



How Much Fruit & Veg do Kids 6 months to 9 years need?



## How Much Fruit & Veg?

Fruits and vegetables are extremely important. They provide vitamins and minerals that your child needs to be healthy and help them learn and concentrate, as well as boost immunity to help protect kids from many diseases, viruses and infections. However, to young, inexperienced taste buds, sometimes they can be a little hard to swallow (figuratively and literally).

### Here we will cover the following topics:

- Age milestones to introduce fruit and veg to your child
- Recommended daily fruit & veg guidelines

### Fact 1:

- Research has proven that exposing infants to a new fruit or vegetable early in life encourages them to eat more of it compared to offering novel fruit and vegetables to older children. So, **include a variety of fruits and vegetables every day** and you'll be setting up healthy habits for your child to last a lifetime.



## Fact 2:

- While it's best to start children off young, **how much fruit and vegetables do our kids need per day?** Well, that's up to a number of factors. Children need to consume fruits and vegies in proportion to their size, age and sometimes, gender ... while older children need more than younger ones.

## Fact 3:

### Age Appropriate Guidelines for Introducing Fruit & Veg

#### 6-7 months:

- Introduce fruit and vegetables (pureed or finely mashed).
- As children are still extremely young, the variety of fruit and veg being fed to them must be simple. Pureed or finely mashed fruits and vegetables, including pureed apple, mashed pumpkin or potatoes are good starting points as they're soft and sweet - perfect for fussy eaters.
- Once your child becomes comfortable with these new tastes, it's time to introduce more fruits and vegetables.
- As babies are still learning how to chew and swallow foods, it is important to pay close attention to what your child is eating and putting into their mouth to reduce the risk of choking.



## 8-12 months:

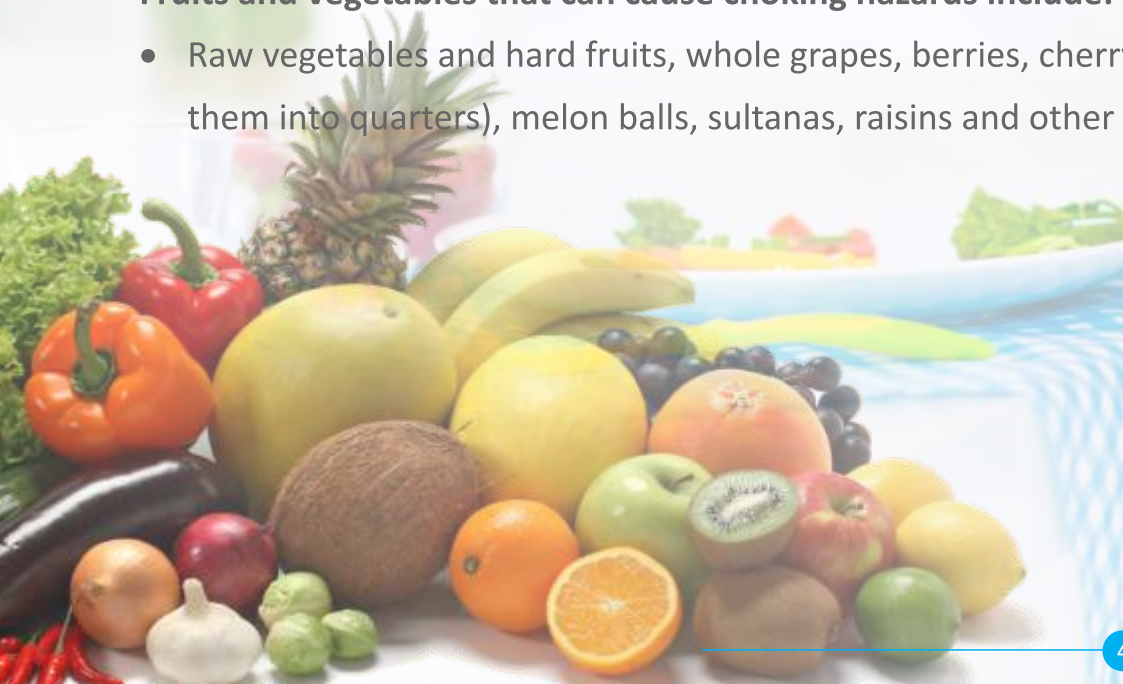
- Children should be exposed to a large range of fruit and vegetables.
- While children are becoming more capable of eating and self-feeding, it's important fruits and vegetables are of an appropriate texture, from pureed to lumpy to normal textures, depending on their developmental stage.

### Examples of appropriate fruits and vegetables include:

- Mashed or soft cooked vegetables (e.g pumpkin, potato, zucchini)
- Mashed, cooked fruit (e.g pears, apple) or soft fruit such as watermelon and banana.
- It is important that food is provided in a way that reduces choking hazards. To reduce the risk of choking, cut fruit and vegies into smaller pieces, or cook foods to soften them and/or mash.

### Fruits and vegetables that can cause choking hazards include:

- Raw vegetables and hard fruits, whole grapes, berries, cherry or grape tomatoes (instead, peel and slice or cut them into quarters), melon balls, sultanas, raisins and other dried fruits, cooked or raw corn kernels.





