



BeKi
fitEssen
schmeckt!

Dear parents,

A balanced, varied diet is very important for the development, health and wellbeing of your child. In this leaflet you will get to know, how to interest your child in it and how easily you can implement healthy eating. At the same time your child learns to enjoy food.

Nutrition Guidelines

SUGGESTION:

If your child doesn't feel hungry in the morning, make sure to wake him or her up early enough. This will reduce stress in the early morning and your child will have sufficient time to eat breakfast. It would be best to have breakfast together, as this improves the appetite. If all of this, and your good example, won't help and your child eats very little, the mid-morning snack needs to be more nutritious.

A healthy start to the day

Children need lots of energy to play and to achieve in school. No child should leave home without a decent breakfast. Ideally a good start to the day would be i.e. muesli with milk or another dairy product, wholemeal cereals and some sliced fruit or a slice of wholemeal or granary bread with a savoury topping and some vegetable sticks.

Eating together is fun

A warm meal during the day is recommended. It doesn't matter, if this is lunch or supper. It is important that it consists of plenty of vegetables and starchy foods like potatoes, rice or another grain plus 2 – 3 times a week a small portion of meat or fish. Eating with the family the food tastes much better and it provides an opportunity for everybody to share their experiences of the day.

Besides the three main meals - in the morning, at midday and in the evening, it is good to have two snacks during the day. This could be small pieces of fruit or vegetables, yoghurt, a small sandwich or sometimes a small piece of cake.

SUGGESTION:

Meals together are important to children. Try at least to make this happen once a day. Regular times for meals allows for better planning for all family members.

Recommendations to make wholesome food and drink tasty:

Everyone has food which does not taste good to her or him. This is the same for children.

- Present the food in an interesting and varied way. If possible, your child should try a small piece of all the different foods, not only the ones they know and already like.
- Encourage your child to assist in the preparation of the meals. Many children like cooking and often it tastes much better to them. Even new foods are accepted more easily this way.
- Try to avoid discussions about meals. Plan your meals for a whole week in advance
- Allow your child to choose one meal per week.
- If your child is hungry and wants some food, offer something like an apple, banana or some yoghurt, a slice of bread or some vegetables. Even small children do not need to eat continually.

Very important: Be patient! Changes in the eating pattern can't be achieved within a few days. Aim to accustom your child slowly to eating more fruit, vegetables, wholemeal and dairy products. Limit the quantity of sweets and guide them to a sensible consumption. To ban them completely is not necessary and may make them even more attractive. Be a good example and watch how your child spends its pocket money.



Baden-Württemberg

MINISTERIUM FÜR LÄNDLICHEN RAUM
UND VERBRAUCHERSCHUTZ



The circle of foods – a guidance for a balanced diet

In order for you to know exactly, which foods are recommended for you and your child, the food circle with its seven sections was developed. The larger the section of a food is in the circle, the more frequently this food should be consumed, i.e. grains have

the largest section of the circle and we should eat it several times during the day. Fats and oils are a small group, which we should use sparingly.

1. Drinks

Water has essential qualities, so it is very important in our diet. Children have a high fluid requirement, it lies between 0,75 l - 1 l a day. Good drinks would be tap water or mineral water, unsweetened teas as well as mixtures of juice and water (2 parts water to 1 part juice). Soft drinks, ice-tea and other sweetened drinks as well as caffeine containing drinks are not suitable for children. Alcohol is strictly forbidden!

2. Grains, Cereals and Potatoes

Foods in this group build the basis of our nutrition and are consumed as bread, muesli or a side dish throughout the day. They supply energy and various nutrients as well as fibre. Since most nutrients are in the outer layers of the grain, you should use wholemeal products like wholegrain bread or wholemeal cereals every day. Finely ground wholegrain rolls or bread are liked by children and are easily digestible.

3. Vegetables and Pulses

Vegetables and pulses are rich in vitamins, minerals and fibre and therefore important for the development of your child. Use the large colourful variety of vegetables and prepare them in different ways, i.e. raw, cooked or as gratin. Many children prefer raw vegetables and like it together with a dip as a snack between meals.



4. Fruit

Fruit tastes sweet and refreshing and most children enjoy them. Fruit as a dessert or as a snack satisfy the desire for sweetness reducing the longing for sweets. Offer a variety of fruit according to the season and the region. Each kind of fruit has its own specific taste and smell, it can be prepared in various ways and consists of many different nutrients.

5. Milk and Dairy Products

Milk and dairy products are the most significant provider of calcium in our diet. This mineral is very important for the development of our bones and teeth. If your child doesn't like milk or can't digest it, try yoghurt, cheese, buttermilk, sour milk or quark.

