

Infant Nutrition

After the first birthday, children can eat more often at the family table. Parents serve as role models! The food needs to be adapted to the chewing capability of the child. Usually biting food possible after 1st year, molars arrive in 2nd year, from 3rd birthday good chewing is possible. If children after their first birthday still don't like the food to be cut, continue using the fork to mash, or purée but increasingly coarser. Let the children feed themselves, using finger food, spoons, or a small fork.

Requirements for Infant Nutrition

Healthy child nutrition depends on various factors. The diet must contain enough nutrients for the development of the organs and for growth. The guidelines of the food pyramid for toddlers aged 1– 3 years are recommended:

Abundant: Drinks: water, unsweetened tea, diluted fruit juice.

Abundant: Plenty of bread, cereals such as rice, potatoes, pasta, vegetables, fruits, salad.

Moderate: dairy products, cheese, milk, fish, meat, sausage, eggs.

Less than moderate: fatty foods such as butter, oil.

Tolerated: sugar confectionery.

Do not forget to drink

Water is the most important element!

The fluid requirement for children between 1–3 years is about 6 – 7dl every day.

Suitable: water, unsweetened tea

Unsuitable: Sugary drinks, such as pure Fruit juice, Coke, Fanta, Sprite, Ice Tea, etc. (these promote tooth decay and obesity), also caffeinated drinks, such as coffee, black tea and Red Bull, etc. are not appropriate. Milk is not considered a drink, rather one of the food elements, since it has many important ingredients as well as calories, protein and potassium. It is therefore not suitable as a thirst quencher.

Cereals, Potatoes, Rice, Bread

Children can consume plenty of it: grains, bread, potatoes, pasta, rice, corn, millet, oats, etc.

Ideally, every meal includes some of these.

1–3 years: about 40 g per day whole grain bread, wheat bread, 80 g cereal/pasta, 100 g potato.

Fruits, Vegetables, Salad

Without fruits, vegetables and salad a healthy nutrition is hardly possible.

1–3 years: about 120g per day fruits and 120g vegetables.

Milk and Milk Products

Milk and milk products are the main source of calcium in a child's diet. In addition they provide Vitamin B2, phosphorus, iodine, protein and zinc. An adequate supply of calcium for the bone structure and bone density is very important (by 25 – 30 yrs old maximum bone density is achieved. With lack of proper bone structure there is a risk of osteoporosis (brittle bones) in adulthood.

How a Child gets enough Calcium:

Best suited is pasteurized skimmed milk (milk drink) or whole milk. Yogurt contains per 100g the same amount of calcium as milk, cheese contains significantly more. 30g hard cheese or 60g soft

cheese contains the same amount of calcium as 2 dl milk. Curd (Quark) contains more phosphate than calcium. Purchased dairy products, such as fruit yogurt, fruit curd, Petit Gervais etc. contain a lot of sugar and are therefore less suitable.

1-3 years: per day about 3.3 dl milk, dairy products.

Meat, Fish, Eggs

Meat provides protein, the major iron, vitamins and minerals. Children do not need meat every day; about 3 times a week is enough. Eggs are rich in protein, vitamins and minerals. 1 -2 eggs per week are adequate. Fish provides protein, iodine, and the health-promoting omega-3 fatty acids. Sausages contain a lot of salt, fat and additives, so offer them less often.

1-3 years: about 1-2 eggs per week, and 3x 70g meat / fish.

Oil and Fat

Sufficient consumption of oil and fat is reached quickly, so be sparing with adding more.

1-3 years: per day about 15 g butter and oil (rape seed olive oil).

Candy

Sugar and sweets are among the "tolerated" foods.

1-3 years: 10 g of sugar per day maximum (equivalent to 2 teaspoons) or jam and sweets, such as maximum 1 piece of chocolate or a glass of soft drink or an amount of about 30g of cakes and pastries.

Salt, Spices

Use salt sparingly (salt pack with green tape, iodine and fluoride). Spices per taste, cautious with hot spices.

Children's Food

Specially designed children's foods are trendy. Often they refer to "healthy" with accompanying vitamins and minerals. A healthy diet does not need these foods. Often they contain a lot of sugar, fat and several unnecessary additives, such as dyes, flavour enhancers, emulsifiers etc.

Drinking from a Cup

To succeed in drinking from the cup:

- Child in a sitting position
- Small glass or cup with a thin edge
- Transparent cup
- Small amounts (water, unsweetened tea)

Important:

- Rule: The parents decide what comes on the table and the child what and how much it eats!
- If the child is restless, it is possible that it is tired, distracted or the meal takes too long.
- Normal eating habits of healthy children include large fluctuations in appetite. The older your child is, the more obvious these daily differences will be.
- Pay attention to your child's signals, such as turning the head away and closing the mouth. Based on signals, finish the meal, do not over-feed the child!
- Aversions to certain foods and preferences for others are normal. Accept their choice and every once in a while offer the food again, but do not force.
- The child needs time to get to know other foods. It has to try them 10 -15 times before it gets used to a new taste.
- Eating rituals and rules are helpful in young children, for example putting in the high chair, wearing a bib and the beginning and end of a meal.

- Fixed meal times, a pleasant atmosphere and eating at the table are essential factors for a normal eating pattern.
- Eating should be at the dining table, not in front of the TV or in the children's room.
- Models at the table: learning by observing plays an important role in children. They imitate the manners of their care giver both in a positive and negative sense (table manners, disdain of food, etc.).

Sources:

Marianne Botta: Kinderernährung gesund und praktisch
Ernährungsempfehlungen Elternberatung Basel-Stadt