



## How to Help Your Child Have Healthy Weight

Childhood obesity is at an all-time high. The number of children who are overweight has tripled in the past 25 years, raising their risk for many health problems. Type 2 diabetes, once a disease seen only in adults, is now found in children as young as age 4. High blood pressure and cholesterol levels are also showing up earlier.

The earlier you take action to help your child have a healthy weight, the better. Good nutrition and physical activity make a huge difference. Taking action early means a healthier and happier child now and in the years to come.



## First Year Feeding Tips:

**Breastfeed your baby.** Breast milk is the healthiest food you can give your baby.

**Don't rush to start feeding your baby solid foods.** Wait until he or she is about 6 months old. Babies younger than 6 months only need breast milk or formula.

**Watch for your baby's signals.** Your baby will let you know when he or she is hungry or full. Stop feeding when your baby closes his or her lips, turns away or loses interest in eating. Don't force your baby to finish a bottle or food. If you are worried that your baby is eating too much or too little, talk to the baby's doctor or a nutritionist.

**Use a cup.** Start teaching your baby to drink from a cup around 6 months old. By age 1, your baby should be drinking just from a cup, not a baby bottle.

**Limit juice.** Babies don't need to drink juice. If you do give your baby juice, wait until your baby is 6 to 8 months old, and give no more than 2 ounces a day, mixed with water, in a cup.





# Active Children, Healthy Children

Making smart food choices is only one part of helping your child have a healthy weight. Being active as a family is also important.

**Help your child be active.** Give your baby a lot of time for active play and plenty of room to move around and practice rolling and crawling skills. Let your toddler walk instead of riding in the stroller whenever you can. Give your child push-and-pull toys. Dance to music, play follow-the-leader and take pretend walks through the snow, the jungle or other fun places.

**Limit TV time.** Studies show that children who watch less than two hours of television per day are much less likely to be overweight. Children under 2 years of age should not watch TV at all.

**Enjoy the outdoors.** Play tag, ride a tricycle or throw a ball. Take a trip to a park or playground. Play with the dog, work in the garden, wash the car or take a walk. These activities help your child learn to enjoy movement.

**Be active as a family.** Be a role model for your child. He or she will watch you and want to be like you.

**Your healthy choices shape their chances!**



For additional information on childhood nutrition and physical activity, visit:

- California WIC Supplemental Nutrition Program [www.wicworks.ca.gov](http://www.wicworks.ca.gov)
- The 5 a Day Campaign [www.ca5aday.com/powerplay](http://www.ca5aday.com/powerplay) and [www.5aday.com](http://www.5aday.com)

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For more information about First 5 California, please contact:  
Phone: (916) 323-0056 or (800) KIDS-025 [www.cffc.ca.gov](http://www.cffc.ca.gov)

## Feeding Tips for Toddlers and Preschoolers:

### **Stick to a regular meal schedule.**

Offer three meals and two or three snacks daily. Don't let your child snack all day long.

**Keep portion sizes small.** Serve age-appropriate amounts for young children.

A good rule is to start with 1 tablespoon of each food for each year of age. For example, if your child is 3 years old, start with offering 3 tablespoons of carrots and 3 tablespoons of rice. Let him or her ask for more.

### **Make fruits and vegetables a priority.**

It is recommended that young children eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables every day. Include at least one fruit or vegetable with every meal and snack.

### **Offer your child a variety of healthy food choices.**

Children may need to try a new food about 10 times or more before they learn to like it. If your child doesn't want to eat something, try again another time. Don't force your child to eat anything.

### **Limit high sugar and high fat foods.**

Limit "junk foods," fast foods, flavored drinks and soft drinks. Use food for nourishment and not as a treat or a reward.