6. Meat, Fish and Eggs

Meat contains a lot of digestible iron and valuable vitamins. Meat should be on your menu twice a week. Choose low fat sausages or ham. Pâté and salami contain a lot of fat. Saltwater fish provide iodine and should be eaten once a week. The wide selection of fish and various ways of preparation help with variety on the menu. Children can eat more than just fish fingers. Salt with added iodine helps to provide enough iodine. Many children like eggs. They are nutritious and can be used in various ways. 2-3 eggs a week are sufficient for children, this includes the ones used for cooking cake, pasta or gratins. A balanced diet with a broad range of food without meat and fish, but including various dairy products and eggs would be sufficient for children.

7. Fats and Oils

Fat is essential, but it should be used sparingly. For cooking use vegetable oils like rape seed oil and on bread use butter or margarine. When shopping look for the hidden fats in sausages, cheeses, nuts, seeds, chips, crisps or sweets.

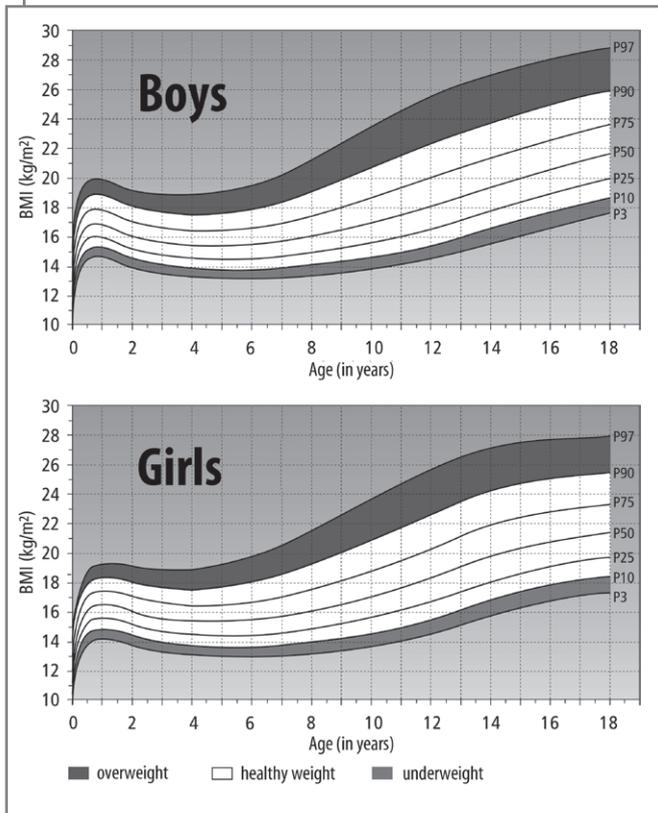
Salts and Spices

Salt and spices have no section in the food circle as they play only a small part in our nutrition. Use only a little salt and try herbs for more flavour. Abstain from hot spices – they are not wholesome to children.



The appropriate weight for your child

A healthy child is neither over nourished nor under nourished. A sufficient, balanced diet ensures that your child will develop well and that it will be prepared for the demands of life.



If you have the impression, your child is either over or under nourished, the following chart will assist you: With this chart you can easily identify the BMI, the body mass index. The BMI is an index for the body size. Divide the weight of your child in kg with its height in meters squared.

Example: a 7 year old child weighs 24 kg and is 1,23 m tall: 24 kg divided by 1,23 m x 1,23 m. The BMI would be 15,9, this is the norm for this age.

Sweets

Chocolate, candies and crisps are popular with children. The high content of sugar and/or fat can result in poor dental health and overweight. For a balanced diet sweets are not needed. There is no recommended daily intake. Experts say that sweets and pastry should not count for more than 10% of your daily energy intake regarding these as supplementary foods.

A 4 – 6 year old child should not eat more than 150 calories as sweets. This could be

1 small piece of fruit cake or 1 scoop of ice cream and 1 teaspoon of jam or 5 pieces of chocolate. A child of 10 – 12 years should consume not more than 200 calories, which would be 2 scoops of ice cream or 5 pieces of chocolate and 1 teaspoon of jam.

Remember, you are the model for your child. Be careful not to use sweets as a reward, as an incentive, to comfort or calm or as a distraction. Buy only small amounts of sweets.

Encourage your child to eat small portions with pleasure. Older children need to understand the importance of choosing what to consume out of the broad selection available.

Foods specially designed for children

On the supermarkets shelves you will find a large variety of children's food i.e. dairy desserts, bakery, pasta, sausages and drinks. Children's food have no extra benefit in the composition of their ingredients or their nutrients to normal food. They are not required in a balanced diet. Already young children in their second year of life do not need any special products.

Exercise is fun!

Playing outdoors is fun and promotes movement. Encourage your child to do this, and include exercise also in the normal daily routine, i.e. walk/cycle to kindergarten or school.

Discuss together which type of sport your child might enjoy. Many organizations have specific programmes for children. These encourage exercise and might establish new contacts amongst children at low costs.

To prevent overweight sufficient exercise is important together with maintaining a balanced diet. Combined this is the best way to be fit, healthy and slim.

Photographs: Landesbildstelle Baden, Graphics: Dorothea Tust, Sigi Bütefisch