



Foods and Drinks to Avoid or Limit

Healthy eating is all about balance. There is no need to add salt or sugar to your child's food. There are also some foods and drinks that are not safe for your child to eat and others that are not as healthy choices as other foods.

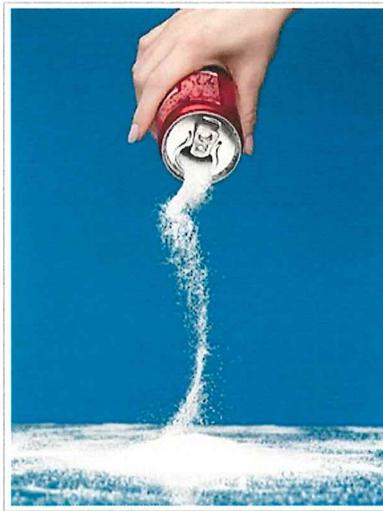
- **Honey before 12 months** may cause a serious type of food poisoning called botulism. Before your child is 12 months old, do not give him or her any foods containing honey, including yogurt with honey and cereals and crackers with honey, such as honey graham crackers.
- **Unpasteurized drinks or foods (such as juices, milks, yogurt, or cheeses)** may put your child at risk for a harmful bacteria that can cause severe diarrhea. Do not give your child unpasteurized drinks or foods such as juice, milk, yogurt, or cheeses. Unpasteurized milk can also be called raw milk.
- **Foods with added sugars**, low-calorie sweeteners, or no-calorie sweeteners are not recommended. Foods with added sugars can include muffins, flavored yogurts, or cookies. Children younger than 24 months old should avoid added sugars. Check the [Nutrition Facts Label](#) to find foods with no added sugars.
- **Sugar-sweetened drinks** (such as soda, pop, soft drinks, flavored milks, sports drinks, flavored water with sugar, and juice drinks) contain added sugars. These drinks are different than 100% juice. Children younger than 24 months old should avoid added sugars.
- **Foods high in salt** (sodium), such as some canned foods, processed meats (e.g., lunch meats, sausages, hot dogs, ham), and frozen dinners should be avoided. Some snack foods and store-bought packaged toddler foods are high in salt. Check the [Nutrition Facts Label](#) to find foods with less salt.
- **Fish high in mercury**, such as king mackerel, marlin, orange roughy, shark, swordfish, tilefish (from the Gulf of Mexico), and bigeye tuna should be avoided. Before serving fish caught by family and friends, check for [fish and shellfish advisories](#). Mercury can be harmful to the brain and nervous system if a person is exposed to too much of it over time. While it is important to limit mercury in the diets of children, many [types of fish](#) are lower in mercury, have important nutrients that support brain development and the immune system, and support a healthy diet. [Learn more](#) about which types of fish to avoid and which types of fish to choose to best support your child's brain and nervous system development.
- **Cow's milk before 12 months old** may put your baby at risk for intestinal bleeding. It also has too many proteins and minerals for your baby's kidneys to handle easily and does not have the right amount of nutrients your baby needs.
- **Juice before 12 months old is not recommended.** Children should not drink any fruit or vegetable juice before they are 12 months old. **Juice after 12 months old is not necessary, but 4 ounces or less of 100% juice a day can be provided.** Check Nutrition Facts Labels to make sure it is 100% juice. Juice drinks, fruit drinks, and fruit-flavored drinks have added sugars and should be avoided. Whole fruits are healthier options for your child than fruit juices.
- **Caffeinated drinks**, such as soft drinks, tea, coffee, and sports drinks, should be avoided for children younger than age 2. There is no established safe limit for caffeine for young children.

Did You Know?



There are certain foods and drinks you should avoid giving your child.

To learn more, watch these videos from [1,000 Days](#).



These are just examples of foods and drinks and do not include all possible foods and drinks to avoid or limit. Talk with your child's doctor or nurse if you have more questions about which foods to avoid or limit.

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