

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Visit: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Early Childhood Parent Tips

### Healthy

- Review your child's growth charts with your healthcare provider.
- Be a good role model and make healthy eating and activity together a goal for all family members.
- Remember this is a time that children are becoming more independent.

### Eating

- Provide healthy choices for meals and snacks:
- Eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day.
- Eat 3 or more servings of whole grain foods per day.  
(*Appropriate serving size for age equals 1–2 tablespoons per year of age.*)
- Limit milk intake to no more than 16 ounces per day.
- Use low-fat or non-fat milk only after 2 years of age.
- Use soft margarine rather than lard, butter or stick margarine.
- Give 100% fruit juice (not fruit drinks), but only 4–6 ounces maximum per day.
- Your child's intake should meet his/her growth and activity calorie requirements - or energy in equals energy out.
- Your child may not like a new food the first few times he/she tries it, so offer it many times to give the opportunity to learn to accept it and like it.
- Use food only to meet nutritional needs and satisfy hunger, not as a reward or to comfort your child.
- Toddlers often have an appetite slump compared to previously, which is OK if they meet their growth and energy needs.
- Limit fast food meals to no more than twice per week.
- Offer healthy traditional foods enjoyed in your culture (e.g., beans, corn, tortillas, fruits and vegetables).

### Activity

- Plan for at least 60 minutes daily of active, free play in short periods of time.
- Limit TV, video and computer time to less than 2 hours daily if your child is older than 2 years.
- Discourage TV and other screen time if your child is younger than 2 years of age.
- No TV during meals.
- No TV or computer in your child's bedroom.

### Together

- Schedule times for family meals together.
- Respect that your child is responsible for whether to eat and how much to eat, and you are responsible for what food is available, and when and where.
- Don't let TV advertisements influence food selection.
- Support healthy food choices and daily physical activity at your child's preschool and child care.
- Help your community develop safe places and inexpensive physical activity opportunities for all families.

#### References

[www.ellynsatter.com](http://www.ellynsatter.com)  
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[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)  
[www.mypyramid.gov/preschoolers/](http://www.mypyramid.gov/preschoolers/)  
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