

## 10 Foods not to give your kids By Joe Wilkes



As physical activity decreases, and processed-food intake increases, kids aren't burning calories the way their parents might have when they were their age. They are establishing eating habits that they will take into adulthood. Here are some of the worst foods you can try to keep them away from, and some healthy replacement ideas.

Note: The following recommendations are for school-aged children. Infants and toddlers have different specific nutritional needs, not addressed in this article.

1. Chicken nuggets/tenders. These popular kids- menu items are little nuggets of compressed fat, sodium, high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS). Instead: Choose a grilled chicken breast and cut it into dipping-size pieces.
2. Sugary cereal. Cups of sugar, grams of fat, and hundreds of empty calories in these morning staples. Instead: Read the labels and try to find cereal that is low in sugar and high in fiber and whole grains.
3. Lunch meat and hot dogs. Kids love hot dogs, bologna, and other processed meats, but they are full of potentially carcinogenic nitrates and nitrites, sodium, saturated fat, and artificial colors and fillers. Instead: Get unprocessed meats, like lean turkey breast, chicken, tuna, or roast beef. Use whole wheat bread for sandwiches.
4. Juice and juice-flavored drinks. While 100% juice is a good source of vitamin C, it doesn't have the fiber of whole fruit, and provides calories mostly from sugar and carbohydrates. Too much juice can lead to obesity and tooth decay, among other problems. Juice drinks that aren't 100% juice are usually laced with artificial colors and that old standby, high- fructose corn syrup, and should be avoided. Instead: Water is still the best thirst quencher. Explain the importance of good hydration to your kids.
5. French fries. High in calories, high in fat, and high in sodium. And the fat they're fried in is usually trans fat, the unhealthiest kind for the heart. To top it all off, studies are beginning to show cancer-causing properties from acrylamide, a toxic substance that is created when starchy foods like potatoes are heated to extreme temperatures. Instead: Vegetables like baby carrots, celery sticks, or other crudité.
6. Chips. Potato chips, Cheetos, Doritos, etc. These are full of fat, oftentimes saturated, and way more sodium than any child or adult should eat. Some chips also have the acrylamide problem discussed under French fries. Instead: Kids gotta snack. Cut-up vegetables are the best thing if you want to get your crunch on, but air-popped popcorn and some baked chips are okay, too.
7. Fruit leather. Many of these gelatinous snacks like roll-ups or fruit bites contain a trace amount of fruit but lots of sugar or HFCS and bright artificial colors. Don't be misled by all the products that include the word "fruit" on their box. Real fruit is in the produce section, not the candy aisle.
8. Doughnuts. These little deep-fried gobs of joy are favorites for kids and adults alike, but they are full of fat and trans-fatty acids, and of course, sugar. Toaster pastries, muffins, and cinnamon buns aren't much better. Instead: A slice of whole-wheat toast spread with sugar-free fruit spread or peanut butter. Stand firm. Doughnuts❑ not for breakfast. Period.
9. Pizza. In moderation, pizza can be a fairly decent choice. The problem comes with the processed meats like pepperoni and sausage, which add fat and nitrates/nitrites (see Lunch meat and hot dogs above). Instead: Try making your own pizza with your kids. Use premade whole wheat crusts, or whole wheat tortillas, English muffins, or bread as a base.
10. Soda. I added this one I actually am surprised this one was left out . In my books it should be # 1 . There is a direct correlation from soda, diet/regular (they are both BAD) to Obesity and Diabetes . You might as well put a cup of white sugar in a cup pour enough water over it to make it liquid enough to drink and drink it . It's that simple .

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