versions will cut calories but will not reduce calcium or other essential nutrients. (**Note:** Whole milk is recommended for children 12 to 24 months of age, unless your child's doctor recommends that you switch to reduced-fat milk.)



Milk, 1 cup (8 ounces)				
	Whole	Reduced Fat (2%)	Low Fat (1%)	Fat Free (Skim)
Calories	149	122	102	83
Saturated Fat	5 g	3 g	2 g	0 g

Data from Food-A-Pedia (US Department of Agriculture)

more Fiber

Fiber helps make us full and keeps things moving in the digestive tract. A diet that includes good sources of fiber may help prevent constipation. These foods also are good sources of nutrients and vitamins that may help reduce the risk of heart disease, certain types of cancer, and obesity.

Good sources of fiber include vegetables, fruit, beans, peas, nuts, and fiber-rich whole-grain breads and cereals. Eat a variety of vegetables, especially dark-green and red and orange vegetables and beans and peas.

If a food company makes a claim about the fiber of a food, the grams of fiber must be listed under "Total Carbohydrate."

Nutrition Facts		
Serving Size	21 Biscuits (54g)	
Amount Per Serving	Cereal	with 1/2 cup skim milk
Calories	190	230
Calories from Fat	10	10
% Daily Value**		
Total Fat 1g*	2%	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%	0%
Trans Fat 0g		
Polyunsaturated Fat 0.5g		
Monounsaturated Fat 0g		
Cholesterol 0mg	0%	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%	3%
Potassium 200mg	6%	11%
Total Carbohydrate 46g	15%	17%
Dietary Fiber 6g	23%	23%
Sugars 11g		
Protein 5g		

more Potassium

Potassium works with sodium to regulate fluid balance, promotes transmission of nerve impulses and proper muscle function, and is essential for metabolism.

Vegetables that are good sources of potassium include broccoli, carrots, collards, green beans, green peas, kale, lima beans, potatoes, spinach, squash, sweet potatoes, and tomatoes. These vegetables are also good sources of magnesium and fiber.

Fruits that are good sources of potassium include apples, apricots, bananas, dates, grapefruit, grapes, mangoes, melons, oranges, peaches, pineapples, raisins, strawberries, and tangerines. These fruits are also good sources of magnesium and fiber.

less Added Sugar

Calories from sugar can quickly add up and over time lead to weight gain, and sugar can play a role in the development of tooth decay.

Note: Noncaloric sweeteners, also called no- and low-calorie sweeteners, artificial sweeteners, or sugar substitutes, add sweetness to foods and beverages without adding calories. However, products containing noncaloric sweeteners may not be calorie free or fat free. Noncaloric sweeteners have not been shown to be dangerous in children. According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, foods and beverages sweetened with noncaloric sweeteners can be incorporated into a healthy eating plan. Because of limited studies in children, the American Academy of Pediatrics has no official recommendations regarding the use of noncaloric sweeteners.

Here are tips on how to limit added sugar.

- Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose breakfast cereals and other packaged foods with less total sugars. Choose whole-grain cereals and other whole-grain foods that have at least 3 grams of fiber and less than 10 to 12 grams of sugar per serving.
- Use the ingredients list to choose foods with little or no added sugars. Added sugar includes brown sugar, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, lactose, malt syrup, maltose, molasses, nectars (eg, peach nectar, pear nectar), and sucrose.
- Limit sugar-sweetened drinks (eg, soft drinks, lemonade, fruit drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks). Offer low-fat milk during meals and water during snacks.
- Limit portions of desserts and other sweet treats.

less Fats

Fat is an essential nutrient that supplies the energy, or calories, children need for growth and active play and should not be severely restricted. However, high fat intake, particularly a diet high in saturated fats, can cause health problems, including heart disease later in life.

Here are tips on how to limit fat.

- Choose foods with little or no saturated fat and no trans fat. Check the Nutrition Facts label (5% Daily Value [DV] or less is low; 20% DV or more is high).
- Switch to vegetable oils instead of solid fats if possible. Vegetable oils include olive, canola, corn, safflower, or sunflower oil. Solid fats include butter, stick margarine, shortening, or lard.
- Try baking, steaming, or broiling foods instead of frying foods.

less Refined Grains

Many refined grain products are high in solid fats and added sugars. Switch to whole-grain products. Start with making half of your grains whole grains.

Here are tips on how to limit refined grains and boost whole grains.

- Check the ingredient list on product labels for the words “whole” or “whole grain” before the grain ingredient’s name. Note that foods labeled with the words “multigrain,” “stone-ground,” “100% wheat,” “cracked wheat,” “seven-grain,” or “bran” are usually not 100% whole-grain products and may not contain any whole grains.
- Use the Nutrition Facts label to check dietary fiber. Dietary fiber is a nutrient listed under Total Carbohydrate on the Nutrition Facts. Excellent sources of fiber have 5 or more grams of fiber per serving. Good sources of fiber have at least 3 grams of fiber per serving.
- Limit refined grain products that are high in calories from solid fats or added sugars, such as cakes, cookies, other desserts, and pizza.

less Sodium

Sodium is an important mineral but only in very small amounts. Dietary sodium comes from salt. Children only need about half a teaspoon (1,200 mg for 4- to 8-year olds; 1,500 mg for 9- to 18-year-olds) of sodium each day. Too much sodium may lead to high blood pressure later in life.

Here are tips on how to limit sodium.

- Eat less processed foods and more fresh foods.
- Use the Nutrition Facts label to check sodium. Choose foods and beverages with 5% Daily Value (DV) or less of sodium. A sodium content of 20% DV or more is high.
- Choose canned foods labeled “reduced sodium,” “low sodium,” or “no salt added.” Rinse canned beans and vegetables to remove some sodium.
- Use little or no salt when cooking or eating. Try other seasonings such as pepper, spices, herbs, or lemon juice. Slowly reduce the amount of sodium in your foods.

Hold the Salt

Train your children’s taste buds to like foods with little or no added salt. One cup of string beans with sodium has 351 mg more sodium than 1 cup of string beans with low sodium. That’s an extra **2,457 mg** of sodium in 1 week (7 days).

Beans, green (string), canned, 1 cup

	With sodium	With low sodium
Total calories	31	27
Sodium	354 mg	3 mg

Data from Food-A-Pedia (US Department of Agriculture)



American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



healthy children.org

Powered by pediatricians. Trusted by parents.
from the American Academy of Pediatrics

Sources

American Academy of Pediatrics. *Calcium and You*. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2006. Reaffirmed February 2013

American Academy of Pediatrics. *Nutrition: What Parents Need to Know*. Dietz WH, Stern L, eds. 2nd ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2012

Food-A-Pedia. US Department of Agriculture SuperTracker Web site. <https://www.supertracker.usda.gov/foodapedia.aspx>. Accessed March 13, 2015

US Department of Agriculture, US Department of Health and Human Services. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010*. 7th ed. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office; 2010. <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2010/DietaryGuidelines2010.pdf>. Accessed March 13, 2015

This publication has been developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. The authors and contributors are expert authorities in the field of pediatrics. No commercial involvement of any kind has been solicited or accepted in the development of the content of this publication. Listing of resources does not imply an endorsement by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The AAP is not responsible for the content of external resources. Information was current at the time of publication.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

Copyright © 2015 American Academy of Pediatrics
All rights reserved