

Tips to help reduce the amount of sugar in your child's diet:



Offer your child 3 meals per day and no more than 3 snacks per day.

Milk and water should be offered as drinks between meals.

Sweet drinks (juices, smoothies, squashes) should be given only as rare treats.

Avoid fizzy drinks.

Sweet foods (chocolate, biscuits, cake, sweets and ice-cream) should only be given as rare treats.

It is better to give treats (sweet food and drinks) immediately after a meal rather than between meals.

When offering fruit try to give whole fruit.

To increase your child's fruit and vegetable intake try offering carrot sticks or other fresh vegetable sticks with dips like hummus or sour cream.

Choose unsweetened milks and yoghurts.

Try not to have sweet foods and drinks in the house. If they are not there, you can't 'cave in'.

Remember! If you have sweet foods and drinks regularly it is no longer a treat, it is a habit!

Regular exercise is also very important for a healthy lifestyle.

Please Note: Always follow the advice of your doctor or dietitian.

For information and advice about caring for your child's teeth, please see the leaflet entitled: Oral Health.

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Date issued: August 2016

Review date: August 2019

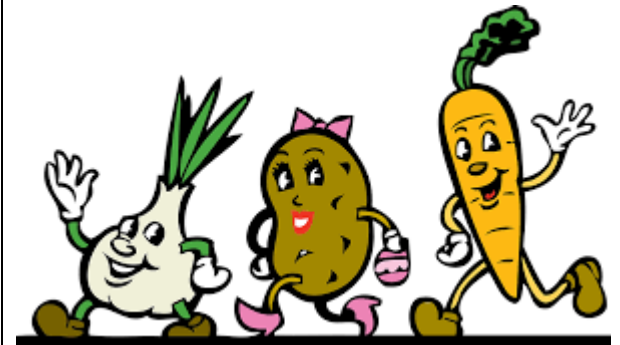
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Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin,
Dublin 12



....where children's health comes first

Reducing Sugar in Your Child's Diet



A Guide to Improving Your Child's Diet

Why is having too much sugar, too often, bad for your health?

Sugar is high in calories and low in nutritional value.

Too much sugar in the diet, too often, can lead to: tooth decay; weight gain and obesity; heart problems and many other health problems.

It is important to reduce the amount of sugar in our diets.



What is the best way to make sure that my child gets a healthy, well balanced diet?

- A well balanced diet will help you and your child get the right nutrients. It promotes good health.

- When offering cereals, breads, potatoes, pasta or rice, provide wholegrain versions, for example porridge, brown rice and brown pasta.
- Everyone should aim to eat at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day.
- Your child should eat lean meat, poultry or other unprocessed protein sources such as eggs or tofu.
- Sweet foods and drinks should only be offered as treats, 2 or 3 times per week. To help reduce the impact on your child's teeth give these treats at a mealtime.
- Avoid juices and smoothies as these often have a very high sugar content. Milk and water are the best drinks to offer your child.
- Use oils, butters and other fats sparingly.
- The Irish Heart Foundation have a 'Food Shopping Card' that will help you identify foods and drinks that are too high in sugar.

The food pyramid can help you to make healthy choices for your family.

