

Nutrition for kids: Guidelines for a healthy diet

Introduction You want your child to eat healthy, but what makes up a healthy diet? Which nutrients are necessary and in what amounts? Nutrition for kids essentially is the same as nutrition for adults. In fact, everyone, regardless of age, needs the same types of nutrients — such as, carbohydrates, protein, fat, vitamins and minerals — just in different amounts. So what's the best formula to fuel your child's growth and development? Click on the tabs to the left for the recommended nutrients within the different age groups. If you have concerns specific to your child's diet, talk to your doctor or a registered dietitian.

		2 to 3 years 		Girls and boys ages 2 to 3	
Calories	1,000 to 1,400, depending on age and activity level	Protein	5% to 20% of daily calories		
Carbohydrates	45% to 65% of daily calories (at least 130 grams)	Total fat	30% to 40% of daily calories		
Sodium	1,000 milligrams a day	Fiber	19 grams a day	Calcium	500
milligrams a day	 	4 to 8 years: Girls 		Girls ages 4 to 8	
	1,200 to 1,800, depending on age and activity level	Protein	10% to 30% of daily calories		
Carbohydrates	45% to 65% of daily calories (at least 130 grams)	Total fat	25% to 35% of daily calories		
Sodium	1,200 milligrams a day	Fiber	25 grams a day	Calcium	800
milligrams a day	 	4 to 8 years: Boys 		Boys ages 4 to 8	
	1,400 to 2,000, depending on age and activity level	Protein	10% to 30% of daily calories		
Carbohydrates	45% to 65% of daily calories (at least 130 grams)	Total fat	25% to 35% of daily calories		
Sodium	1,200 milligrams a day	Fiber	25 grams a day	Calcium	800
milligrams a day	 	9 to 13 years: Girls 		Girls ages 9 to 13	
	1,600 to 2,200, depending on age and activity level	Protein	10% to 30% of daily calories		
Carbohydrates	45% to 65% of daily calories (at least 130 grams)	Total fat	25% to 35% of daily calories		
Sodium	1,500 milligrams a day	Fiber	26 grams a day	Calcium	1,300
milligrams a day	 	9 to 13 years: Boys 		Boys ages 9 to 13	
	1,800 to 2,600, depending on age and activity level	Protein	10% to 30% of daily calories		
Carbohydrates	45% to 65% of daily calories (at least 130 grams)	Total fat	25% to 35% of daily calories		
Sodium	1,500 milligrams a day	Fiber	31 grams a day	Calcium	1,300
milligrams a day	 	14 to 18 years: Girls 		Girls ages 14 to 18	
	1,800 to 2,400, depending on age and activity level	Protein	10% to 30% of daily calories		
Carbohydrates	45% to 65% of daily calories (at least 130 grams)	Total fat	25% to 35% of daily calories		
Sodium	1,500 milligrams a day	Fiber	26 grams a day	Calcium	1,300
milligrams a day	 	14 to 18 years: Boys 		Boys ages 14 to 18	
	2,200 to 3,200, depending on age and activity level	Protein	10% to 30% of daily calories		
Carbohydrates	45% to 65% of daily calories (at least 130 grams)	Total fat	25% to 35% of daily calories		
Sodium	1,500 milligrams a day	Fiber	38 grams a day	Calcium	1,300
milligrams a day					

About the Author

Mayo Clinic

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