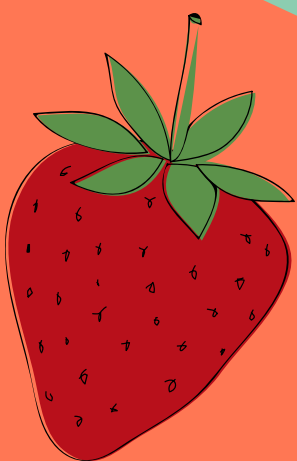


Nutrition for Children

As a Mom and Dietitian, I know first hand how getting your child to eat well – regardless of age – can be a tough battle; but its one well worth fighting! A healthy child becomes a healthy adult. With your support and guidance, you can shape the future health of your child.



Here are 5 tips to help you raise healthy kids:

1

TAKE CONTROL OF THE KITCHEN

You decide which foods to buy and when to serve them. Kids will ask for less nutritious foods, but parents should be in charge when deciding which foods are regularly stocked in the house. Kids won't go hungry - they'll eat what's available at home. If their favourite snack isn't all that nutritious, you can still buy it once in a while so they don't feel deprived.

2

MAKE A SCHEDULE

Children need to eat every three to four hours: three meals, two snacks, and lots of fluids. If you plan for these, your child's diet will be much more balanced and they will be less cranky because they won't be famished. When you are out, carry healthy snacks so there is no need to stop at a fast food place.

3

PLAN FAMILY DINNERS

A good dinner should be balanced: whole-grain bread, rice, or pasta; vegetables; and a protein source like lean meat, cheese, or beans. If planning for the whole week is too much, start with 2 or 3 days. Try batch cooking so you can freeze extras. If the main meal doesn't include vegetables - keep raw veggies or steamed veggies on hand to round out the meal. Try to have as many family meals as possible. Studies show that kids who have regular family meals eat more vegetables! Make sure you practice what you preach and eat well too. Be a good role model.

4

ALLOW TREATS

Having less healthy foods on occasion keeps them from becoming forbidden. Candy, soda, and ice cream should be called "sometimes" foods. For school snacks, kids should choose a fruit along with a vegetable of their choice and a portioned treat (granola bar, cookies, chips). As long as they are having balanced meals, there is no reason why a treat shouldn't be allowed.

5

SKIP THE JUICE

Juice boxes contain one thing only. Sugar. An average juice box contains close to 20 grams of sugar, which is 5 teaspoons of sugar! If you do buy juice, skip the juice boxes and buy the bigger bottles so you can control portions and dilute the juice with water: ¼ cup juice and ¼ cup water.

Healthy Snacks!

Kids and snacking go hand in hand. Reading the nutrition facts panel can help you make good choices. Try to choose snacks that have at least **3 grams of fibre** and **3 grams of protein** per serving. A healthy snack is a combination of a complex carb and protein. Here are my top snack ideas that your kids will enjoy!

- 1** Popcorn – Whole grain goodness and a great source of fibre. Try Skinny pop
<https://www.skinnypop.com/>
- 2** Made Good granola bars and granola bites – These delicious snacks are filled with wholesome goodness and free from common allergens
- 3** Snapea Crisps – A great source of fibre and protein
<https://www.harvestsnaps.com/products/>
- 4** Dry cereal – Shreddies and Power O's are both a great source of fibre and protein
<http://lovegrown.com/>
- 5** Cheese and crackers – Opt for a whole grain cracker like Triscuit <http://www.triscuit.com/>
- 6** Raisins – Great portable snack. To increase the protein, add some nuts or pumpkin seeds to make a quick and easy trail mix
- 7** Mott's Fruitsations + veggies – unsweetened fruit sauce – add in some hemp hearts to boost protein or mix in some plain Greek yogurt
<http://www.mottsfruitsations.ca/en/home>
- 8** Smoothies – A fantastic way to get in fruits and veggies! Add any milk of your choice and 1 tbsp of hemp hearts to naturally boost protein