

KID-FIT News



The Quarterly Preschool Physical Education and Fitness Guide

Dealing With An Underweight Child

Nutritious Calories For Underweight Children

Try adding some of these excellent foods to your picky eater's diet:

- 100% Fruit/Veg. Juice
- Smoothies
- Fruit Shakes
- Peanut Butter
- Avocado
- Cheese
- Granola
- Whole Wheat Bread
- Garbanzo Beans
- No-fat Refried Beans
- Dried Fruit
- Sports Bars
- Salmon

So much focus is placed on childhood obesity today yet some children are actually underweight.

Underweight toddlers pose a unique challenge. Children who don't eat enough may not grow properly. They won't get enough nutrients to maintain proper bodily functions and the immune system will be impaired.

First, it's important to determine if a child is truly underweight. The best way to find out is by asking your pediatrician. You can also check the Centers for Disease Control Girls/Boys BMI charts (see: <http://bit.ly/cfFo9f>). Make sure the child doesn't have an underlying medical condition too. Dehydration and illness can both lead to dramatic weight loss.

Just how do you know how much your child should eat? A child's stomach is not large, about the size of their fist. So little ones aren't able to eat a lot at one time. They 'graze' which means they need healthy snacks and small balanced meals throughout the day.

For picky eaters to accept and like specific foods, they will need to be exposed to a food several times. Experts say up to 15 times. Avoid forcing children to eat any food as it will only make the situation worse over time. Meal time needs to be a fun, positive experience children look forward to.

Other things that may help



include keeping a log of the types of foods that your child eats eagerly including whether textures are crunchy, smooth or chewy. To promote a healthy appetite for a nutritious meal, avoid liquids right before mealtime and offer treats that are low in fat and sugar between meals

When a child suddenly has an increased appetite, it's most likely due to a growth spurt.

Depression In Preschoolers

Mention depression and most people will think of an adult filling a prescription for Prozac or some other prescription drug. But, recently there's been a great deal of debate over how young a person can actually be diagnosed with depression.

Many child psychiatrists and psychologists believe the roots are visible in children as young as age 2 or 3.

Daniel Pine from the National

Institute of Mental Health says "One of the most important mental-health discoveries of the past 10 to 20 years has been that chronic mental illnesses are predominantly illnesses of the young."

When one or more parents are depressed, it's estimated that young children living with them are 2-3 times more likely to suffer the same fate.

Real life issues such as poverty,

abuse and neglect contribute in part to feelings of depression in children. And rightly so.

If you feel a child is suffering from any of these warning signs, get an expert opinion right away. Medication may be needed but parenting can go a long way in helping too. Reduce pressure a child may feel from being overscheduled, avoid exposure to conflict and offer more nurturing. The same

Signs of a depressed child :

- * Very anxious
- * Little joy playing
- * Irritable
- * Angry
- * Frequent sadness or crying
- * Low energy level
- * Physical complaints
- * Changes in eating/sleeping
- * Prefers to be alone
- * Sensitive to failure
- * Relationship problems
- * Self destructive behavior

Healthy Recipe

Simple Beet Salad

Only 4 ingredients. Even kids love beets this way.

3 large beets, cleaned and peeled
1/2 cup orange juice
1/4 cup lemon juice
2 Tbsp. olive oil

Shred the beets on a grater or in a food processor. Toss with the juices and oil. Refrigerate and serve.

Nutritional Information:

Calories per 1 cup serving: 123
Total Fat: 4.5 gms.
Protein: 1.5 gms.
Carbohydrate: 11 gms.
Sodium: 64 mgs.
Fiber: 2.5 gms



Fitness Fun

Tucked In

Try these super fun activities outdoors with a potato sack or sturdy King size pillow case.

1. Sneaky Squirrel. Have children get inside the sack, holding on to the outside. Have them hop three times as if they were squirrels looking around for nuts, and then tuck back inside to hide. On your signal, they come out again and hop four times and then hide. Each time you signal

to come out, they hop one extra time before hiding. See how many times they can work up to. Aim for 10.

2. Sprouting Potatoes. Children tuck inside their sacks, lay down and hold the top closed as if they are potatoes. Once inside they will roll on the ground. You tell them which way to roll to find the best place to sprout and grow. Once they have rolled back and forth several times, signal them it's time to "grow".

Then, they can let go of the top and 'sprout' (sticking out head and arms).

3. Three-Legged Fun. Even small children can learn the basics of the traditional three-legged race which builds strength, coordination and balance. Have two of them stand side by side and place their inside legs inside the sack. Start slow and have them practice taking ten steps. Each ten steps, gradually increase the speed.

Need more activities? See a new indoor P.E. activity here each month: http://www.kid-fit.com/free_pe_activities.html



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