

FEEDING YOUR TODDLER

From 2 to 4 years

At Karitane, we are aware that mealtimes can be a challenge at times. Toddlers will eat different amounts on different days. This depends on their day's activity, if they are tired or unwell.

- Offer a range of nutritious foods to your toddler. Be guided by your child - don't force them to eat if they don't want to and don't withhold healthy food if they are hungry. As long as your toddler is active and well, eating a variety of healthy foods, there is no cause for concern
- A well-balanced diet is recommended for all family members, while keeping in mind the size and appetite of each individual



Tips for Positive Mealtimes with Toddlers

Involve your toddler in preparing their meals e.g. homemade pizza, fruit salad, sandwiches.

Reduce distractions, for example turn off the TV and electronic devices.

Try to keep mealtimes regular and predictable.

Sit down together when eating, preferably at a table with the family.

Provide opportunities for your child to see other children and adults eating new or different foods.

Mealtimes can provide a time to be with your child and role model positive eating habits.

Offer new foods regularly, even if the child at first indicates they are not interested in the food.

Encourage your toddler to touch, smell and taste new foods (without any expectation of them swallowing it), taking time to enjoy the texture and become familiar with what they are eating.

Praise your child for positive mealtime behaviours like trying new foods, eating finger foods, trying a spoon, waiting their turn, for example "thank you for staying on your chair".

Expect some mess and use surfaces that are easily cleaned.

Respond to your toddlers cues, this may include signs that they are tired, hungry, wanting more food or that they have had enough.

For safety, stay with your child at mealtimes

Securely seat your child for meals with food within easy reach.

REMEMBER:

It is up to you which foods are offered. Your toddler decides how much and which of the foods offered they choose to eat.

Avoid take away or pre-packaged food that contain high levels of salt and fat

Avoid using sweets and chocolate as rewards

Check the amount of milk, juice and cordial your child may be drinking. Large amounts will fill them up and they may not eat their meal








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Recommended Daily Serves from 2-4 years

Offer a variety of healthy foods from the 5 food groups each day. The following is a rough guide to the amounts and types to offer, but don't worry if your child doesn't always eat all of these every day.

Food Group		Serve Size	Daily Serves	Serve Examples
Breads, Cereal, Rice, Noodles & Pasta		40g	4-5	1 slice bread ½ cup breakfast cereal ½ cup cooked rice/noodles/pasta 4 small bite sized cracker biscuits
Vegetables & Legumes		75g	2-3	salad vegetables cooked vegetables 1 small potato/mashed potato cooked beans, peas, lentils
Fruit		150g	1-2	½ medium piece of fruit 1 piece small fruit ½ cup tinned fruit
Milk & Dairy products		250g	1½ - 2½	1 cup milk (250ml) 1 tub (¾ cup) yoghurt (200g) 2 slices of cheese (40g) 1 cup custard (250ml)
Meat & Meat Alternatives		65g	1-2	cooked meat, chicken or fish (e.g. ¼ cup mince) 1 thin slice of roast or cold meat 1 egg ¼ cup cooked beans/lentils

Source: NHMRC (2013) *Eat for Health, Australian Dietary Guidelines—Summary*, p43



CREATING HEALTHY FAMILY MEALS

- From 12 months of age and beyond, toddlers should be eating family meals from the 5 food groups recommended by the Australian Dietary Guidelines (see above)
- The fat in a toddler's diet should come from dairy, meat, fish, chicken or egg. These same products will provide most of a toddler's protein requirements
- Toddler milks or "special" milk for toddlers are not required