

Body

nobody's perfect

Help Your Child Eat Well

- **Serve healthy meals and snacks.** Your child has a small stomach and can eat very little at one time. He needs to eat often. This can mean three meals and a nourishing snack between meals. Canada's Food Guide has lots of ideas for healthy foods that will help your child grow.
- **Some foods are better than others.** Try to limit "other" foods like cookies, pop, and chips. These foods do not give a growing body what it needs. They can keep your child from eating enough of the foods that she needs to grow and develop.
- **How much is enough?** You may be surprised by how little food your toddler or preschooler needs to eat each day to be healthy. Many parents are not sure how much is enough or too much. Remember, it is your job to provide the right amount of healthy food at regular meals and snack-times. It is your child's job to decide if and how much to eat. Help your child learn to eat only when hungry and to stop when full.



i If you have concerns about how much your child is eating, talk to your health care provider.

For more information about Nobody's Perfect, or to download this document, please search "Nobody's Perfect Tipsheets" on Canada.ca.



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

Canada

Fun & Easy Activities

Food That Looks Fun Enough to Eat

Keep your child interested in eating by making the meal look fun. You can arrange food on the plate to look like something else. Find a funny name for your creation, or ask your child to think of a name. A 4 or 5 year old can help make these “recipes.” Here are some ideas:

- **Ants on a log** – Cut a piece of celery about 6 cm long. Fill it with peanut butter, hummus or cheese. Put a few raisins on top of the filling. Do they look like ants sitting on a log?
- **Funny face pizza** – You can buy a small pizza crust about 15 cm across. Or use a piece of pita bread. Spread some tomato sauce on the crust and grate some cheese on top. If your child is old enough, she can help you do this. Now make a face on the pizza. For example, to make eyes, you can use two tomato slices. For the mouth, try slices of green pepper. For a nose, you can use a small tomato. Put the pizza in the oven till the cheese melts.
- **Sandwich shapes** – Your child will like your sandwiches better if you cut them into interesting shapes. Try cutting some triangles and some circles. You can use a cookie cutter to make heart-shaped sandwiches. Then arrange the shapes on the plate in fun ways.

Playing with Food

Young children can learn to recognize healthy foods. Cut out pictures of food from ads. Look for coloured flyers in grocery stores. Find pictures of vegetables, fruits, bread, cereal, rice, meat, beans, cheese, and milk. Put all the pictures on the table and ask your child to find food he eats for breakfast.

Put these pictures in a pile together. Ask which foods would make a good lunch. Get your child to put them in a pile. Talk about which foods help his body grow.

Now add pictures of cookies, pop and chips. These foods do not give a growing body what it needs. Explain why you do not serve them often.

Look at Canada’s Food Guide for more ideas. Soon your child will be helping you plan healthy meals and snacks.



Body

nobody's perfect

Keeping Your Child Healthy

- **Active play, every day.** To grow and be healthy, your child needs to run, play, and be active. When your child gets enough exercise he is healthier and happier. Play with your child and show him that you have fun being active too.
 - **Limit screen time.** Children are not active when they are watching TV or playing on a computer. These screen-based activities are not recommended for children under 2 years of age. After that, continue to limit the time your child spends in front of a screen.
 - **Help your child get enough sleep.** Most children need about 10 to 14 hours of sleep each day. The younger your child, the more sleep she needs. Without the right amount of sleep, a child's body cannot grow properly. Make a regular bedtime
- part of your daily routine. A quiet time during the day is a good idea even if your child does not sleep.
- **Keeping clean and keeping well.** Keeping clean is an important part of staying healthy. Teach your child to wash his hands often. Explain that he will stay clean and safe from germs. Even when your child is a baby, he only needs a bath 2 or 3 times a week. Keep his face, hands and bottom clean every day.
 - **Clean your child's mouth.** Take care of your baby's gums even before the teeth come in. Later, help your child to brush her teeth in the morning and before bed.
 - **Get regular check-ups.** Take your child to a health care provider and to the dentist for regular check-ups. Make sure your child is immunized.

i Give your child a smoke-free home. Your child needs you to protect him from second-hand smoke.



For more information about Nobody's Perfect, or to download this document, please search "Nobody's Perfect Tipsheets" on Canada.ca.



