

Healthier eating

Childhood is an important time to establish good eating and drinking habits for future health.

Children under five need to eat a variety of foods from the following four food groups:

Fruit and vegetables

Five child-sized portions should be offered each day. Examples of one child-sized portion are:

- ½ apple, ½ pear, ½ banana or ½ orange;
- 1 tablespoon fruit salad, tinned or stewed fruit;
- ½ cup of strawberries or grapes;
- 1 tablespoon cooked or raw vegetables.

Note: to reduce the risk of choking cut up smaller fruits and vegetables like grapes and cherry tomatoes, remove any stones and pips and cut larger items into smaller pieces.



Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

Two servings should be taken every day, ie at lunch and evening meal.

Examples of one serving include:

- 2–3 tablespoons baked beans;
- 2 fish fingers;
- 1 egg;
- 45–60g (1½–2oz) beef, pork, lamb, chicken or fish.



Processed meat products should be given no more than once a week.

Note: to reduce the risk of choking whole nuts should not be given to children under the age of five.

Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy foods

Offer a minimum of one portion with each meal. Examples of one portion are:

- 1 small potato;
- 1 slice of bread;
- 3 tablespoons cooked pasta or two heaped tablespoons cooked rice or 8 oven chips;
- 2 tablespoons low sugar breakfast cereal eg Weetabix, porridge or corn flakes.



Note: offer a variety of the above until five years of age as eating only high fibre choices would fill small children up before they get the nutrients and energy they need.