



# Cut back on your kid's sweet treats

Set your kids on a path for lifelong healthy eating by limiting the amount of added sugars they eat. Sweet treats and sugary drinks have lots of calories but few nutrients. Most added sugars come from sodas; sports, energy, and fruit drinks; cakes; cookies; ice cream; candy; and other desserts.

**1** **Serve small portions**  
Show kids that a small amount of treats can go a long way. Use smaller bowls and plates for these foods and serve them in bite-size portions.

**2** **Sip smarter**  
Soda and other sugar-sweetened drinks contain a lot of sugar and are high in calories. Offer water when kids are thirsty.



**3** **Use the checkout lane that does not display candy**  
Most grocery stores will have a candy-free checkout lane to help avoid temptation. Waiting in a regular checkout lane tempts children to ask for candy that is right in front of them.

**4** **Choose not to offer sweets as rewards**  
By offering food as a reward for good behavior, children learn to think that some foods are better than other foods. Reward your child with kind words and comforting hugs, or give them non-food items, like stickers, to make them feel special.

**5** **Make fruit the first choice**  
Offer a variety of fruits in different ways. Make fruit kabobs using cantaloupe, bananas, and strawberries or offer whole fruits such as pears, clementines, or apples.



**6** **Make food fun**  
Sugary foods that are marketed to kids are advertised as “fun foods.” Make nutritious foods fun by preparing them with your child’s help and being creative together. Create a smiley face with sliced bananas and raisins. Cut fruit into fun and easy shapes with cookie cutters.

**7** **Encourage kids to invent new snacks**  
Make your own snack mixes from dry whole-grain cereal, dried fruit, and unsalted nuts or seeds. Let school-age kids choose the ingredients to create their own snack.



**8** **Play detective in the grocery aisle**  
Show kids how to find the amount of total sugars on the Nutrition Facts label in various cereals, yogurts, and other products. Challenge them to compare products they like and select the one with the lowest amount of sugar.

**9** **Make treats “treats,” not everyday foods**  
Treats are okay once in a while. Just don’t make treat foods an everyday thing. Limit sweet treats to special occasions.

**10** **If kids don’t eat their meal, they don’t need sweet “extras”**  
Keep in mind that candy or cookies should not replace foods that are not eaten at meal time.