## 2-3 years:

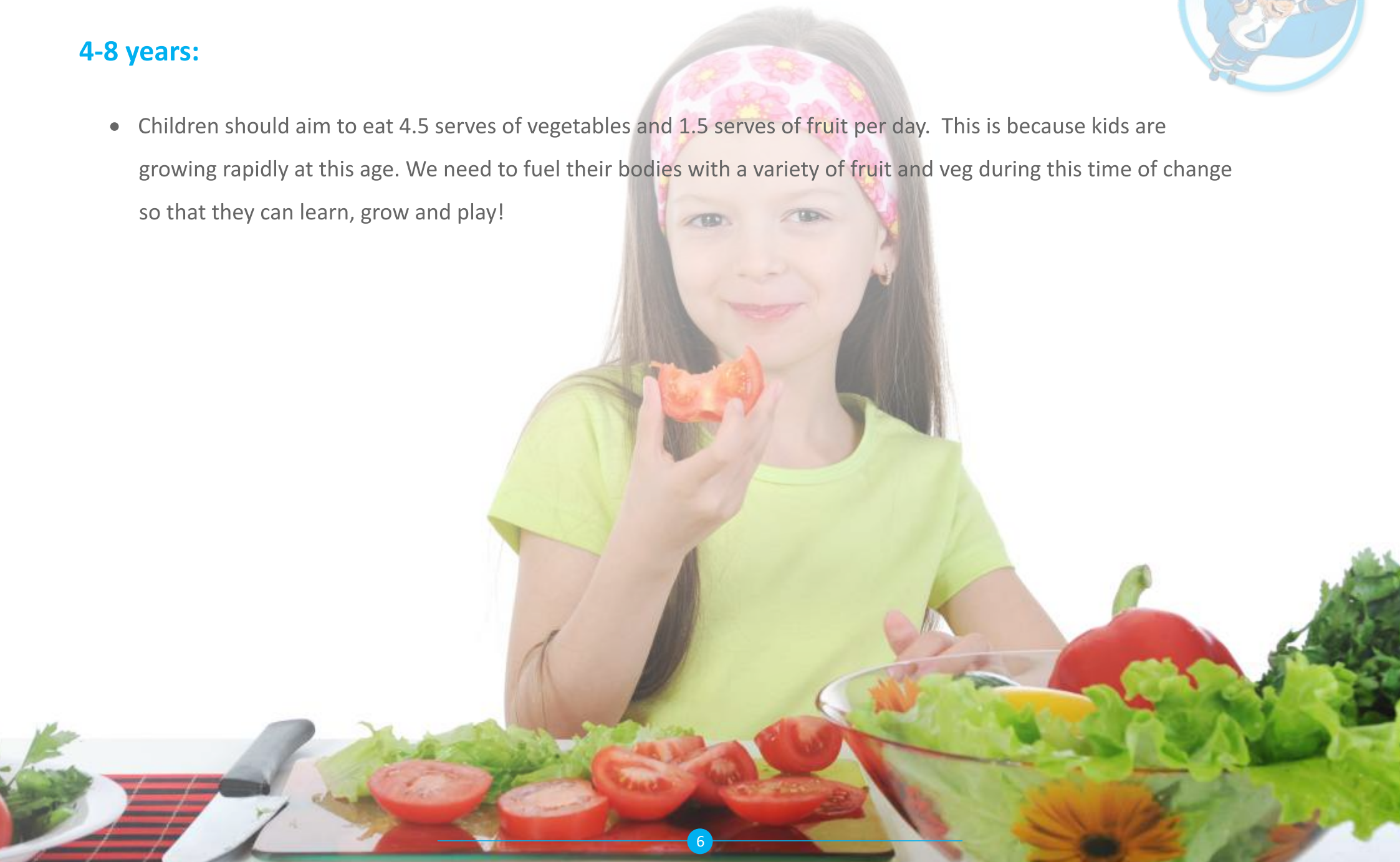
- Children should aim to eat 2.5 serves of vegetables and 1 serve of fruit per day.
- At this age, children are learning the benefits of these nutritious foods, and their young tummies are still getting used to them.
- Introduce a variety of fruit and veg, but there's no need to overload them at this age.
- Introduce cut up fruit (e.g. apple, banana, mandarin, pear, watermelon, strawberries and soft vegetable sticks (e.g. cucumber, capsicum, snow peas).
- Offer a variety of both raw veg (e.g. halved cherry tomatoes, cauliflower and broccoli florets) and cooked vegetables. Try either fresh or frozen options. You can also use canned vegetables (drain and rinse well).
- Avoid hard vegetables (e.g. raw carrot) as they can cause choking.
- Try fresh, frozen and tinned fruit (in juice, not syrup, as syrup has added sugars).
- Cook or grate hard fruits (e.g. apple) to prevent choking.





## 4-8 years:

- Children should aim to eat 4.5 serves of vegetables and 1.5 serves of fruit per day. This is because kids are growing rapidly at this age. We need to fuel their bodies with a variety of fruit and veg during this time of change so that they can learn, grow and play!





## 9 years onwards:

- Children should eat the daily recommended 5 serves of vegetables and 2 serves of fruit per day.

Finally, it's important to realise that these values are designed for the average child of that age group. If your child is deficient in something, taller than average or suffers from a health problem, you might need to chat with a nutritionist or dietitian to make sure your child's nutritional needs are being met.

## KEY POINTS

- Fruits and vegetables are extremely important for growing children
- It is crucial children start eating fruits and vegetables from a young age
- Start off with pureed food, progressing onto bigger pieces of fruit and vegetables as your child gets older (be cautious of foods that can be choking hazards)
- Serves of fruit and vegetables should increase as your child gets older, until they reach the adult requirement of 2 serves of fruit and 5 serves of vegetables per day
- Children need to consume fruit and vegetables in relation to their age, height and health status.

**References:**

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