Building Your Baby’s Diet
Step by Step, 12 to 24 months

Have a Daily Routine:
A nightly bedtime with pre-bedtime habits – tooth brushing, quiet time without screens or loud noises, reading, dim room lights, and snuggling together. Always offer a quality breakfast to kick off your toddler’s day (the first of 3 meals and 2-3 mini-meals, spaced every few hours).

Expand the diet in the second year
By 12 months, half of your baby’s daily calories come from breastmilk and/or infant formula, and the other half from foods. More complex foods are added from 12-24 months. By 24 months, your toddler will be eating the same foods as your family. TIP: Let the same high-quality meal planning that you use for your infant and toddler benefit your whole family. Make every calorie count.

Think and plan all meals and snacks
• Think of the 5 food groups: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy, and quality proteins.
• Serve a variety from each food group to pack in the most nutrition (see Table for examples).
• Each meal should contain 2-3 different food groups.
• Offer toddlers choices. Apple or banana? Carrots or broccoli? Toast or cereal?
• Mix different colored fruits and vegetables.
• Combine favorite foods with new foods.
• Let children explore the look, smell, taste, and texture of more complex dishes.

Table:
Examples of Nutrient-Rich Foods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRUITS</th>
<th>• berries (blueberries, raspberries, strawberries)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• citrus (oranges, lemons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VEGETABLES</td>
<td>• greens (spinach, broccoli)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• yellows (squash, carrots)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• reds (beets, red peppers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHOLE GRAINS</td>
<td>• whole-grain cereals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• whole-grain crackers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• whole-grain breads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAIRY</td>
<td>• milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• yogurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROTEINS</td>
<td>• meats (beef, poultry, pork)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• fish/shellfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• nuts/nut butters</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

http://ohioaap.org/projects/PMP
Try Something New:
Try hummus from the Middle East, rice and beans from Central America, seafood dishes from Japan or Scandinavia, pasta dishes from Italy, noodle dishes from China, etc. There are so many new choices to explore.

2nd Year Drinks:
Offer milk and water. Keep using a small cup at mealtimes.

You can find more information about healthy drinks for toddlers here:

2nd Year Foods:
• Ask if your toddler is hungry.
• Offer a variety of small servings.
• Let your toddler ask for more.
• Let your toddler leave food on the plate.
• Keep offering a variety of foods in creative ways; toddler’s food choices change frequently.

Don’t waste important calories on foods or drinks that don’t offer a lot of nutrients.

More Information?
• Check out the American Academy of Pediatrics Healthy Children website at:
  https://healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/feeding-nutrition/Pages/default.aspx
• Visit Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics Parenting at Mealtime and Playtime website:
  https://pmp.ohioaap.org/

Ohio AAP PMP Mobile App
Search Parenting at Meal and Playtime on Apple Store or Google Play

App Highlights...
• Physician-endorsed materials for parents to access on-demand
• Resources for parents organized by age
• Text reminders sent monthly and/or for age milestones
• Easy sign-up
• Videos on feeding, play, nutrition and more

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