



KidFood

Healthy Eating for Today's Kids

Nutrition Matters

February 2014

A Sweet Tooth

Yes, children do have a sweet tooth.
They do like sweet foods - candy, cookies, bars, and ice cream -
and get excited when sweets are offered to them.

You can't stop your child from ever eating sweets ever.
But you do have control over what types of foods are available in your home.

Keep your home stocked with healthy choices that are ready to grab and eat for snacks:

- A container of cut up carrot sticks or baby carrots, broccoli spears, or cherry tomatoes in the refrigerator.
- Dish of peeled oranges segments, rinsed grapes, blueberries, strawberries, pineapple chunks, or kiwi slices in the refrigerator.
- Bowl of bananas on the counter - ready to peel and eat.
- Whole grain crackers, popcorn, pretzels, or yogurt.

Choose processed foods low in sugar; read the label:

- Buy 100% juices with no sugar added. And limit to one 6-oz serving a day.
- Don't keep sugary drinks in your refrigerator. Drink water when thirsty.
- Buy fruits canned in 100% juice or water, not syrup.
- Choose the yogurt with less sugar. Or buy plain yogurt and sweeten with fresh fruit.
- Buy breakfast cereals low in sugar.
- Read the label on breads, crackers, rolls, muffins, and other baked foods; they can be high in added sugars and unhealthy fats.



Why Are Sweet Foods a Problem?

Eating too many sweets can cause tooth decay, unhealthy weight, or a fussy eater.

- **Tooth decay.** A child who eats lots of sweets is more likely to have tooth decay. Cavities hurt.
- **Extra Calories.** Sweets can add up to a lot of extra calories, and your child could become overweight.
- **A Fussy Eater.** A child can learn to prefer sweet foods and refuse to eat anything that is not sweet.



Want your child to eat healthy snacks?

Eat healthy snacks with your child. Your child will not want to eat an apple, if he sees you eating candy. Eat an apple with your child!

Small children want to eat what they see.

Keep healthy snacks in your house. Do not buy soda, cookies, candy, and other sweets when you go to the store. You have control over what types of food are in your home.

It is okay to have an occasional sweet, but not every day.

Once or twice a week is enough. When you have a sweet food, eat a small amount. Your child is watching and learning!

Offer Healthy Snacks

Fresh fruit - apple slices, bananas, oranges, melon chunks, kiwi

Baby carrots or carrot sticks

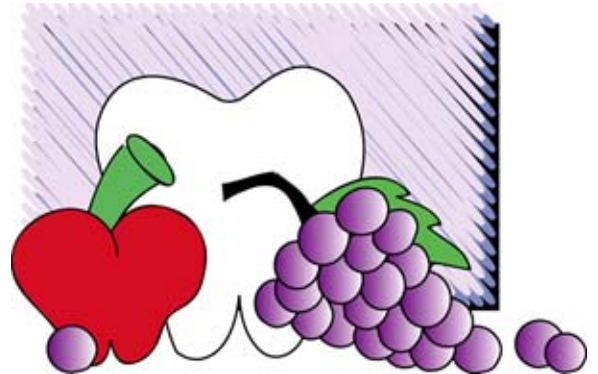
Broccoli or cauliflower pieces

Cheese slices, string cheese, low-sugar yogurt

Hard cooked eggs

Protect Your Child's Teeth and Smile!

- ☺ **Eating sweets often during the day can cause cavities.** Bacteria are always living in your child's mouth. These bacteria use sugar to make acid. This acid can cause cavities. Limit sweets!
- ☺ **Holding sweets in the mouth for a long time can cause cavities.** Sucking on hard candy will keep sugar in your child's mouth for a long time. Drinking sweet drinks and juice often during the day can cause cavities.
- ☺ **Sticky and chewy sugary foods can stick to your child's teeth and cause cavities.** Sticky sweets and fruit rollups can stick to teeth and cause cavities. Choose fresh fruit for snacks.
- ☺ **Thirsty? Drink water.** Offer unsweetened water between snacks and meals.
- ☺ **Limit juice** to 6 ounces or less each day. Snack on whole fruits. Drinking juice and other sweet drinks throughout the day can cause cavities.
- ☺ **Stop the baby bottle.** Wean your toddler from the bottle by 1 year of age.
- ☺ **Water in sippy cup.** Let your toddler use a sippy with only plain water in it.
- ☺ **Wean from the sippy cup.** Use a regular cup or glass without a lid when eating meals and snacks. Let your toddler practice drinking from a regular cup or glass without a lid at meals and snacks. Put a small amount of milk, juice, or water in the cup. Refill as needed to limit spills.



What Can You Do?

- Eat fruits, veggies, and other low sugar snacks with my child.
- Drink water between meals and snacks.
- Keep a dish of fruits or veggies in my refrigerator ready to eat.
- Other: _____





PLACER-NEVADA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OFFICE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
11477 E AVENUE (Building 306, DeWitt Center)
AUBURN, CA 95603

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ROGER INGRAM, County Director
MICHELE FISCH, Nutrition BEST Program Representative

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University of California
Cooperative Extension
11477 E Avenue
Auburn, CA 95603
Phone: 530-889-7350
Fax: 530-889-7397
Email: ceplacer@ucanr.edu
Website: <http://ceplacer.ucanr.edu>

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