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Foreword

Nutrition for children is a very important subject that parents should be aware of and incorporate into their child's daily dietary intake. Proper nutritional balance will allow the child the opportunity to have a good growth potential. Get all the info you need here.



Child Diet Dilemma

The Best Ways To Healthy Eating For Children

Chapter 1:

Healthy Diet Basics

Synopsis

All children need the same types of basic nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, proteins and fats. The amounts however are usually dictated to by the various different ages of children in question, which in turn will dictate the appropriate amount of calorie, proteins, minerals and vitamins for complete and effective growth.



The Basics

However getting the child to consume healthy meals can often be quite a challenge and healthy means usually mean uninteresting and bland food to the child mostly distorted taste buds.

Children usually enjoyed foods that are very flavorful, sweet or simply not really healthy for them. However with some research and proper planning it is possible to design a complete diet plan that is nutritionally balanced to suit various age groups the children may fall into.

Getting the full range of proteins, iron, calcium and vitamin A should ideally be the focus of the diet plan in place. When it comes to the appetite of children, there will usually be noticeable fluctuations and this will be reflected according to the growth the child is experiencing at any particular juncture in their lives.

Ideally a general gauge to go by would be that most 3 year olds would need about 1300 calories daily, while a 10 year old would need about 2000 calories daily and the adolescent would need 2800 calories a day.

Including a healthy amount of vegetables, fruits, dairy products, meats and beans would be ideal when it comes to trying to provide for a complete dietary plan. Snacks are also fine but should be nutritionally based too.

Chapter 2:

The Importance Of Breakfast

Synopsis

The importance of breakfast should never be taken for granted as the energy that provides for optimal mental and physical health starts with a good healthy breakfast plan.



Mornings

Breakfast is a good way to get the body's system awake and off to a good working start as it help to refuel the body after the long rest.

It has been noted that children who eat breakfast tend to eat healthier overall and are more likely to participate in physical activities and are mentally alert, thus allowing the child the opportunity for healthy growth.

Skipping breakfast can usually cause the child to be irritable, tired, restless and basically distracted and unable to get both their body and mind in sync to get through the day effectively and productively. The mood and energy levels will usually drop by mid morning if there is no proper breakfast intake daily.

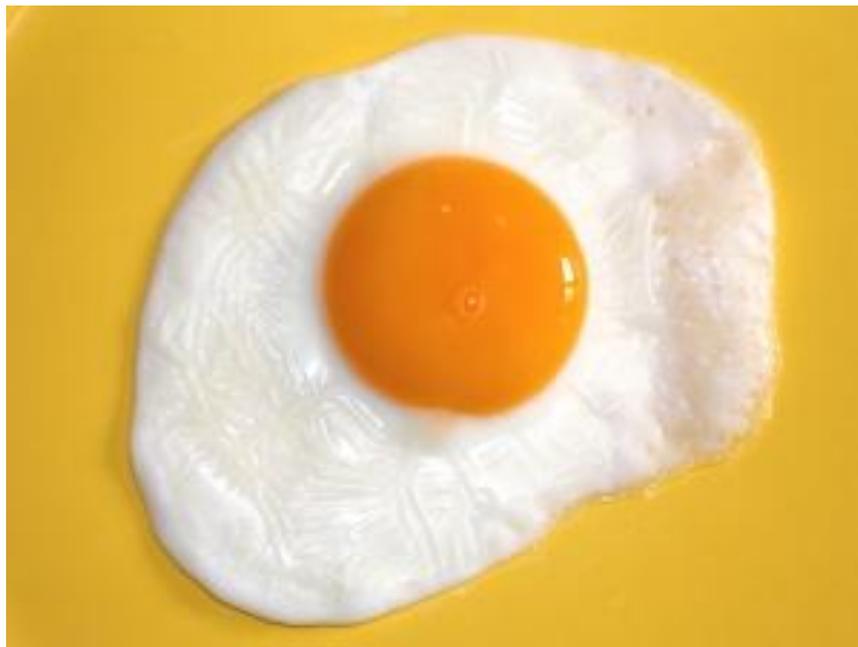
Being one of the ideal ways to kick start the mind and body, breakfast also contributes to the healthy body metabolism rate that allows the body to process and convert the foods into fuel for the energy required for optimal function throughout the day.

When the metabolism rate get moving, the body will then be able to start burning the calories effectively thus decreasing the likelihood of fat build ups within the body system.

It has been noted that children who are not consistent with the regiment of nutritional breakfast intake generally frequently snack

on unhealthy foods during the day, thus causing them to become overweight easily.

Choosing breakfast food that are rich in whole grains, fiber and protein while at the same time low in added sugar will help to boost the child's attention span, concentration and memory retention processes, all of which are crucial element for being able to focus and absorb what is being taught in school.



Chapter 3:

Reducing Flour And Sugar

Synopsis

Basically not known for its healthy qualities, being able to eliminate large portions of flour and sugar from a child's basic diet plan would be an ideal goal to work towards. These ingredients do little to promote healthy and wholesome growth in children of any ages, thus consciously eliminating these from the diet plan would be a step in the right direction.



The Sweets

It would be a good and sensible idea to adopt a lesser intake if these two items from the very start, as the idea of flour and sugar in the child daily intake would not really benefit in any way except perhaps to enhance flavor and volume in the foods eaten.

This elimination or control will help the child achieve a more healthy weight gain percentage and overall healthier body condition.

Optimal weight conditions usually means the connecting optimal number of calorie intake and with the reduction of flour and sugar in the diet plan this ideal platform can be easily achieved.

Ideally the high calorie items such as breads should be replaced with low calorie items such as legumes that will also help to keep the child satisfied for longer periods of time.

