

## Maintaining Health and Wellbeing

### Healthy Eating

Between the age of one and five years children grow very quickly and are usually very active, so they need plenty of calories and nutrients. Encourage a variety of foods from the 4 main food groups below to provide the nutrients your child needs.

- Eat at least five portions of a fruit and vegetables every day – a under five's child's portion is:
  - 25 ml orange/apple juice diluted with water
  - Small banana
  - Half apple, pear, nectarine
  - 40g portion of vegetables
- Include bread, and other foods such as rice, pasta and breakfast cereals, potatoes, yams and sweet potatoes – remember that children's stomachs can't cope with foods such as whole wheat pasta and brown rice. Also, too much fibre can sometimes reduce the amount of minerals they can absorb, such as calcium and iron.
- Meat, fish, eggs, beans, peas and lentils – these are rich in nutrients such as protein, vitamins and minerals. You can give boys up to four portions of oily fish a week such as mackerel, salmon and sardines, but it's best to give girls no more than two portions of oily fish a week.
- Milk and dairy foods – these provide calories, protein, vitamins and minerals. From two years old, you can start giving your toddler semi-skimmed milk. Fully skimmed milk isn't suitable as main drink until they are five years old,

### Useful Contacts

.....

because it doesn't contain enough calories for a growing child.

- Although under five's can eat the same foods as adults, before they are two years old children can't eat large amounts of food at one sitting. So until then, give your child meals and snacks packed with nutrient dense foods such as: full-fat milk and dairy foods, meat and eggs as well as some fruit, vegetables and non-wholemeal starchy foods.
- As your child becomes older they may still require snacks but ensure that snacking is not too frequent. Over frequent and inappropriate snacks can lead to children not eating at meal times. Limit non-nutritious sugary and savoury snacks such as crisp, sweets and chocolate to treats rather than daily items, better choices include
  - Plain biscuits, breadsticks, Melba toast, toast, crumpets, currant buns or teacakes, pitta bread or sandwiches.
  - Home made plain popcorn or non-sugar coated cereals
  - Dried or fresh fruit, carrot sticks
  - Yoghurt and fromage frais, preferably plain with added fruit.

## Maintaining Health and Wellbeing

### Healthy Eating

- By the time they are five years old, young children should be eating family food, which is more bulky as it contains lots of starchy foods and plenty of fruit and vegetables. But make sure it doesn't contain too much saturated fat, which is found in butter, hard-fat spreads, cheese, fatty meat and meat and meat products, biscuits, pastry and cakes.
- Drinks – Milk and water are the best drinks to give in between meals, sweetened drinks such as fizzy drinks and fruit squash should be avoided. If you do give fruit squash or sugary drinks, make sure they're well diluted with water and drunk at mealtimes.
- There is no need to add salt to your child's food. From the age of one to three, children should be having no more than 2g a day. If you are buying processed foods, even those aimed at children, remember to check the information given on the labels to choose those with less salt.
- Take care to avoid the following foods:
  - Raw eggs and food that contains raw or partially cooked eggs because of the risk of salmonella, which causes food poisoning. If you give eggs to your toddler, make sure eggs are cooked until both the white and yolk are solid.
  - Whole or chopped nuts for children under five years old because of the risk of choking.

### Useful Contacts

.....

- It's a good idea to crush or flake them.
- Shark, swordfish and marlin because these fish contain high levels of mercury, which might affect a child's developing nervous system.
- The department of health recommends that if you have any concerns about the adequacy of your child's diet up to then children up to the age of five are given supplements of vitamins A, C and D.

### Food Standard Agency (FSA)

[www.eatwell.gov.uk](http://www.eatwell.gov.uk)

**The Wealdstone Centre** has classes on healthy eating:

The Wealdstone Centre  
38-42 High Street,  
Wealdstone  
HA3 7AE

Tel: 020 8420 9380

Email: [info@harrowhlc.org.uk](mailto:info@harrowhlc.org.uk)

[www.harrowhlc.org.uk](http://www.harrowhlc.org.uk)