

Help Children Enjoy Nutrient-Rich Foods

Now is a perfect time for children to spruce up their eating habits by making more healthful food choices at home and at school, and parents play an essential role in shaping these choices. Consuming at least three servings of low-fat or fat-free milk, cheese or yogurt each day is a deliciously easy way to help kids build and maintain strong, healthy bones, muscles and teeth. Dairy foods are a must at any age, and together, they contain a unique package of essential nutrients, including three of the five nutrients that children don't get enough of: calcium, potassium and magnesium.¹

At home, at school or on-the-go, here are great ways to make nutrient-rich foods, including three servings of dairy foods, part of your child's daily routine!

Breakfast Basics:

Breakfast keeps kids on target by helping them meet their daily nutrient needs. Try these fun and easy breakfast options that take less than 3 minutes to prepare:

- Skewer a banana, dip it in low-fat yogurt and then coat with your child's favorite fiber-rich, wholesome cereal or granola.
- Top a warm whole-wheat pancake with low-fat flavored yogurt and sprinkle with a handful of berries. Roll and go!
- Wrap scrambled eggs, a slice of reduced-fat Monterey Jack cheese and some colorful sliced peppers in a whole grain tortilla.
- Give children finger foods to make breakfast more fun, such as sliced apples with low-fat flavored yogurt for a dipping sauce.
- Blend a banana, a tablespoon of peanut butter and low-fat vanilla yogurt or low-fat milk for a drinkable and nutritious way to start the day.
- Spread low-fat cottage cheese on celery and top with raisins for a fun treat.

Fuel Up At School:

- Cut nutrient-packed sandwiches into shapes using cookie cutters – be sure to use whole-wheat bread along with skinless turkey breast and reduced-fat cheese, or try peanut butter with sliced bananas.
- Create a pre-packaged finger food meal kit that includes bite-sized pieces low-fat cheese, hard boiled eggs and almonds, along with individual portions of cut fruit and vegetables.
- Wrap a salad that includes bright leafy greens, low-fat cheese and grilled, skinless chicken breast in a whole grain tortilla.
- Encourage kids to opt for nutrient-rich vending choices, such as low-fat and fat-free white, chocolate or strawberry-flavored milk, to add a nutritional boost to any school lunch.
- For parties at school, bring nutrient-rich snacks, such as colorful veggies and yogurt-based dip, skewers with cheese cubes and fruit, or strawberries with vanilla-flavored yogurt as a dip.

Make Mealtime Family Time:

- Make family mealtimes a priority. If schedules don't allow family dinners, make time to eat together when your time is flexible, such as with a picnic or a Sunday morning brunch at home.
- Make your kids part of the mealtime process by teaching them how to prepare nutritious snacks and meals. Let your children choose which of their favorite meals they want to make and show them how.
- Encourage kids to get their third daily serving of dairy by choosing low-fat or fat-free milk as their dinnertime beverage.
- Pizza is a kid-favorite and can easily be made more nutrient-rich. Get your children to help build one using whole grain dough and top with reduced-fat cheese, your favorite colorful vegetables, and grilled, skinless chicken breast.
- Engage children in healthful food gathering by bringing them to farmers markets or pick-your-own farms, and encourage them to choose one new fruit or vegetable to try each week. If they pick it or grow it, they may be more likely to eat and enjoy it!

For more tips and information on how to incorporate dairy foods into your family's diet, visit www.nationaldairycouncil.org.

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 2005. 6th Edition. Chapter 2: Adequate Nutrients Within Calorie Needs. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 2005.