

# The 10 Best Foods for Kids

## Child Nutrition Basics

Although you don't want to get in the habit of forcing your kids to eat foods they don't like or make them "clean" their plates, there are lots of healthy foods kids like. Parents often overlook these healthy foods and go straight to what they think are more "kid-friendly foods," such as hot dogs, pizza, french fries, chicken nuggets, juice, and soda.

Your kids would be much better off learning to avoid those types of [high-calorie](#), [high-fat foods](#) with foods that are high in [fiber](#), low in fat, and have [calcium](#), [iron](#), and other vitamins and minerals, including these healthful foods that most kids love.

1

### Milk

It often seems like toddlers and preschoolers just can't get enough milk, but as they get older, many kids start to drink less and less milk. This probably isn't because they develop a distaste for milk, but rather because so many other drinks, including [soda](#), fruit drinks, and too much [fruit juice](#), become available at home.

Milk is a good source of calcium, vitamin D and protein for kids and should be a part of every child's diet—unless they have a [milk allergy](#). In fact, depending on their age, most kids should drink between 2 to 4 glasses of milk ([low-fat milk](#) if they are at least 2 years old) each day, especially if they aren't eating or drinking any other [high-calcium foods](#).

2

### Apples

Like most [fruits](#), apples are a great [snack food](#). They are juicy, sweet (although some varieties are tart), have vitamin C, are low in calories (about 90 calories for a medium apple) and have about 5g of [fiber](#) for an unpeeled whole apple.

Unfortunately, apples are one of those healthful foods that can get turned into a "kid-friendly food" and lose a lot of their nutritional benefits.

Instead of giving their kids an unpeeled whole apple or a cut up whole apple, parents often give kids peeled apples, applesauce or apple juice as alternatives. Peeling the apple makes it lose about half of its fiber, and applesauce is also much lower in fiber than a whole apple and has more sugar and calories.

3

## Peanut Butter

Although it would seem like a PB&J (peanut butter and jelly) would be a staple in most homes, many parents are avoiding peanut butter because of the worry about food allergies and because it is supposedly high in fat. Peanut butter is relatively high in fat, but it is mostly mono- and- poly-unsaturated fat, so it is better than the [saturated fats](#) that are found in many other high-fat foods.

Reduced fat peanut butter is also available, or if you choose a vitamin-fortified brand, such as Peter Pan Plus, it also provides your child with vitamin A, iron, [vitamin E](#), [vitamin B6](#), folic acid, magnesium, zinc, and copper, in addition to being a good source of protein.

4

## Yogurt

Yogurt is a healthful food for kids, especially for kids who don't drink a lot of milk, as yogurt is a good source of calcium.

You may think that your kids are doing well with this one because they already eat yogurt, but if all they eat is a kids' brand of yogurt with extra sugar and no added probiotics, then they may be missing out on some of the nutritional benefits of yogurt.

When choosing a yogurt for your kids, look for one with "live active cultures" that is low-fat and without a lot of added sugar. You may also look for one with added [probiotics](#), although not all studies agree that they are helpful.

5

## Tuna Fish

Fish can be a healthful food unless your kids only eat fish sticks or fried fish sandwiches. Sometimes overlooked, tuna fish is a healthful fish that many kids like.

Parents seem to be serving tuna fish less often these days because of the concerns about [mercury contamination](#), but it is important to keep in mind that like many things, tuna fish is OK in

moderation. Even with the warnings, children are allowed up to two servings a week of canned light tuna or one serving of solid white albacore tuna.

Tuna fish is a great source of protein and provides omega-3 essential fatty acids and many vitamins and minerals. To make your child's tuna fish sandwich even healthier, use low-fat mayonnaise and whole wheat bread.

## 6

### Breakfast Cereal

No, a bowl full of a sugary cereal is not a [healthy breakfast](#), but many other breakfast cereal can be a healthy part of your child's diet.

