



Food For Thought

Healthy Ideas for Preschoolers



Grain Group

Foods from the Grain Group which includes bread, cereal, rice and pasta are important for several reasons. They provide:

- ◆ Carbohydrates for energy
- ◆ Fiber for regularity
- ◆ Vitamins and minerals for many important body functions
- ◆ Protein for growth and repair of cells

Carbohydrates are the main source of energy. Energy is needed for the body to function, to be able to play and work and to be able to study and learn.

Fiber is very important in the diet. Foods with fiber include whole-grain breads and cereals, fruit and vegetables. Fiber is found only in plant foods. Fiber helps food move through the body faster. Increase the fiber in your diet a little at a time. For more fiber, substitute whole wheat flour for some of the white

flour when you bake. Substitute brown rice for white rice. Choose whole grain cereals. In baking $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of white flour plus $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of whole-wheat flour may be substituted for 1 cup of white flour.

Most foods in the Grain group are low in fat: but croissants, muffins and some granolas are high in fat. Remember butter, margarine or icing added to foods from this group add calories and fat.

How Much do We Need?

Children 2 to 3 years old need 3-ounces of grain a day. Four to eight year olds need 4 to 5-ounces. Adults need 6 to 8-ounces. People who are very active may add 1 to 2-ounces more a day.

How much is an ounce? An ounce is one serving. Some examples of a serving include:

- 1 slice of bread
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked rice, pasta, or cooked cereal
- 1 small muffin
- 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal
- 1 6-inch tortilla

Half of all servings should be whole grains.

For personalized nutrition information visit
www.mypyramid.gov

Which is the Best Choice

(See answer on back)

1 Raised glazed donut

242 calories

14 g. fat

1 g. fiber

3 slices Whole-wheat bread

210 calories

3 g. fat

6 g. fiber

Read a Book



Most kids like to have books read to them. To help your children learn more about bread, cereal, rice and pasta look for a book about these foods that they would enjoy. Make a trip to the library and have your kids help you pick out a book about some food from this group. Be sure to select books that have a positive message about food.

Set a time to read the book. Make sure everyone is comfortable and can see the pictures.

After you have read the book ask the children questions such as: What food did you just hear about? Have you

ever eaten this food? Do you like this food?

There are many children's books about bread, cereals, rice and pasta. Here are a few titles to help you get started:

If you Give a Moose a Muffin by Laura Joffe Numeroff
Bread and Jam for Francis

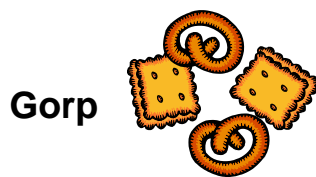
by Russell Hoban

The Little Red Hen

by Paul Galdone

Too Many Tamales

by Gary Soto



To make Gorp, mix everything together in mixing bowl. Gorp is usually made with two cereals (3 cups each), one salty food (1/2 cup), one sweet food (1 cup) and one dried fruit (1/2 cup). Measurements are approximate and may be varied depending on what you have on hand. Suggested ingredients:

Any dry cereal
Sunflower seeds
Pumpkin seeds
Roasted soybeans
Raisins
Any nuts
Candy-coated chocolate candy
Chocolate chips
Corn chips
Bite-sized crackers
Marshmallows
Pretzels

Cereal Treats



1/4 cup margarine or butter
1 pkg. (10 oz.) marshmallows
6 cups crisp rice cereal
1/2 cup candy corn candy

Combine margarine and marshmallows in 2-quart glass bowl.

Microwave (high), uncovered, 2 1/2 to 3 minutes or until marshmallows are puffed. Stir in cereal until will coated. Mix in candy corn. Cool enough to handle.

With buttered hands, form mixture into 24 balls. Place on waxed paper until cool. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap for storage.

Tips:

✘ Pieces of cut black licorice can be substituted for candy corn.

✘ Mixture can be pressed into greased 13x9-inch baking pan and cut into squares for serving.

Nutrition per piece: 85 calories, 1 g. protein, 2 g. fat, 0 mg. cholesterol

Answer: The bread is better because it's high in fiber, the doughnut has more fat.



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