
Healthy Eating Habits

1. Introduce solids foods only when a child is developmentally ready for them. Parents should consult with their child's doctor before introducing solid foods.
2. Don't feed food or cereal from a bottle or syringe type feeder.
3. Have the infant or toddler sitting up straight in a comfortable high chair or on a chair at the table.
4. Don't feed a child who is laughing, crying, or coughing.
5. Do not allow children to eat in their crib or bed and always closely supervise any child while s/he is eating.
6. Eat with the children and model taking small bites and chewing slowly.
7. Avoid foods that cause choking.
8. Follow serving recommendations on food containers.
9. Learn how to tell whether or not a child is choking and complete training in First Aid and CPR.



For additional information on Preventing Choking in Young Children

Caring for Our Children, National Health and Safety Performance Standards, Guidelines of Out-of-Home Child Care (2nd Ed.). American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, and National Resource for Health and Safety in Child Care (2002).

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml04/04216.html>

USDA Food Safety: www.foodsafety.gov

Mayo Clinic.com: *Choking and Other Airway Emergencies in Babies.* <http://www.mayoclinic.com/invoke.cfm?id=PR00041&si-2436>.

WIC: <http://www.state.ma.us/dph/fch/wic.htm>

www.safekids.org

www.state.ma.us/dph/fch/injury/index.htm



Tips to Prevent Choking in Infants and Toddlers



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Choking Prevention

At least one child dies from choking on food every five days in the United States. More than 10,000 children are taken to hospital emergency rooms each year for food-

choking injuries. Children under five are at greatest risk for choking injury and death. Deaths from choking are preventable by serving appropriate foods to children.



It is important to remember that young children may not have enough muscles to chew and swallow certain foods properly.

STEPS TO HELP CHILDREN AVOID CHOKING INCLUDE:

1. Be aware of the eating abilities of infants and toddlers.
2. Children must be supervised at all times.
3. Avoid foods that cause choking.
4. Provide First Aid/CPR to children who are choking.



Foods to avoid to prevent choking

Do NOT serve these foods to children under 4 years of age:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Peanuts or other nuts | Fish with bones |
| Seeds | Tough or large chunks of meat |
| Spoonfuls of peanut butter or other nut/seed butters | Cookies |
| Whole kernel corn Popcorn | Hotdogs (whole or sliced into rounds) |
| Chewing gum | Raw carrots (in rounds) |
| Cherry tomatoes | Potato/corn chips, pretzels |
| Hard or chewy candy | Whole beans |
| Whole grapes, berries, cherries | Marshmallows, including mini-marshmallows |
| Fruit with pits | Whole olives |
| Whole pieces of canned fruit | Peas and other raw vegetables |
| Apple slices with peel | Ice cubes |
| Large chunks of cheese | Cooked vegetables that are stringy or hard to chew |
| Sausage | Lollipops |
| Hard pieces of partially cooked vegetables Plain wheat germ | String Cheese |

Non Food

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Nails, tacks, screws | Balloons |
| Jewelry | Small toys or toy parts |
| Buttons | Coins |
| Batteries | Safety Pins |
| Paper Clips | Crayon pieces |

Items to Avoid

Description of foods that may cause choking and may not be listed in "foods to avoid"

Some of the most popular foods with young children are often the ones that cause choking. Be cautious and observant when feeding young children.

AVOID FOODS WITH THESE CHARACTERISTICS:

1. Firm, smooth, or slippery foods that can easily slide down the throat before chewing.
2. Dry, small, or hard foods that are difficult to chew and easy to swallow whole.
3. Tough or sticky foods that don't break apart readily and are hard to remove from the airway.
4. Large pieces of food.
5. Round or tube-shaped foods.

Tips to Make Foods Safer

- * Cut into quarters lengthwise, then into small pieces.
- * Peel fruits and cut in half lengthwise.
- * Chop finely or into thin strips
- * Spread peanut butter THINLY on crackers or bread

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