When choosing a breakfast cereal for your kids, try to look for one you can't simply eat out of the box like candy. Good choices include whole grain cereal that is calcium fortified and has added fiber. Depending on the rest of your child's diet, you may also look for a [breakfast cereal](#) that provides extra iron and other minerals and vitamins.

In general, some healthful breakfast cereals that many kids like include Cheerios, Multi Grain Cheerios, Shredded Wheat, Wheaties, and Total Raisin Bran. Add a chopped banana or strawberry to the bowl, and your kids will like it even more.

## 7

### Eggs

So eggs are healthy again? For a while, eggs did get a bad wrap as causing high cholesterol, but most nutrition experts now agree that [eggs](#) can be a healthy part of your diet.

Eggs are a good source of protein and contain some iron and many other vitamins and minerals.

What about cholesterol? Eggs do contain cholesterol, but they do not contain a lot of saturated fat, which is the more important factor in raising a person's cholesterol level. Still, an egg every other day is fine for most kids.

## 8

### Vegetables

Of course, vegetables are going to be on the list of the best foods for kids, but that doesn't mean tricking your kids into eating them or trying to force your kids to eat brussels sprouts, broccoli, and spinach.

There are plenty of [vegetables](#) that kids do like, such as cooked carrots, corn, peas and baked potatoes. Cooked carrots can be an especially healthful choice as they are high in fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, and [potassium](#).

Remember to introduce your kids to a variety of vegetables at an early age, offer lots of choices, set a good example by eating vegetables as a family and continue to offer very small servings of vegetables, even when your kids don't eat them. If you keep offering them, they eventually eat them.

9

## Oatmeal

As much as infants enjoy oatmeal cereal, it is a little surprising that they grow up on white bread and other refined grains and don't often eat oatmeal and more whole grains.

You can combat that trend by serving your kids oatmeal, which many kids love, and more oatmeal foods and snacks (oatmeal cookies, oatmeal bars, etc.).

Oatmeal is a high fiber food that is good for your kids, just like most other [whole grain foods](#).

10

## Sunflower Seeds

Although eating sunflower seeds may seem like a bad habit of kids on little league baseball teams, they are actually a healthful food that all kids can enjoy—as long as they don't throw the shells on the floor and are old enough so that the seeds aren't a choking hazard.

Sunflower seeds are high in fiber and are a good source of iron. They also have a lot of vitamin E, magnesium, phosphorous, zinc, and folate.

Although high in polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats, those are the "good" fats. Sunflower seeds are low in saturated or "bad" fats.

# 10 Best Foods to Feed Your Kids

Post Test – June 2018

Please keep this test and certificate in your files for Licensing.  
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1. Milk is a good source of \_\_\_\_\_, vitamin D and protein.
2. Applesauce has the same amount of fiber, sugar and calories as a whole unpeeled apple.  
True or False?
3. Peanut butter is relatively high in fat, but it is mostly mono and poly unsaturated fat, so it is better than the \_\_\_\_\_ that are found in many other high-fat foods.
4. Choose a yogurt that is low-fat and without a lot of added \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Tuna fish is a great source of protein and provides Alpha-1776 essential fatty acids and many vitamins and minerals.  
True or False?
6. Whole grain, low sugar cereal that is calcium fortified with added \_\_\_\_\_ is a good choice for a healthy breakfast.
7. Eggs contain too much saturated and should only be eaten once a week.  
True or False?
8. Cooked carrots are high in fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C and \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Oatmeal is a good choice for a healthy breakfast because it is a Whole Grain food.  
True or False?
10. Sunflower seeds are a good source of vitamin\_\_\_\_, magnesium phosphorous, \_\_\_\_\_ and folate.

Answers for May: Whole Grain Rich

1. False
2. FDA
3. True
4. Ingredients
5. Creditable
6. Sugar
7. False
8. Bran
9. Germ
10. Nutrition Facts



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