



Bright Futures™

prevention and health promotion for infants,
children, adolescents, and their families™

The Bright Futures Guidelines,
Third Edition
Health Promotion Information Sheet

PROMOTING HEALTHY NUTRITION

The Bright Futures Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents, Third Edition features 10 health promotion themes. These state-of-the-art discussions focus on topics of key importance to families and health care professionals in their common mission to promote the health and well-being of children from birth through adolescence. These 10 themes are also woven into the 31 health supervision visits.



What you'll find in the "Promoting Healthy Nutrition" chapter

Overview: Setting the stage

Infancy, childhood, and adolescence are marked by rapid physical growth and development, which depend on good nutrition. Physical growth, developmental requirements, nutrition needs, and feeding patterns vary significantly in each stage of growth and development. Additionally, the dramatic growth in pediatric overweight and obesity in recent years has increased health care professionals' and parents' attention to the need for a balanced and nutritious diet along with regular physical activity.

In-depth: Exploring the topic

The introductory section of this chapter discusses key food and nutrition concerns, including issues related to culture, food insecurity and hunger, and community partnerships to ensure adequate nutrition. The section also addresses the essential components of nutrition, including nutrition for appropriate growth, development of feeding and eating skills, healthy feeding and eating habits, healthy eating relationships, and nutrition for children and youth with special health care needs.

The chapter also looks at healthy nutrition issues unique to each developmental stage, along with evidence on the effectiveness of relevant health promotion interventions.

Preconception and Prenatal Periods

- Folic acid

Infancy: Birth to 11 Months

- Nutrition for growth, including caloric needs and vitamin and mineral supplements
- Developing healthy feeding and eating skills, including issues related to breastfeeding, formula feeding, frequency and amount of feedings, complementary foods, and feeding and eating problems
- Providing a nurturing and healthy feeding environment
- Nutrition for infants with special health care needs

Early Childhood: 1 to 4 Years

- Nutrition for growth
- Developing healthy feeding and eating skills
- Nutrition for children with special health care needs

Middle Childhood: 5 to 10 Years

- Nutrition for growth
- Developing healthy eating habits
- Nutrition for children with special health care needs

Adolescence: 11 to 21 Years

- Nutrition for growth, including assessment of the adolescent diet
- Developing healthy eating habits, including issues of body image, eating disorders, and athletics and performance-enhancing substances
- Nutrition for youth with special health care needs



How the theme of “Promoting Healthy Nutrition” fits into Bright Futures visits

Each Bright Futures health supervision visit is structured around *five priority topics* that help focus the health care professional’s guidance to parents and children. Some priorities are unique to a particular visit; others are featured often and their components evolve in concert with the child’s development.

These examples of priorities, taken from selected visits, show how Bright Futures helps health care professionals talk to families about promoting physical activity during each developmental stage:

Infancy: 4 Month Visit

Nutrition adequacy and growth, including feeding success, weight gain, feeding choices (including complementary foods and food allergies) and feeding guidance regarding breastfeeding and formula

Early Childhood: 12 Month Visit

Feeding and appetite changes related to self-feeding; nutritious foods; choice, and; “grazing”

Middle Childhood: 5 and 6 Year Visits

Nutrition and physical activity, including healthy weight; the appropriate well-balanced diet; increased fruit, vegetable and whole-grain consumption; adequate calcium intake, and; 60 minutes of exercise a day

Early Adolescence: 11 to 14 Year Visits

Physical growth and development, such as physical and oral health, body image, healthy eating, and physical activity

Additional Resources on Promoting Healthy Nutrition

- American Academy of Pediatrics www.aap.org
- Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration <http://mchb.hrsa.gov>
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/FoodSecurity
- Institute of Medicine of the National Academies Dietary Reference Intakes Table <http://www.iom.edu/?SearchText=Dietary%20Reference%20Intakes%20Table>
- Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005 www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/document/default.htm
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, MyPyramid www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html

Bright Futures is a national health care promotion and disease prevention initiative that uses a developmentally-based approach to address children’s health needs in the context of family and community.

Other Bright Futures Health Promotion Themes

Family Support

Child Development

Mental Health

Healthy Weight

Healthy Nutrition

Physical Activity

Oral Health

Safety and Injury Prevention

Community Relationships and Resources

Healthy Sexual Development and Sexuality

*To learn more about Bright Futures,
visit www.brightfutures.aap.org.*

