



## Tools You Need To Balance The “In” Side Of The Energy Equation

Below are examples of amounts of the various food groups for preschoolers and school age kids, based upon the food pyramid.

### **Preschoolers (ages 2–5) and Children (ages 6–11)**

Note: daily amounts are given in ranges. If your child is closer to 5, or more active, then use the higher end. If younger or less active, stay on the lower end.

### **Fruits**

Fresh, frozen, canned (in light syrup or water) or dried fruit are all good choices. Fruit juices count, but use occasionally. They are full of calories, and don't have all the nutrients of their fresh counterparts.

\*Source: [youcanpreventchildhoodobesity.com](http://youcanpreventchildhoodobesity.com). All Rights Reserved. Use for educational purposes granted with source acknowledged.

Recommended amount per day for preschoolers: 1–1½ cups

Recommended amount per day for children: 1½ cups

One cup =

1 small apple or ½ large apple

1 large banana

8 large strawberries

1 cup of fruit pieces

1 cup of 100% fruit juice

½ cup of dried fruit

## **Vegetables**

Choose a variety of vegetables. Think the rainbow. You can have purple cabbage, red tomatoes, pumpkins, yellow squash and cauliflower. The deeper and richer the color, the better the vegetable is for you. Fresh, and frozen are best, but canned (if rinsed to get rid of the sodium) are also good choices. Beans and peas can count toward the daily allowance for vegetables.

Recommended amount per day for preschoolers: 1–1½ cups

Recommended amount per day for children: 2½ cups

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One cup =

- 1 cup of raw or cooked vegetable pieces
- 1 cup of vegetable juice
- 2 cups of leafy vegetables, such as spinach
- 1 cup of cooked beans, such as pinto beans, black beans, kidney beans
- 2 medium carrots
- 1 large tomato

## **Grains**

At least half of the grains eaten should be whole, such as oatmeal, 100% whole-wheat bread, brown rice or wheat pasta.

Recommended amount per day for preschoolers: 3–5 ounces

Recommended amount per day for children: 6 ounces

1 ounce =

- 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal
- ½ cup of cooked pasta, rice, or cooked cereal
- 1 slice of bread
- ¼ bagel from a bagel store
- 5 whole-wheat crackers
- 7 square or round crackers
- 1 pancake
- 1 tortilla (corn or small whole-wheat flour)

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## **Meat and Beans**

Choose lean meats, such as white-meat chicken or turkey, fish, lean or extra-lean beef, pork and other meats. Eat meat alternatives, such as beans, peas, nuts and seeds. These are high in protein; beans and peas are naturally low in fat; nuts and seeds contain good fat; and all are high in protein. Recommended amount per day for preschoolers: 2–4 ounces

Recommended amount per day for older children: 5 ounces

1 ounce =

1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish

1 regular slice of sandwich meat

1 egg

1 tablespoon peanut butter

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup cooked beans

$\frac{1}{2}$  ounce nuts or seeds

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup tofu

## **Milk**

Choose milk and milk products, such as yogurt and cheese that are either low-fat (1%) or non-fat. Limit sweetened milk products, such as flavored milk, fruited yogurt and yogurt smoothies.

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Recommended amount per day for preschoolers: 2 cups

Recommended amount per day for older children: 3 cups

One cup =

- 1 cup of low-fat (1%) or skim (non-fat) milk
- 1 8-ounce container of yogurt
- 1½ cups natural cheese, such as cheddar and Jack cheeses
- 1/3 cup of shredded cheese
- 1½ cups of low-fat ice cream, ice milk or frozen yogurt

## **Oils**

Oils are not a food group per se, but you need some for good health. Choose oils such as olive, canola, and soybean when cooking or choosing a salad dressing.

## **Other things to keep in mind:**

Know how to limit fats and sugars.

- Get your fat and sugar facts on the label.
- Limit solid fats. These are the fats that are solid at room temperature, including butter, margarine, shortening, etc. Limiting these kinds of fat includes limiting the foods that are made with them.
- Choose foods and beverages low in or without added caloric sweeteners, such as fructose, corn syrup, honey and sugars.

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