

## What is the Importance of Good Nutrition for Kids?



There's no doubt about it: Kids are picky eaters. Some kids only want to eat one type of food, some kids won't try any new foods and some kids won't eat any foods of a particular color. Good nutrition is incredibly important for kids even though maintaining it is often difficult for their parents. Proper nutrition is essential during childhood so that a child grows to obtain a healthy height and weight, can concentrate in school and does not have any nutritional deficiencies.

### Growing Bones and Muscles

During the time period from birth to age 5, the human body goes through its most rapid growth. Children's bodies are transitioning from crawling to walking and then to running and playing sports. Childhood is a time when healthy and strong bones and muscles are imperative so that they do not injure their muscles or break their bones because of a lack of nutrients. Calcium from milk, cheese and yogurt helps to strengthen the child's bones as they grow bigger and taller. Protein from foods like eggs and peanut butter fuels the muscles so kids can run around and play without damaging muscle tissue.

### Prevention of Nutritional Deficiencies

Many nutritional deficiencies, such as rickets and scurvy, used to be common for children to have but are now very rare. This is because we now know that proper nutrition prevents the dangerous effects of disorders caused by nutritional deficiencies. It is important to make sure children get enough vitamins and minerals, by eating foods from all of the recommended food groups daily, especially fruits and vegetables.

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# WHAT WE'RE READING...



February 2014 | [livestrong.com](http://livestrong.com) | Sarah Davis | Nutrition

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### Prevention of Obesity

Childhood obesity is becoming such a problem that obesity-related health problems which adults often have are now appearing in children for the first time. There are now cases of type two

diabetes and high cholesterol in young school children. If children are taught good nutrition practices by their parents, they are less likely to be over-nourished and become obese. Good nutrition habits like eating fruits and vegetables every day and limiting sugar intake prevents childhood obesity related problems that can last an entire lifetime for the child.

### **Eating Habits for Life**

Kids are influenced by what their parents eat. If they see their mom or dad modeling healthy eating behaviors such as eating fruit as a snack, children will be more likely to do the same. Good nutrition is important during childhood because this is the time period when life long habits are formed. If a child is raised to drink sodas whenever she wants to, she will be likely to continue those unhealthy habits into adulthood, which will eventually cause health problems.

### **Learning Concentration**

A child's performance in school is very much related to the child's eating habits. For instance, children who eat breakfast have better concentration in school than children who skip breakfast. Good nutrition practices involve eating breakfast every morning so that the child will be nourished and ready to focus. Focus and concentration in school result in better learning, which in turn results in more opportunities in life.

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