



**Maternal & Family
Health Services**

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Grade School Nutrition

Nutrition is important to normal growth processes, and it is important that children of grade school age consume a well-balanced diet. Your child's need for calories rises during times of rapid growth, gradually increasing as they move through middle childhood into puberty.

As the middle years progress, children's total energy needs will increase and their food intake will rise, especially as they approach puberty.

Between ages seven and ten, both boys and girls consume about 1,600 to 2,400 calories per day, although caloric needs vary considerably even under normal circumstances.

During times of rapid growth, children will probably require more total calories and nutrients than at any other period in their lives.

Calcium intake is important to encourage bone growth and protein is key for building body tissue.

Your child should consume a variety of foods from the five major food groups. Each food group supplies important nutrients, including vitamins and minerals.

The five food groups:

- Vegetables: 3-5 servings per day
- Fruits: 2-4 servings per day.
- Bread, cereal, or pasta: 6-11 servings per day.
- Protein foods: 2-3 servings per day
- Dairy products: 2-3 servings per day

Tips for healthy food options:

- Limit intake of high sugar foods and beverages
- Choose water and low-fat or fat-free dairy milk (or lactose free or fortified soy versions) when you're thirsty.
- Limit high sodium and processed foods
- Choose whole grains-try oatmeal, brown rice and whole grain breads
- Eat more fruits and veggies-make half your plate fruits and veggies each day.
- Stay active! Include one hour of exercise or physical activity daily

