

# PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



Pinellas County Health Department

Steps to a HealthierFL—Pinellas County

## Parents: Do Your Kids 'Eat Smart & Play Hard'?

United States Department of Agriculture • Food and Nutrition Service  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/>

### Eat Smart. Play Hard.™

Dietary habits begin very early in life. It is important to teach children proper nutrition as soon as possible. Healthy eating and physical activity are important life skills that help children grow and prevent them from developing health problems in later life, including obesity. Obesity in youth often carries over into adulthood, leading to many chronic diseases including heart disease and diabetes. The Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ Campaign is designed to motivate children and their caregivers to make positive changes in eating and in physical activity behaviors. Balance your day with nutritious food and play and make family time an active time!

### Power Up With Breakfast

Breakfast gives you energy to grow, go and glow. A healthy breakfast is important for everyone, especially for growing children. Eat breakfast with kids to start a lifelong healthy habit. No time for breakfast? Pack it to go or help kids take part in the School Breakfast Program.

Kids who eat breakfast:

- ▶ *do better in school and are more alert when they eat breakfast*
- ▶ *perform better with increased attention span and memory*
- ▶ *feel better and complain less of headaches and stomach aches from being hungry*
- ▶ *miss fewer days and are late less often*
- ▶ *have an improved behavior and attitude*
- ▶ *get the nutrients they need to grow and develop*

**Plan:** Set out bowls and cereal the night before to make the morning meal quick and easy. Keep sliced fruit or hard-boiled eggs in the refrigerator.

**Prepare:** Feed kids on the go. Keep 100% juice, dried or fresh fruit, yogurt, bagels, or breakfast bars handy. Kids can grab these as they rush out the door.

**Dare:** Suggest kids try something different like a burrito or other leftovers, such as a stuffed baked potato.

**Change the pace:** Have a breakfast picnic on the weekend. Celebrate a special occasion with breakfast instead of dinner. Eat breakfast at school with your kids!

*Only 2% of America's children meet all the recommendations of the Food Guide Pyramid: ([mypyramid.gov](http://mypyramid.gov))*

*16% do not meet any of the recommendations;*

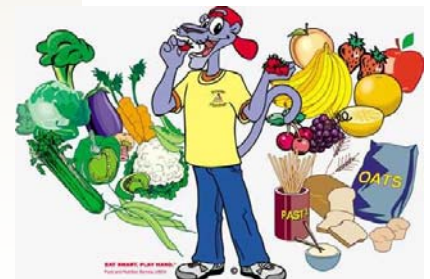
*less than 20% eat the recommended servings of vegetables of three a day;*

*about 25% eat the recommended servings of grains;*

*30% of school children consume the recommended milk groups servings;*

*16% of school children meet the guidelines for saturated fat;*

*and only 19% of girls ages 9 to 19 meet the recommended intakes for calcium.*





# Power Breakfast Ideas

**Rice Pudding:** Mix leftover rice, low fat yogurt, dried fruit, nuts and cinnamon.

**Pita Pizza:** Fill pita bread with your favorite low-fat cheese, cooked lean meat, & veggies; heat.

**Egg Burrito:** Fill a soft flour tortilla with scrambled eggs, boiled potato, refried beans or salsa.

**Waffles, Pancakes, French Toast:** Try ready-made items that can be toasted or microwaved.

**Sandwich Roll-Up:** Try peanut butter and banana or jelly on a flour tortilla.

**Fruit Salad:** Mix fruit with yogurt or cottage cheese.

**Hot Fruit:** Top canned or fresh fruit with brown sugar and nuts. Heat in oven or microwave.

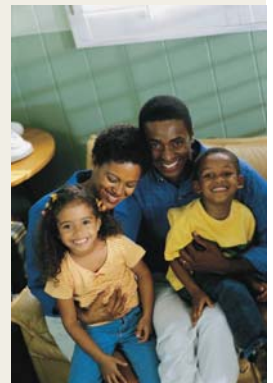
**Hot Cereal:** Use quick-cooking oats and add dried or fresh fruit, nuts and brown sugar, or cheese, and soft margarine to grits instead of butter.

# Grab Quick and Easy Snacks

Healthy snacks give kids extra energy to play and grow. Snacks are a normal part of a healthy diet for growing kids. Fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain foods make good snacks. All foods can fit into a healthy diet. Choose low-fat, reduced sugar, and reduced salt snacks.

Did you know that healthy snacks...

- ▶ Can supply a big part of the food and nutrition kids need for energy.
- ▶ Are great as mini-meals in addition to regular meals.
- ▶ Are a great way to get kids to eat more fruits and vegetables.
- ▶ Make get-togethers with friends more fun!



## Does Your Child Have A Food Allergy?

Food allergies affect about 8% of children, although they tend to affect younger children more. The good news is that most younger children will outgrow food allergies by the time they are three years old. What are the symptoms of a food allergy? Wheezing, difficulty breathing, skin rashes, diarrhea, nausea, abdominal pain and swelling around the mouth and in the throat are all symptoms. A severe allergic reaction known as **anaphylaxis** can lead to shock and even death. A condition that is much more common than allergies in children are **intolerances** to certain foods. These intolerances can also cause vomiting, diarrhea, spitting up and skin rashes. An example of an intolerance that children have is **lactose intolerance**. Children develop symptoms after drinking lactose containing food products such as cow's milk. If you notice that your child develops symptoms after being exposed to certain foods, you should avoid those foods. The most common foods that can cause allergies in kids include: peanuts, tree nuts (peanuts, pecans, etc.) fish, shellfish, eggs, milk, soy and wheat. If you suspect an allergy, keep a diary for a few weeks and write down what foods your child has been eating, especially new foods. This can help you to figure out which foods your child is allergic to.

Children with severe reactions should be evaluated by their pediatrician. Testing can be done; either a skin test or a blood antibody test to see if specific food allergies can be found. Foods to avoid until your infant is at least a year old include cow's milk and other dairy products, citrus fruits and juices, and wheat. Also, avoid giving eggs until age two, and peanuts (as smooth peanut butter) and shellfish until your child is at least three years old. Whole peanuts and tree nuts should be avoided until your child is four because of the choke hazard.

Excerpted from KeepKidsHealthy.com; kidshealth.org



Funding for this newsletter was supported by Cooperative Agreement Number 03135 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Health and Human Services, or the U.S. Government.

For information about Steps to a HealthierFL-Pinellas County visit our website: [www.StepsFL.com](http://www.StepsFL.com) or call 2-1-1 (Pinellas County cell phone users must call 727-210-4211)