

Caring for your child: 6 years

Feeding your child

- Offer 3 nutritious meals and snacks daily. Include a variety of healthy foods.
- Give a balanced breakfast or make sure that the school provides one.
- Offer at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day.
- Give your child low-fat or nonfat dairy or soy products (milk, yogurt, cheese), 2 to 3 servings each day.
- Ask the doctor if your child needs vitamins or other supplements.
- Let your child decide how much to eat.
- Measure a serving size by what will fit into the palm of your child's hand.
- Eat meals with your child. Have a pleasant conversation with TV off.
- Avoid juice drinks, soda, chips, and sweets.

Practicing healthy habits

- Don't let anyone smoke in your home or car. Smoking around children increases their risk of ear infections, asthma, and pneumonia.
- Help your child brush and floss their teeth every day.
- Schedule a dentist appointment every 6 months.
- Make sure your child gets enough sleep by setting a regular bedtime. Don't allow TV in the bedroom.
- Limit TV, computer use, and video games to one hour a day. Avoid programs and games with violence or sex.
- Encourage 60 minutes or more of physical activity each day for everyone in the family.
- Protect your child from sun exposure with protective clothing and sunglasses. Use sun block (SPF 15 or higher) on your child before they go into the sun. Repeat every 2 hours. Buy new sunscreen once a year. It loses its effectiveness after 12 months.

Keeping your child safe

- Use a car seat for every ride. Be sure that it is properly installed in the back seat, which is the safest place for children. If your vehicle doesn't have a back seat that

will allow a car seat to be safely installed, make sure to turn off the passenger side front airbag. Front seat airbags have been involved in the deaths of some children and small adults.

- For information on choosing the safest seat for your child, call toll-free **1-800-282-5587** or visit **www.800BUCKLUP.org**.
- Watch your child at all times around any kind of water. Knowing how to swim doesn't make your child "drown-proof."
- If your child is in a home that has a gun, make sure that it is unloaded and locked up.
- Watch your child carefully near streets and driveways. Teach them the rules of pedestrian safety.
- Make sure your child wears a bicycle helmet that fits properly whenever riding a bike or scooter. Bike helmets also provide protection for other sports such as inline skating and skateboarding. For these sports, add wrist guards, kneepads, and gloves.
- Install and check smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Change the batteries every 6 months when you set your clocks ahead or back.
- Keep the number for Poison Control, **1-800-222-1222** (voice and TDD), near your phone.

Other parenting tips

- Read with your child every day. Give praise and show affection. Have play time with your child daily.
- Teach your child their home address, phone number, and how to call 911.
- Teach children not to accept anything from strangers and not to leave with strangers. Tell them not to let anyone touch them inappropriately, and to tell you right away if that happens.
- Encourage your child to be involved in activities with peers, such as team sports, church or community activities, or scouting.
- Be involved with your child's school and activities. Get to know your child's friends and their families.

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- Show an interest in other activities your child enjoys such as bicycling, swimming, hiking, reading, drawing, or music.
- Teach responsibility. Give your child simple chores to do around the house, such as setting the table, helping with grocery shopping and food preparation, dusting, sweeping, and feeding pets.
- Recognize good behavior with attention and praise. Don't yell or spank. Use time outs instead. Apply rules fairly and in the same way every time.
- Be a good role model. Children learn from watching and listening.

Feeding children 6 to 8 years old

Healthy eating habits

- Serve 3 balanced meals a day plus 2 healthy snacks.
- You decide what foods to serve, when meals and snacks are served, and where to eat.
- Let your child decide whether or not to eat and how much.
- Remember that a child's serving size is equal to the amount that will fit into the palm of their hand.
- Offer a variety of foods. Serve foods your child likes, and try new foods.

Eating habits to avoid

- Don't force your child to eat. If they aren't hungry at one meal, it's okay for them to wait until the next meal or a snack is served.
- Turn off the TV. Eating while watching television can lead to mindless eating, and increase the risk that a child will be overweight.
- Avoid fast food and junk food, such as chips, soda, candy, donuts, French fries, and cookies. These are often high in fat, salt, sugar, and extra calories.

WEBSITES

- Kaiser Permanente: kp.org/wa
- American Academy of Pediatrics: aap.org
- Bright Futures: brightfutures.org

SUGGESTED READING

- *Your Child's Health*, Schmitt
- *Caring for Your School Age Child: Ages 5 to 12*, American Academy of Pediatrics
- *How to Get Your Child to Eat...But Not Too Much*, Satter
- *Temperament Tools*, Neville, et al.

Feeding children 6 to 8 years old

Food Group	Number of Servings	Examples
Fats and oils	As little as possible	Oil, butter, mayonnaise, gravy, fatty meat (bacon, sausages, ribs, pastrami, salami), salad dressing
Lean meat, fish, and dairy	Nonfat and low-fat dairy: 2-3 cups per day Lean meat and fish: 5 ounces per day	Nonfat and low-fat milk, yogurt, cheese, and soy products, beans, skinless chicken or turkey, lean meat, and fish - baked, grilled, or broiled, not fried
Fruits and vegetables	Fruits: 2-4 per day (1½ cups) Vegetables: 3-5 per day (1½ cups)	Apples, bananas, pears, melon, strawberries, grapes, cherries, oranges, tangerines, carrots, celery, broccoli, green beans, peas, lettuce, tomatoes
Bread, cereal, rice, and pasta	6-11 per day (6 ounces - 1 ounce is about 1 slice of bread, 1 cup dry cereal or ½ cup rice, pasta, or cereal)	Whole grain bread, cereal (vitamin fortified), rice, crackers, tortillas, pretzels, pasta, granola bars

Visit the USDA's interactive website designed especially for children: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>.

Next well-child visit at 8 years old

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