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Mealtime for Little Folks

Home and Family Series

Michigan State University Extension Service

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# MEALTIME FOR LITTLE FOLKS

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE, MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY



By ROBERTA HERSHEY

Extension Specialist in Foods and Nutrition, retired

*"In spite of anything you do,  
your food grows right up into you."*

## **Hello, Mommie and Daddy**

This is Jerry. I am three years old now. I like to talk on the telephone. I'm phoning to tell you how I eat.



I like pretty colored foods.

I like foods I can hold—rolled lettuce, pieces of carrot, and slices of apple (peeled please).

I like my meat cut up in little pieces.

I don't like things that bite my tongue. (My taste is keener than yours.)

It is fun to eat foods that go "crunch."

I like food warm—not real hot or real cold.

I like a little bit on my plate at one time. Then I can ask for more.

I like to feed myself. When I get too tired, it's nice if somebody helps.

I don't like vegetables with strings in them, either.

I don't like gummy things. They stick in my mouth. Sometimes mashed potatoes do.

A whole glass of milk almost fills my tummy. Then there isn't much room left. I'd rather leave the milk till last.

I like my own plate. I can push my spoon against the high sides. This way, I don't spill so much.

I can eat best with my own spoon. I like the short handle. Yours is too big and deep.

I like my own fork too. It fits my mouth and it isn't sharp.

I like to push my feet flat on the floor or on the step of my high chair.

I like to pour my milk my own self. Let me use the little pitcher. It has a wide mouth.

I like to drink from my own pink cup. I can put my whole hand through the handle. Sometimes, a little, small-topped glass makes it easier not to spill.

I can pick up those little, round, green peas with my fingers. They run away from the spoon. They are good when you mash them.

## **Little Letters from Little Folks**

Dear Mom and Dad—Now that I'm six and in kindergarten, I like to play writing letters. That's why I'm writing to you.

Sometimes I'm not very hungry. But some days I eat a lot.

I'd rather not have the same foods day after day. But I do like my favorites—like hamburgers and ice cream.



I liked it when Aunt Sally said I ate neatly.

When I was at Uncle John's, he asked me if I'd like my broccoli by the meat on my plate or by my potato. I like to choose that way.

Lunch is nice when we have the green place mats and flowers on the table.

I don't like red beets to run into my potatoes.

Surprise custard is fun. One day I found a bright cherry hidden in mine.

I'm almost always quite hungry after school. That's when I like a snack with the other boys and girls.

I would eat more breakfast if I woke up a little earlier. Then I wouldn't have to hurry so much to get to school.

I don't like foods that are too soft and runny. I like chewy ones though.

I like to help set the table; it makes me hungrier.

The vegetables I grew in my own garden are best. Grandma lets me help her buy groceries when I visit her. I put cold, cold frozen orange juice and a big box of oatmeal in the cart.

Love,  
SUSAN

## Telegrams

From Grandmother and  
Grandfather to Parents  
of the Very Young

TELEGRAPH  
OFFICE



Do give Susan more chance to talk at the table.

Wish you wouldn't tell the children that carrots are good for them.

Try new foods, a little bit at a time, at the beginning of a meal.

Discourage your neighbor from giving candy to the children.

Why order Jerry to clean up his plate? It only makes him dislike the food.

Dessert becomes much too important when you use it to bribe the youngsters to eat their vegetables.

A star on a chart for eating an egg may help the children like stars—not eggs.

Don't lose the woods for the trees; a happy mealtime is more important than making sure Jerry eats his meat.

Don't make a theatrical production of mealtime. Take it easy.

Eating isn't a duty—It's a privilege.

## "Advice from the Family Physician

to parents of pre-school  
children"



Remember, the way you feed your child has a great influence on his physical development and, to some extent, determines his emotional makeup. Expect him to grow rapidly at some periods and more slowly at others. He may not grow at the same rate as the child next door.

## Do you want your child to be Growing — Going — Glowing?

Then look him over carefully —

### DOES HE HAVE

- A straight back?
- Firm muscles?
- Sound teeth? Gums firm and pink?
- Good color (whites of eyes bluish-white; pink membranes inside mouth and eyelids)?
- Straight legs?
- Flat shoulder blades?
- Clear skin?
- Glossy hair?
- Sweet breath?
- A nicely rounded body?

### DOES HE

- Seem happy?
- Eat well?
- Play actively?
- Have daily elimination?
- Sleep soundly?

