



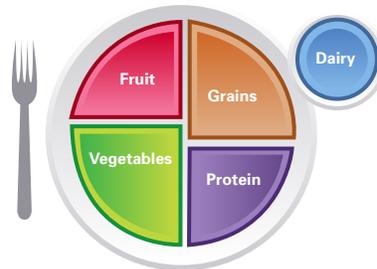
2 years

Parent Tips

- Your toddler will watch what you eat. Eat together as a family. Show healthy eating by choosing vegetables. Offer a colorful variety of foods.
- **Trust your toddler's appetite.** All children know how much they need to eat. Ask your toddler, "Is your tummy full?" Don't make them eat more.
- Your toddler may show independence by crying or having temper tantrums—this is normal. They will outgrow this, don't take it personally! Be patient.
- Grazing on foods or drinks all day prevents good eating habits.
- Your toddler may want the same food over and over—this is normal at this age. Don't force your toddler to eat and don't fight about food.
- Offer a wide choice of foods. If they don't eat at one meal they will eat at the next.
- Sweets and sweetened drinks (fruit punch, sports drinks, or soda) are not good for your toddler.

Feeding Advice

- Your main job as a parent is to be sure that meals start with a vegetable and include a wide variety of healthy foods from all the food groups (fruits, vegetables, dairy, whole grains and meat/protein).
- Offer a variety of textures, flavors and colors at each meal. This will limit picky eating.
- Encourage toddlers to feed themselves.
- Use small plates, spoons and forks.
- Offer fruits and vegetables at snack time if your toddler is hungry between meals. No more than 1 to 2 snacks each day. Snacks should not replace meals.
- Have family meals every day.



What should my toddler be drinking?

- Serve milk with meals.
- Serve water first for thirst between meals.

Be Active

- Encourage one hour or more of daily play – marching, climbing, jumping, dancing and going outside.
- Join in the fun with your toddler and play along.
- Limit screen time (TV, computers, tablets, video games, cell phones) to 1 to 2 hours a day. Help your toddler choose what to watch.
- Keep computers and TVs out of toddler's bedroom.

Sleep Advice

- Enjoy a calming sleep routine with low lights, a warm bath, and **reading** together.
- No food or screens before bed.
- It is normal and best for toddlers at this age to sleep around 12 to 14 hours each day.





Over the next year your child will talk much better, have better attention and be very curious. This is a really important year to teach new things.

Have You Noticed?

- They want to do things for themselves now
- Are squirmy at mealtimes, get up, dance around, play and eat at the same time.
- Can hop on two feet, briefly balance on one foot, and kick a ball that isn't moving.
- Ask for the same foods, games, TV programs, or songs over and over.
- Can use a spoon, fork and cup to eat. It's messy but it's how they learn.

Watching Your Child

- Chores are fun for them at 2 years (wiping, sweeping, laundry, dishes). Play music and dance and sing as you do chores together.
- Now they can talk about what they see, hear, smell, taste and touch. Ask them questions.

Fun at Mealtime

- Kids love to help with food. If they make it, they will try it.
- Offer veggies or fruit with dips, like salsa, hummus, yogurt or ranch dressing.
- Flavors or spices can add something new. Add a drizzle of maple syrup or cinnamon onto carrots, green beans or a sweet potato.
- Change how a food looks on the plate. Shred carrots or use a cookie cutter for shapes.

Play with a Purpose

Every day, set aside some time to play with your child:

- **Talk** – Use words to say out loud whatever they do. Use words that describe. Talk to them as they do things themselves, even if it's wrong (shoes on wrong feet, pants on backward). Be excited, celebrate their effort.

Play with a Purpose: 2 years



- **Big muscles** (legs, back, arms) – Play games that make their heart beat fast as they run, jump, throw, catch and kick with their feet. Chase, tag, hide-and-seek, races, and climbing on things build strength and confidence. Make time every day to throw, roll, bounce, and kick a very soft ball.
- **Hands and fingers** – Do things that make them use their hands, like coloring, painting, puzzles, playing with string or rope, building with large Lego toys.

Try This!

- Try not to get into a struggle with your child about food.
- **Avoid bribing.** Don't use food as a reward. They love the reward but don't learn to like the food you want them to eat.
- **Plan ahead.** Pack your own healthy snacks that won't spoil, like unsweetened cereal, whole grain crackers, dried fruit or fruit you can peel (oranges, bananas).

Want more info? Go to www.theounceofprevention.org