



TODDLERS – the fussy feeders

As discussed in the March edition of Footprints, solids (foods) are recommended by the World Health Organisation to be introduced to infants from around six months of age. By seven to eight months of age it is suggested that the texture of foods changes gradually from pureed to a more mashed, lumpy consistency. The variety of foods also increases so that by twelve months of age your child is eating foods similar to the rest of the family.

At around 18 months many new changes are emerging for your toddler and for some parents. What emerges is that their child no longer is interested in food, is a very fussy eater, or eats sporadically.

Why are toddlers picky eaters?

After a year of rapid growth when a baby generally triples its birth weight, in the ages from one to three years toddlers gain weight at a much slower rate. Anywhere from one to three kilograms per year would be appropriate, therefore they require less food.

Toddlers are BUSY BUSY BUSY! Play is now their priority, not food, so the act of sitting down to meals is really not compatible with their busy exploring lifestyle. They are their own experts in regulating their appetite. Erratic eating behaviour is normal. They can eat non stop one day and then practically nothing the next. From one to three years of age toddlers need between 1,000 to 1,300 calories/day. Yet they may not get this amount every day, so aim for a nutritionally balanced week, not day.

Tips for feeding toddlers.

- 1 Nibble tray – provide a smorgasbord of foods to graze on – ham, cheese, sultanas, pretzels, fruits. Place little nibbles on a tray near where your toddler plays and let them snack healthily. A child's behaviour can deteriorate towards the end of the morning or afternoon. Behaviour is worst the longer they go without food, so healthy grazing minimises blood sugar swings and therefore can lessen undesirable behaviour.
- 2 Dip it – kids think that dipping food into a tasty dip is fun and delightfully messy. Cut up fruit sticks and dip into yoghurt; or veggies, cheese and crackers and dip into cheese or guacamole dip.
- 3 Spread it – teach toddlers how to smear their own bread with peanut butter or vegemite. The more involved they are in the creation the more excited they are to eat it.
- 4 Top it – make a tasty addition to foods by topping it with tasty cheese or guacamole onto veggies.
- 5 Drink it – make a healthy smoothie. Add milk and fruit along with yoghurt, wheat germ, honey – this can be the basis of a healthy meal.
- 6 Cut it up - how much a child eats will often depend on how you cut it up. Use cookie cutters to create fun shapes in toast, sandwiches, potato chips, veggies etc.

More tips in later editions.

EVENTS FOR MAY

25 May – Moving & Munching: Healthy Schools for Healthy Kids! at the School of Rural Health, University of Melbourne, Graham Street, Shepparton.

This is a free conference for teachers, parents and those interested in improving childhood nutrition and physical activity. Call Jenny Burrows 5832 9863.

children are sweet enough

They don't need sweet drinks like fruit juices and fruit drinks, flavoured milk, soft drinks, flavoured mineral water, cordials, sports drinks and energy drinks. Limit sweet drinks and tap into water everyday.

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Are you up to date with your child's Maternal and Child Health ages and stages check?



MAY IS

BRING A FRIEND TO PLAYGROUP MONTH

Bring a new family along to your playgroup during the month of May and you will receive a 'buy one, get one free' child swim pass to Aquamoves (one pass per family).

Playgroup is great fun for children and adults and we want as many people as possible to experience the fun on offer. So spread the word and bring a friend along to your next playgroup session.

For more information please see your playgroup leader.

Book review

My name is Jesse and I am in Grade 1 at Orrvale Primary School. I love Dr Seuss books but my favorite is "Inside Outside Upside Down". It is a rhyming story about a boy who climbs into a box that is picked up by a truck and taken to town by mistake. The best part is when the box falls off the truck and that's how he ends up getting home.



TIPS

These fritters are great cold and are perfect to send to school or work as a light lunch or a snack.

For something a little different, you could also add a small handful of alfalfa sprouts to the fritter mix - it's another way to boost the nutritional value.

If you would prefer not to use sour-cream, you can also use low-fat natural yoghurt with a little sweet chilli sauce mixed in.



Three Vegetable Fritters

- 1 cup white self-raising flour
- ½ cup wholemeal self-raising flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 300g can corn kernels, drained
- 1 medium carrot, grated
- 1 medium zucchini, grated
- 1/2 cup reduced fat grated cheese
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup soy or dairy milk
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

1. Sift flour and salt into a large bowl. Add vegetables and cheese.
 2. Combine eggs and milk. Stir liquid ingredients into dry ingredients
 3. Heat oil in a large non-stick frypan. Add ¼ cupfuls of mixture to the pan and cook until golden brown on both sides and cooked through.
 4. Serve with light sour cream and sweet chilli sauce.
- Makes 16

Recipe Nutrition Facts

Per serve:
500 kilojoules (115 calories).
Protein 5g. Fat 5g. Carbohydrate 13g. Sodium 200mg. Potassium 100mg. Calcium 50mg. Iron 0.6mg. Fibre 2g

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