Now check on his meals

## A Guide for Planning a Day's Meals for Children from 1 to 6

FOOD	APPROXIMATE QUANTITY NEEDED DAILY
Milk to drink, and in, or on, foods.	3 to 4 measuring cups
Eggs.	1
Meat, poultry, fish, cottage cheese.	1 to 4 level tablespoons
Potatoes, white or sweet.	1 serving
Other cooked vegetables (mostly green leafy or deep yellow ones).	1 to 2 servings
Raw vegetables (carrots, cabbage, tomatoes, lettuce, etc.)	1 serving
Fruit for vitamin C.	1 medium orange or 1/2 cup citrus fruit juice or 2/3 cup tomato juice.
Other fruit (apples, apricots, bananas, pears, peaches, prunes, etc.)	1 serving
Bread, whole grain, or enriched.	1 1/2 to 3 slices
Cereal, whole grain or enriched.	1 serving
Butter or fortified margarine.	Small amounts spread on bread, and used to season vegetables.
Vitamin D concentrate, vitamin D milk, or fish liver oil.	400 units (a quart of vitamin D milk contains 400 units).
Iodized salt.	In Michigan, water supplies are low in iodine, so use of iodized salt is important.

Omit very sweet foods, foods high in fat, and foods highly seasoned.

**Not too much roughage**—Little children do better without much rough cellulose such as bran, seedy berries, fruit skins, and popcorn.

**Watch vitamin D**—Modern science is proving that too much vitamin D can interfere with growth and appetite in young children. Vitamin D is important to help in the formation of bones and teeth, but 400 units daily is usually enough.

**Save their teeth**—The candy and soft-drink hazard is a real threat to your child's nutrition, especially to his teeth. If he acquires the sweet-snacking habit, he ceases to enjoy the bland foods in his normal diet, so he is likely to eat less and less of them and then become undernourished.

## Menus for Young and Old

### Autumn

#### BREAKFAST

Cantaloupe (Diced for pre-school child)  
Oatmeal — Milk  
Whole Wheat Toast — Butter  
Milk — Coffee (adults)

#### LUNCH

Poached Egg on Toast with Grated Cheese  
Carrot Sticks — Raw Cucumber Strips  
Canned, Fresh or Frozen Peaches  
Milk — Tea (adults)

#### MID-AFTERNOON SNACK

Apricot Juice  
Cottage Cheese — Prune Sandwich

#### DINNER

Baked Fish  
Scalloped Potatoes  
Stewed Tomatoes  
Tossed Salad — Lettuce Leaf (pre-school child)  
Blueberry Muffins — Butter  
Pumpkin Pie (adults)  
Pumpkin Custard (pre-school child)

## Winter

### BREAKFAST

Orange Juice  
Scrambled Eggs — Crisp Bacon  
Enriched Toast — Butter  
Milk — Coffee (adults)

### LUNCH

Cream of Mixed Vegetable Soup  
Hard Toast Sticks  
Lettuce — Pear — Grated Cheese Salad  
Oatmeal Cookie  
Milk — Tea (adults)

### MID-AFTERNOON SNACK

Surprise Custard

### DINNER

Pot Roast of Beef  
Potatoes — Carrots  
Gravy (adults)  
Celery  
Apple Betty (adults)  
Apple Sauce (pre-school child)  
Milk — Coffee (adults)

## Spring

### BREAKFAST

Sliced Orange  
Creamed Chipped Beef on Toast Cubes  
Date Cookies  
Milk — Coffee (adults)

### LUNCH

Chicken Sandwich on Whole Wheat Bread  
Green Beans in Milk  
Rhubarb Sauce  
Milk — Coffee (adults)

### MID-AFTERNOON SNACK

Apple Slices spread with Peanut Butter  
Milk

### DINNER

Salmon Loaf  
Baked Potatoes with Sour Cream  
Fresh Asparagus  
Cole Slaw (adults) Cabbage Wedge (pre-school child)  
Lemon Sponge Pudding  
Milk — Coffee (adults)

## Summer

### BREAKFAST

Fresh Strawberries  
Enriched Dry Cereal with Milk  
Boston Brown Bread — Butter  
Milk — Coffee (adults)

### LUNCH

Chopped Hard-Cooked Egg on Lettuce (pre-school child)  
Devilled Egg Salad (adults)  
Summer Squash with Crumbled Bacon  
Rye Bread — Butter  
Pineapple Milk Sherbet  
Milk — Coffee (adults)

### MID-AFTERNOON SNACK

Cream Cheese — Watercress Sandwich  
Apple Juice

### DINNER

Lamb Patties  
Creamed Peas and New Potatoes  
Enriched Bread — Butter  
Fruit Compote (Canned Peaches, Cherries, Bananas)  
Angelfood Cake  
Milk — Coffee (adults)

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## PARENTS with POISE

ARE —

CHEERFUL

CASUAL

CONSISTENT

NEVER —

FRET

FUSS

FORCE