

Does Your Child Make The Grade?

By: Nicole Chase

Take this short quiz to find out how your child's eating habits compare to current recommendations.

1. How many servings of whole grain bread, cereal, rice, or pasta does your child eat per day?

- A. 3 or more
- B. 1-2
- C. None

2. How many servings of fruits and vegetables does your child eat per day?

- A. 5 or more
- B. 2-4
- C. 0-1

3. How many servings of low- or fat-free milk, cheese, or yogurt does your child eat per day?

- A. 2-3
- B. 1
- C. None

4. How many servings of meat, poultry, fish, or beans does your child eat per day? (Hint: Three servings of meat is about the size of a deck of cards.)

- A. 5
- B. 2-4
- C. 0-1

5. How much juice, soda, or other sugar-sweetened beverages does your child drink per day?

- A. None
- B. $\frac{2}{3}$ cup or less
- C. More than $\frac{2}{3}$ cup

6. How much time does your child spend each day being active?

- A. 60 minutes or more
- B. 30-60 minutes
- C. Less than 30 minutes



7. How often does your child skip breakfast?

- A. Almost never
- B. 1-2 times per week
- C. More than two times per week

If you scored mostly:

A's: Keep up the good work! Try sharing your healthy habits with family and friends.

B's: You're almost there! Fine-tune your kid's eating habits by reading the tips below.

C's: Work on the basics of healthy eating by reading the tips below.

The three keys to promoting healthy growth and development are moderation, balance, and variety. If your kid didn't score all A's, don't fret. Here are some simple tips that will help your child earn straight A's:

- **Make half your grains whole!** Whole grains add fiber, iron, and B vitamins to the diet. Make half your grains whole! Whole grains add fiber, iron, and B vitamins to the diet. Look for words like "whole" or "100%"
- **Strive for five fruits and vegetables everyday!** These super foods are jam-packed with nutrients that are crucial for growth, such as vitamin C.
- **Build healthy bones with calcium rich foods!** Wean your child to low- or fat-free milk, cheese, and yogurt to help promote a healthy weight and lower the risk of heart disease. Two to three servings a day will get your kid off to a great start!
- **Go lean with protein!** About five ounces a day depending on your size and age, helps build and maintain muscle. Younger kids need less. Remember, three servings of meat is about the size of a deck of cards. Go with lean meat, skinless poultry, fish, and don't forget the beans!
- **Limit juice, soda, and sugar-sweetened beverages!** They can add excess sugar and "empty calories." Try diluting 100% fruit juice with water or better yet, reach for a piece of whole fruit for added fiber.
- **Get active as a family!** Kids need at least sixty minutes of activity each day to promote a healthy weight and strong bones. Turn off the TV and have a family "dance-off" competition, or ask your kid to join an organized sport like soccer or tennis.
- **Fuel their brain with breakfast!** Studies show that kids who eat breakfast improve their memory and performance in school.

Educator Tip: Incorporate this quiz into a nutrition lesson plan for parents or kids.

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