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Great Finger Foods for Toddlers

Tips for Hands-on Toddler Meals

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Simplify meal time by offering your toddlers nutritious finger foods that they can feed themselves.

Toddlers are working to gain their independence as they learn to do more things on their own. Self feeding is a fun skill for toddlers to master and helps to make meal time less of a struggle. Simple finger foods can provide well rounded nutrition for toddlers and help them to feed themselves at meal time.

Soft Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables always make a wonderful snack for toddlers. It is important to introduce your toddlers to a large variety of fruits and vegetables while they are young so they develop a taste for them. Slice bananas, strawberries, and soft pears into small pieces. Smaller fruits like blueberries or raspberries can be served whole.

Cucumbers, peeled, quartered, and sliced into toddler sized pieces make a wonderful mild snack. Cooked peas, corn, and green beans can help toddlers practice using their pincher grip to develop small motor skills as they enjoy a healthy meal. Some vegetables are too hard for toddlers to eat raw but when cooked they become a wonderful treat. Cooked carrots, sweet potatoes, and potatoes are nice and soft and can be added to any meal. Cube the potatoes and cook them so that they are just soft so toddlers can eat them with their fingers.

Cereals and Grains

Unsweetened cereals make a great snack. Be sure that the cereal you are feeding your toddler is made of whole grains and does not have added ingredients and preservatives that your toddler does not need. Whole grain crackers, pita bread, and wheat bread can be eaten on their own or spread with nutritious toppings such as peanut butter or hummus. Dipping can make snacks fun for preschoolers and are a great way to get some add nutrition to their daily diet.

Cut Meats

Cooked chicken or soft beef such as pot roast can be cut into small pieces for toddlers to feed themselves. Lunch meat can be cut with small cookie cutters to make fun shapes that toddlers will enjoy eating. Many toddlers will enjoy meat on it's own but if your toddler prefers some extra flavor with their meal you can try serving meat with a small serving of ranch dressing or gravy.

Cheese

Cheese sticks are always fun for toddlers but you have to make sure that your toddler does not try to put too much of the cheese stick in his mouth at one time. Cheese cubes can add some protein and calcium to any meal or snack. Cheese can also be cut into quarter inch slices and cut with a cookie cutter just as deli meat can be to create fun shapes for your toddler to enjoy.

Meal time does not have to be a struggle. There are many healthy finger food options that your toddler can enjoy during meal times and as healthy snacks. Most of the foods that you serve the rest of the family can be modified slightly to make them more toddler-friendly. Help your toddler develop a lifelong habit of healthy eating by providing them with a variety of nutritious foods every day.

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