

AGES & STAGES

Feeding & Nutrition Tips: Your 1-Year-Old

After your child's first birthday, you'll probably notice a sharp drop in his or her appetite. Maybe your child is suddenly turning his or her head away after just a few bites and/or is resisting coming to the table at mealtimes. Despite this behavior and increased activity, there's a good reason for the change. Your child's growth rate has slowed; he or she really doesn't require as much food now.



Tips for Parents:

- **One year olds need about 1,000 calories divided among three meals and two snacks per day** to meet their needs for growth, energy, and good nutrition. Don't count on your child always eating it that way though—the eating habits of toddlers are erratic and unpredictable from one day to the next! For example, your child may:
 - Eat everything in sight at breakfast and almost nothing else for the rest of the day.
 - Eat only the same food for three days in a row—and then reject it entirely.
 - Eat 1,000 calories one day, but then eat noticeably more or less over the next day or two.
- **Encourage, but don't pressure or force your child to eat at a particular time.** Hard as it may be to believe, your child's diet will balance out over several days if you make a range of wholesome foods available.

- **One year olds need foods from the same basic nutrition groups that you do.** If you provide your child with selections from each of the basic food groups (</English/ages-stages/gradeschool/nutrition/Pages/Making-Healthy-Food-Choices.aspx>) and let him or her experiment with a wide variety of tastes, colors, and textures, he or she should be eating a balanced diet with plenty of vitamins.
- **Don't restrict fats from your one-year-old's menu.** Babies and young toddlers should get about half of their calories from fat. Cholesterol and other fats are also very important for their growth and development at this age. Once your child has reached age two, you can gradually decrease fat consumption (lowering it to about one-third of daily calories by ages four to five). *See [Preschoolers' Diets Shouldn't Be Fat-Free: Here's Why](/English/ages-stages/preschool/nutrition-fitness/Pages/Reducing-Dietary-Fat-for-Preschoolers.aspx) (/English/ages-stages/preschool/nutrition-fitness/Pages/Reducing-Dietary-Fat-for-Preschoolers.aspx) for more information.*
- **Be sure the food is cool enough to prevent mouth burns.** Test the temperature yourself, because he or she will dig in without considering the heat.
- **Don't give foods that are heavily spiced, salted, buttered, or sweetened.** These additions prevent your child from experiencing the natural taste of foods, and they may be harmful to long-term good health.
- **Your little one can still choke on chunks of food.** Children don't learn to chew with a grinding motion until they're about four years old. Make sure anything you give your child is mashed or cut into small, easily chewable pieces.
 - Never offer peanuts, whole grapes, cherry tomatoes (unless they're cut in quarters), whole carrots, seeds (i.e., processed pumpkin or sunflower seeds), whole or large sections of hot dogs, meat sticks, or hard candies (including jelly beans or gummy bears), or chunks of peanut butter (it's fine to thinly spread peanut butter on a cracker or bread).
 - Hot dogs and carrots— in particular—should be quartered lengthwise and then sliced into small pieces.
- **Make sure your child eats only while seated and while supervised by an adult.** Although your one-year-old may want to do everything at once, "eating on the run" or while talking increases the risk of choking. Teach your child as early as possible to finish a mouthful prior to speaking.

Additional Information from HealthyChildren.org:

- Sample Menu for a One-Year-Old (</English/ages-stages/baby/feeding-nutrition/Pages/Sample-One-Day-Menu-for-a-One-Year-Old.aspx>)
- Making Sure Your Child is Eating Enough (</English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Making-Sure-Your-Child-is-Eating-Enough.aspx>)

- [Serving Sizes for Toddlers \(/English/ages-stages/toddler/nutrition/Pages/Serving-Sizes-for-Toddlers.aspx\)](/English/ages-stages/toddler/nutrition/Pages/Serving-Sizes-for-Toddlers.aspx)
- [Selecting Snacks for Toddlers \(/English/ages-stages/toddler/nutrition/Pages/Selecting-Snacks-for-Toddlers.aspx\)](/English/ages-stages/toddler/nutrition/Pages/Selecting-Snacks-for-Toddlers.aspx)

Last Updated 12/29/2016

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