

Nutrition Tips for Raising Healthy Children

- Make sure your child eats breakfast. Breakfast provides children with the energy they need to listen and learn in school
- Involve your child in planning and preparing meals. Children may be more willing to eat the dishes they help fix
- Give your children plenty of water
- Have family meals together and serve everyone the same thing.
- Give your child a snack in addition to his or her three daily meals. Here are some healthy snack ideas your kids will enjoy:
 - * Dried fruit and nut mix
 - * Fresh fruits or vegetables
 - * Low-fat yogurt
 - * Whole grain crackers
 - * Whole grain bread or crackers with low-fat cheese or peanut butter
 - * Pretzels
 - * Air popped popcorn
 - * Homemade fruit smoothie made with low-fat milk or yogurt and fruit



- One last tip. Give your kids child-sized portions and let them ask for more food if they are still hungry. Also, forcing children to clean their plates or saying things like, “finish your food so you can be big like grandpa!” may send them the wrong health message.

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Bronx Health REACH works with the Bronx faith-based community to improve health and get access to better health care. If you have any questions about Bronx Health REACH, contact us at 212-633-0800 ext. 1232..
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*MARCH IS NATIONAL
NUTRITION MONTH*

Milk Does the Body Good... Low-Fat Milk Does Even Better!

OBESITY is an epidemic in New York City, and our children are at high risk. 43% of public elementary school students are overweight or obese in the city, and the rates are even higher in the Bronx. Being obese in childhood increases the likelihood of adult obesity, which is associated with diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, and cancer.

You can help your children develop healthy eating habits now by giving them calcium rich foods that help to lower body fat levels. Because calcium is important for growing bones, children 2 to 8 years should drink two cups per day of 1% or skim milk, and children 9 years and older should drink three cups per day.

By teaching children the importance of good nutrition and regular physical activity early, they will learn good habits at a young age.



Why Switch to Low Fat Milk?

The American Academy of Pediatrics advises that parents begin giving their children low fat milk after the age of two. Because your child will be likely to get plenty of fat from other things that he or she is eating, keeping the calories down by drinking low fat milk will help your child stay at a healthy weight.

And, starting early can help your child develop preferences for low fat foods that will lead to a lifetime of eating well.

What's the Big Deal About Low Fat Milk?

Children who drink low fat milk are consuming significantly fewer calories and fat than those who drink whole milk.

Here is the breakdown:

Whole Milk	150 Calories	8g Fat
2% Milk	120 Calories	4.5g Fat
1% Milk	100 Calories	2.5g Fat
Skim Milk	80 Calories	0g Fat

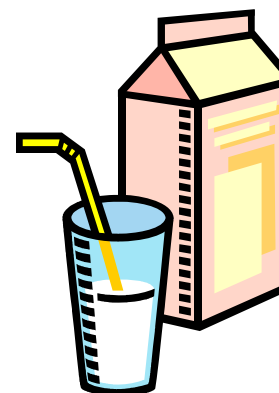


This means that an average 5 year old who switches from whole milk to 1% and usually drinks 3 cups daily would save 150 calories a day. Although that doesn't sound like much, since you gain about a pound for every 3,500 calories you consume, those extra 150 calories might cost you an extra pound in body weight every 3 weeks or so!

What If Your Child Won't Drink Low Fat Milk?

It can be a big change to go from whole milk to skim milk. Making the switch at an early age is much easier than doing it when your child is older, when they are more likely to notice and be resistant to drinking low fat milk. Still, even with young children, it is a good idea to make a gradual switch, going first to 2% milk and then moving to 1% or skim.

Soy milk and rice milk is also low fat, so either one would also be a good choice once your child is 2 years old, especially if he or she is allergic to cow's milk or has lactose intolerance.



Success in Schools

The New York City public schools recently recognized that low fat milk is the healthiest option for our children. In 2006, the New York City school district — the largest in the country — completely eliminated whole milk from their cafeterias.

Since your child already drinks low fat milk at school, let's make the change at home as well.