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

Canada

Fun & Easy Activities

An Obstacle Course at Home

Being active can help your child maintain a healthy weight and have more energy. An obstacle course will encourage your child to move her body in different ways. You can make one in the kitchen or outdoors in the backyard. You can even make a simple one in the park. You have all the materials you need in your home.

For example, if your baby is crawling, open both ends of a large cardboard box. This makes a tunnel. Put her at one end and a toy at the other. Encourage your baby to crawl through the box and get the toy. Build longer obstacle courses as your child gets older and bigger.

Add more challenges to develop her skills. Here are some ideas:

- Turn a chair on its side. Your child crawls over the legs of the chair.
- Make a circle with string on the ground. Your child jumps in and out of the circle three times.

- Put a pair of shoes on the ground. Your child runs around the shoes three times in one direction, then three times in the other direction.
- Make a straight line with string on the ground. Your child walks keeping her feet on the string.
- Give your child a small plastic bag with rice in it. Make sure it is tightly closed. Your child stands still and balances the bag on her head while you count to ten.
- Make this more difficult by asking your child to stand on one leg with the bag on her head. Or ask her to keep the bag on her head and walk backwards ten steps.

Your child will have even more fun if you do the obstacle course with her. Show your child that you have fun being active. Your child learns more from your example than almost anything else.

Good Clean Fun

Children do not always want to wash their hands, take a bath or brush their teeth. It will be easier if you make these activities fun to do.

When your child washes his hands, sing the “ABC” song with him. It will help him understand how long he should be washing. Use lots of soap and rub his hands together to make sure all areas are covered with soap suds. Then rinse his hands under warm running water.

Toys like cups, empty plastic bottles, or sponges make bath night fun. Wash your child while he pours water from one cup into another.



Body

nobody's perfect

Caring for a Sick Child

How Can I Tell If My Child Is Sick? A child who is sick often looks and acts differently from usual. She may say she has a stomach ache or does not feel well. Her skin may be hot and sweaty or it may be pale and cold. Your child may be more sleepy than usual. She may not want to eat or drink. She could look unhappy or become whiny. You know your child best. It may be that she just does not seem right to you.



How can I look after my sick child? Keep your child home. Do not send him to school or day care if he is sick.

- Encourage your child to rest.
- Take his temperature.
- If his skin feels hot, do not put on extra blankets.
- Encourage him to drink extra fluids.

When do I call my child's health care provider? Often you only need to give your child rest and fluids. But sometimes a child becomes more ill and other signs of sickness show up. If you do not know what is wrong or what to do, talk to your health care provider.

Prepare for an appointment. Before you call for an appointment, think about what is wrong. Make notes to remind yourself what to say when you see the health care provider. The more you can tell the health care provider about what is wrong with your child, the sooner your child will get the help she needs.

Understand your health care provider's advice. Your health care provider may tell you things to do at home. If you do not understand, ask again. Repeat the instructions to make sure you understand.

For more information about Nobody's Perfect, or to download this document, please search "Nobody's Perfect Tipsheets" on Canada.ca.



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

Canada

Giving Medicine

When Should I Give Medicine?

Do not give medicine to a baby or child without checking with a health care provider or pharmacist. Giving the wrong medicine or the wrong amount can do more harm than good.

If your health care provider prescribes medicine for your child, there are things you need to know.

- What is the medicine called?
- What is it supposed to do?
- How much should you give your child?
- How often should you give it to your child?
- Should you keep giving it until it is all gone?
- Should you give the medicine with food or on an empty stomach?
- Should your child avoid certain foods while he is taking the medicine?
- Will the medicine interfere with any other medicine your child may be taking?
- Should you wake your child up during the night to give him the medicine?

Stop giving medicine if your child has a reaction. A reaction to medicine could be something like a red rash or vomiting. Call your health care provider right away.

Give your child's medicine only to your child. Give the medicine exactly as prescribed. Do not give your child's medicine to other children. Do not give someone else's medicine to your child. A prescription is given for a particular child with a particular illness. If any medicine is left over after your child's illness, take it back to the pharmacist.

 **Keep all medicines locked up and out of reach of children.**

