

# Daily Food Guide for Toddlers 1 – 3 years

This chart gives you an idea of the foods your child should eat each day. Choose foods from all of the basic food groups for good health.

Food Group Daily Amount	What is a Serving?	Recommended Foods
<b>Grains</b> 4–6 servings	$\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ slice of bread $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ bagel or bun $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of hot cereal $\frac{1}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cold cereal, dry $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked pasta (macaroni, noodles spaghetti) or cooked rice	<b>Whole Grain Foods:</b> Make at least half of your grains whole grains.  <b>Food Labels:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look for <b>whole grain</b> or <b>whole wheat</b> as the first ingredient; whole wheat flour, whole cornmeal, brown rice, oatmeal</li> <li>Look for <b>less than 9</b> grams of sugar or <b>more than 3</b> grams of fiber on breakfast cereals and bars</li> </ul>
<b>Vegetables</b> 2–3 servings	$\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cooked, canned or fresh chopped $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{3}$ cup vegetable juice	Eat a <b>variety</b> of vegetables daily <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serve dark green, red, orange and other vegetables (spinach, broccoli, tomato, carrots)</li> <li>Serve 100% vegetable juice</li> </ul>
<b>Fruits</b> 2– 3 servings	$\frac{1}{2}$ small fresh fruit $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cooked, canned or fresh chopped $\frac{1}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup berries	Eat a <b>variety</b> of fruits daily <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apples, banana, cantaloupe, kiwi, orange, peach, pear, strawberries...</li> </ul>
<b>Protein:</b> meat, fish, poultry, eggs or equivalent  2 servings	1–3 tablespoons ( $\frac{1}{2}$ – $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces) beef, pork, poultry or fish 2–4 tablespoons cooked beans or chopped nuts 1 small egg 2 tablespoons tofu 1 tablespoon nut butter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bake, broil or grill lean meat trimmed of fat, boneless skinless poultry, fresh seafood</li> <li>Canned seafood packed in water</li> <li>Limit the amount of processed meats (hot dogs, sausage, ham, deli meats) due to high salt content</li> </ul>

## Daily Food Guide for Toddlers 1 – 3 years *continued...*

<p><b>Dairy</b> 6 servings</p>	<p>½ cup (4 ounces) milk or milk substitute* ½ cup yogurt ½ ounce cheese ¼ cup cottage cheese</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve whole fat milk until age two</li> <li>• Include milk with meals</li> <li>• Limit intake of drinkable yogurts, puddings, frozen yogurts and ice cream because of the high sugar content</li> <li>• *Milk Substitutes:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Plant-based “milks” like almond milk and coconut milk should not be given as a main drink for children less than 2 years old.</li> <li>○ Toddlers with milk allergy should continue to drink formula or breastfeed until age 2 to ensure good nutrition.</li> <li>○ Children older than 2 years old can drink plant- based milks as part of a healthy diet.</li> <li>○ Rice milk should not be used as a drink for children less than 4 years old due to concerns about arsenic content.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Fats</b> 3 servings</p>	<p>1 teaspoon oils or margarine ½ – 1 tablespoon salad dressing or mayonnaise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Olive, peanut, canola, safflower oils</li> <li>• Salad dressing and mayonnaise made from these oils</li> <li>• Tub margarine: choose one with a liquid vegetable oil listed first</li> </ul>

### Helpful Hints

- To avoid choking, cut small round foods like hot dogs and grapes into bite size pieces. Avoid hard candy.
- Avoid fried foods and convenience foods as much as possible.
- Avoid ‘sugary’ beverages including pop, fruit juice, lemonade and Kool-Aid.
- Have scheduled meal and snack times seated at the dining table or in a high chair.
- Do not give more than 24 ounces or 3 cups of milk each day.
- Try new foods when your child is hungry by offering those foods first. Encourage your child to try at least one bite of a new food. It may take several introductions of the food before the child will pick it up and try it.
- Do not make meal time a fight. Talk to your child, but not about how much food she/he needs to eat.
- When your child is done, or begins to play with food, this is usually a sign that they are finished eating.

Daily Food Guide for Toddlers 1 – 3 years *continued...*

# Sample Menu

Meal	Foods	4 – 6 Grain Servings	2 – 3 Vegetable Servings	2 – 3 Fruit Servings	2 Protein Servings	6 Dairy Servings
Breakfast	½ cup of oatmeal	√				
	½ banana			√		
	4 ounces of whole or reduced fat milk					√
Snack	1/3 cup berries water			√		
Lunch	Sandwich: 1 ounce chicken breast, ½ ounce cheese, 1 slice whole wheat	√			√	√
	½ cup of cooked carrots		√			
	4 ounces milk					√
Snack	4 ounces yogurt ¼ cup granola water	√				√
Dinner	Spaghetti and meatballs: 1/3 cup cooked whole wheat pasta	√				
	1/3 cup tomato sauce		√			
	1 meatball (1 ounce)				√	
	1/3 cup green beans		√			
	4 ounces milk					√
Snack	2 graham crackers	√				
	4 ounces milk					√

Additional Comments:

---



---

Dietitian/Diet Technician: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_