

Fruit adds Colour to Children's Life

Every child would welcome and enjoy a childhood filled with colour and cheer. As parents, have you ever thought of adding colour, fun and memorable moments to your children's lives? A highly recommendable entry point would be to start with the indispensable part of healthy living - fruit.

Many studies have confirmed that fruit plays an important role in healthy eating because it could reduce the risk of many chronic diseases like heart diseases, stroke and certain kinds of cancer. According to the Food Pyramid, children aged 2 to 6 years should consume half to one serving of fruit every day. Yet, local studies have revealed that over 70% of local preschool children do not have an adequate daily intake of fruit.



All the Way with Fruit

Have you ever thought of the best time for eating fruit? Actually, fruit would be both great for serving as main meals (e.g. breakfast, lunch or dinner) or snacks (in the morning or afternoon) and there are many ways of enjoying it. Here are some suggestions –



Fruit for Health

- Children should eat fruit every day because fruit can –
- boost immunity and reduce the chance of getting sick
 - help remove body wastes and prevent constipation
 - keep children healthy, making them smarter and more active
 - replace unhealthy snacks and desserts, thus avoid putting on excessive body fat

Eating Time	Examples	Suggested fruit
Breakfast	Oatmeal with low-fat milk + fruit low-fat yoghurt + fruit	Raisins, pineapple, strawberries
Refreshment break	Fresh fruit	Apple, plum, nectarine, banana
Lunch, dinner (as a substitute for dessert)	Fresh fruit Mixed fruit salad	Orange, Hami melon, grapes, cherries



One Serving ^{Remark 1} is Approximately.....

- 2 pieces of small-sized fruit (e.g. plum, kiwifruit)
- 1 piece of medium-sized fruit (e.g. orange, apple, mandarin orange)
- 1/2 piece of large-sized fruit (e.g. banana, grapefruit, star fruit)
- 1/2 bowl ^{Remark 2} of fruit cuts (e.g. watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew melon)
- 1/2 bowl of mini-sized fruit (e.g. cherries, strawberries, grapes, lychees)
- 1 tablespoon (about 15ml) of dried fruit without added sugar or salt (e.g. raisins, dried prunes)
- 3/4 cup (about 180ml) of pure fruit juice ^{Remark 3} without added sugar (e.g. pure orange juice with pulp)



Joyful Fruit Tips

To make children love and eat fruit, parents are advised to serve fruit in creative manners. Parents may –

- use fruit to teach colour (e.g. red apples, green grapes)
- build beautiful patterns and shapes with fruit of different colours, and make use of fairy tales and imaginations
- sing nursery rhymes that spell out the benefits of fruit (e.g. an apple a day keeps the doctor away)
- teach children about fruits at supermarkets or markets
- teach children about seasons and festivals with the help of seasonal farm produces at different times of the year

Remark 1: Each serving of fruit weighs about 80 grams. Children from 3 to 6 years old should eat at least 80 grams of fruit every day, which is equivalent to the intake amount recommended by the World Health Organization.

Remark 2: 1 bowl = 250-300ml

Remark 3: Compare to a whole fruit, pure fruit juice contains less dietary fibre but a much higher sugar content. Parents are advised to provide whole fruit for their children to meet the recommended daily serving. Besides, it is worth noting that consuming pure fruit juice in excess to 3/4 glass (180ml) would still be counted as taking one serving of fruit only.