Other alternative would be replacing sugar with the more healthy option of honey as this too will help to cut down on the unnecessary high calorie intake.

Eating food items such as oatmeal, fresh fruits, grains and nuts would certainly be better than breads, jams, pancakes and other sweetened foods that may be satisfying but for only a short time.

Avoiding high intakes of sugar and flour in the daily diet plan of a child will also help the child to have a healthier future as an adult. Good habit formed as a child will usually follow on through adulthood, thus eating healthy from the start would be an ideal plan to go with.



Chapter 4:

The Dangers Of Fats

Synopsis

Generally it is an accepted fact that every child needs some amount of fats within the daily diet plan as these fats contribute to the energy levels that gives the body what it needs to work in a healthy manner. However too much of the fat intake will eventually effect the body system in ways that are eventually damaging to the child's eventual growth and health.



Fats

Children who make it a habit of consuming high fat diets will eventually cause the unhealthy fats like saturated fats and trans fats to clog the arteries, thus adding to the disruptive blood flow for the body's needs.

This will then lead to the higher possibility of sustaining heart problems as the child grows older. Current statistics show that more people are having some form of heart problems at much earlier stages in the life.

There is also some significant connection between the fats intake and the presence of cancer cell in the body system. Saturated fats have been the significant cause for concern as it is touted to be the main cause of cancer cells multiplying at faster rates within the body.

Obesity is also another unhealthy side effect caused by the large amounts of uncontrolled fat intake for children.

Children are usually seeking out foods that will give them immediate satisfaction and these usually take on the unhealthy features of junk food or other snacks that are not based on healthy nutritional values.

This obese condition will then lead to other medical complications such as gallbladder disease, fatty liver disease, gastro esophageal reflux, sleep apnea, gout and osteoarthritis as the child grows into adulthood.

There is also the added risk of sustaining type 2 diabetes even as a child, especially if the child is not active in sports and outdoor activities.



Chapter 5:

Keeping Healthy Foods Accessible And Fun

Synopsis

Most parent lament of the problems they have to deal with when it comes of children who are generally fussy eaters. However it is possible to be able to get child to consume healthy foods if they are presented in a fun manner and are delicious tasting. Therefore it would really be up to the parent to make the effort to find innovative and interesting ways to ensure the child willing eats healthy foods or snacks.



Better Choices

Most children diligently avoid the food group that is centered on vegetable, thus creating huge problems for parents who are well aware of the merits of this food group and how much it will benefit their child.

Making a simple carrot stick more appealing to the child would require some effort on the part of the parent which may take the form of making the consumption of such a food group an activity that is part of a game or even cutting the carrot to resemble fun items such as animal shapes.

Getting the child to participate in the preparation process of preparing the meal or snack will help the child feel a sense of achievement, and this will encourage the child to also want to try the foods prepared by themselves or at least where they have actually participated in the preparation.

This sense of achievement can be a good and effective tool to use to get the child to eat healthy as the fun ingredient can be a very persuasive encouragement.

Children tend to eat with the eyes first and then their tongues, meaning that if the food does not look appealing, getting them to even taste it would be a uphill battle. Therefore including a lot of color into the presentation would be one way of creating an appealing palate for the child.

Chapter 6:

Use The Food Pyramid

Synopsis

Most children require the same basic nutritional needs that are going to help with their bodies needs for optimal growth. Therefore it would be wise for the parents to explore the merits of understanding and providing healthy food options based on the ideal food pyramid for children.



Food Groups

Basically the food pyramid will consists of five ideal yet very different food categories and these would include fruits, vegetable, grains, oils and meats and beans.

By taking the time and effort to understand the nutrients in each of the different food groups, the parent will be able to determine how much is needed from each type for the child's daily consumption needs.

This will also help the parent come up with a complete and effective nutritional diet plan for the child to follow. This will also help to decrease the chances of the child becoming obese which seems to be the current trend today among children all over the world.

The food pyramid should ideally start with the bottom being the main source of overall energy food that should be items such as corn, potatoes, healthy breads, pasta, rice, and legumes.

The next level up should come in two separate categories where group one would ideally consists of all kinds of vegetables while group two would be based on various different fresh fruits.

The third level of the pyramid would also have to be divided into two categories where one would represent of the dairy based products

while the other would consists of various meats, fish and eggs. The last level at the top of the pyramid should consist of controlled amounts of fats, oil, sugar and salt. This last category should be carefully monitored as it is not really altogether very healthy but nonetheless necessary.



Chapter 7:

The Issues With Childhood Obesity

Synopsis

Obesity is supposed to be categorized as the unhealthy overweight condition in the human body and when this becomes apparent at a very young age such as in children, the parents should take a serious look at the diet plan and daily lifestyle of the child as these are probably the two main factors contributing to this negative condition.



Some Final Points

The calorie intake should ideally be matched with the amount being burnt off during physical activity and when the intake is more than the required amount the effective burning of these excess becomes harder to manage thus allowing accumulation to set in.

This of course then brings the individual to the point of becoming obese. Ideally the child's lifestyle should center on the ability to burn off more calories than the actual intake.

The following are some ways parent can adopt when trying to keep the likelihood of their child becoming obese in check:

At the stage of infancy, breastfeeding would be an ideal option to choose and delaying the introduction of solid food into the daily dietary plan for the child would be advised. Studies have shown that this delay would help in preventing obesity from occurring early on in the child's life.

Children should be encouraged to only consume healthy foods, and this should extend to all types of categories such as snacks, main meals and any other form of food consumption. Making it a habit to serve only low fat snacks while also encouraging the child to be active and adopt some form of daily physical activity would ideally keep the child from becoming obese.

Wrapping Up

Teaching a child to consciously select only healthy food choices where nutrition is the focal point is definitely something to be initiated from a very early age.

