



HeadStartNews

Food Habits

It's important for children to develop good food habits when they are young. Children tend to copy their parents' food habits. If parents don't eat vegetables, drink milk or try new foods; children usually won't. If parents eat when depressed or bored, children usually will too.

To change a child's poor food habits, it may help to write down two positive things about a child's eating habits, such as "has good table manners" or "eats green vegetables." Then select two negative things about the child's eating habits, such as "whines for sweets" or "argues at the table." Compliment a child's positive habits and focus on negative habits to change. Be patient; it takes a while to change a child's habits.



To help children develop good food habits:

- Involve children in planning, buying and preparing food. Children enjoy food more when they can help.
- Cut down on liquids such as juice, fruit punch and soda. Serve water instead.
- Sit down at the table to eat. Make

eating the only event. Avoid arguments and give everyone a chance to talk. Teach children to eat slowly and to stop when full.

- Serve small portions. Children's appetites and their food choices change quickly. Sometimes they may eat small amounts or none at all. Food jags are common. Keep offering a variety of foods, but don't pressure children to eat. Children don't always have to clean their plates.
- Remove the salt shaker and sugar bowl from the table. Infants naturally dislike salty foods. They learn to like salt because adults give them salty foods or shake salt on their food. Infants are born with a natural taste for sugar. In fact, taste buds that detect sweetness on the front or tip of the tongue form before birth. Most children prefer sweet foods to any other foods. Let children enjoy the natural taste of foods.
- Keep children active when they are bored, stressed or sad, rather than offering food. It's not wise to use food as a punishment or reward.
- Be a good example. Children learn by watching others, including parents, friends and people on TV.

Tortillas with Pinto Sauce



This recipe is easy to fix and high in iron.

What You Need:

- 1-1/2 pounds ground beef
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 small green pepper, chopped
- 1 can pinto beans, undrained
- 3 to 4 cups tomato or vegetable juice
- Lowfat plain tortilla chips
- Toppings such as shredded cheese, lettuce, olives, tomatoes or sour cream

How To Fix:

1. Brown beef, onion and green pepper in fry pan. Drain fat.
2. In blender, mix pinto beans (undrained) and vegetable juice.
3. Add to beef and onion mixture. Heat to serve.
4. Pour meat mixture over tortilla chips. Add toppings of your choice. Serves 8. (304 calories and 21 grams fat in 1/2 cup sauce and 1 cup chips)

Words Around the House

There are many ways parents can help their children build good language skills. Exposing preschool children to letters and words helps them build good language skills.



Home projects to help children learn letters and words:

- Make an alphabet poster for the refrigerator or your child's room.
- Cut out pictures from newspapers and magazines.

Discuss objects in the pictures, then paste them on a colored piece of construction paper. Write the name of the object above the

picture.

- Help children keep a scrapbook of things they see out a window or spot on a walk—such as birds, flowers, trees and houses. Draw or cut out pictures of what they see from magazines or coloring books. Label the pictures.
- Make a flannel board with objects, letters and labels.
- Always label your child's pictures. If your child draws a picture of a dog, write “dog” on the picture. Hang the picture on the refrigerator or a special bulletin board set aside for your child's art work.

Parents Are a Child's First Teacher

Parents want their children to do well in school, but parent's are a child's first teacher. Much can be done at home to help prepare a child for school.

- Read to children.

Look at picture books and magazines. Point out colors and shapes of objects in pictures. Ask your child what is happening in the picture. Visit your library and go to story hours.

- Learn math around the



home. Have your child set the table. Count the number of people eating, the number of plates, glasses, forks, knives and spoons. Unpack groceries and count the cans, boxes or apples.

- Take walks and ask questions about the sounds of nature, color of cars and shapes of leaves.
- Start a hobby with your child. Build model cars, feed birds, grow a garden or collect things. A hobby provides you and your child with much to talk and read about.

Pregnancy and High Blood Pressure

During pregnancy a woman's blood pressure is checked at each prenatal visit. High



blood pressure can occur during pregnancy and affect the mother and fetus. Sometimes high blood pressure can be a sign of preeclampsia. Preeclampsia occurs when high blood pressure is combined with protein in the urine and fluid buildup. It can lead to severe problems for the mother, premature birth, poor fetal growth, and stillbirth.

Call your health care provider if you are pregnant and have:

- Rapid weight gain of more than about one pound a day.
- Swelling of face, hands, ankles or feet.
- Severe or constant headache.
- Blurry vision and spots before your eyes.
- Decreased amount of urine.
- Severe pain under the ribs or right over your stomach.

If blood pressure goes up, bed rest is often suggested. It's vital to get regular care during pregnancy so your blood pressure can be watched.

Antibiotics and Viruses

When their child gets sick, parents often ask their health care provider for an antibiotic. Antibiotics are drugs which stop the growth of harmful germs in our body. Antibiotics don't always work. Some bacteria become resistant to antibiotics. Amoxicillin (a form of penicillin) is often not effective against the Strep. bacteria that causes middle ear infections.

A health care provider can usually tell if an infection is caused by a virus or bacteria. Antibiotics have no effect on viruses. It's usually best just to treat the symptoms. All of an antibiotic must be taken unless a health care provider tells you to stop. If treatment is stopped too early, the bacteria may be harder to treat than the first time.