

As children reach toddlerhood, they are generally ready for a more structured eating schedule. Whilst toddlers can be difficult to feed, they usually have a very good sense of when they are hungry and when they are not. Offer several balanced meals over the day so they have plenty of opportunities to eat. This way you can relax a little if they do decide to refuse a meal or two.

To ensure your toddler is satisfied and is meeting their nutritional needs provide three main and three mid meals per day. Try some of the following healthy meal ideas and suggestions.

Breakfast

This is usually well received by toddlers unless they have filled up on an early morning milk drink. Some suggestions include:

- ✓ Scrambled egg with wholegrain toast
- ✓ Porridge with banana or strawberries and a sprinkle of cinnamon
- ✓ Wholegrain cereal (such as weetbix) with fruit and milk
- ✓ Veggie fry up with tomato, spinach and mushroom on wholegrain toast



Mid meal snacks for morning and afternoon tea

Consider these as complementary snacks to make up for the meals your toddler may have decided not to eat at other occasions. Avoid reaching for highly processed biscuits and crackers as this will just fill them up with empty calories and prevent them from reaching their nutritional needs. Some healthier options include:

- ✓ Peanut butter or mashed avocado on toast
- ✓ Mini meat balls
- ✓ Cheese sticks with cucumber and corn spears
- ✓ Hardboiled egg and a cup of milk
- ✓ Fruit, yoghurt and cereal cups



Lunch

Offer different food groups to what the toddlers have had in the morning. For example, if they have been eating fruit, cereal and dairy foods try offering meat or alternatives with a side of vegies instead. Some great lunch ideas include:

- ✓ Frittata
- ✓ Baked beans on toast
- ✓ Noodle cakes
- ✓ Egg and lettuce sandwich fingers
- ✓ Mini wraps



Dinner

By the end of the day, toddlers are generally tired and may not feel like eating a large meal for dinner. Don't stress if this is the case. Your toddler may have met their nutritional requirements for the day before dinner time. Keep serving sizes small and focus on spending time as a family. Nutritious family meals which also make great leftovers for lunch the next day include:

- ✓ Spaghetti bolognaise
- ✓ Chicken and corn risotto
- ✓ Beef goulash
- ✓ Creamy vegie pasta



Evening snack

If your toddler is hungry after dinner, allow them to have something small that is easy to digest before bedtime. Try these easy and soothing bedtime snacks:

- ✓ Half a cup of milk
- ✓ Banana and yoghurt
- ✓ Stewed apple topped with a low sugar custard



For child friendly recipe ideas visit
www.actnss.org/recipes