

# Nutrition for Children Taking Steroids

Eating well and being active while taking oral steroids can help your child:

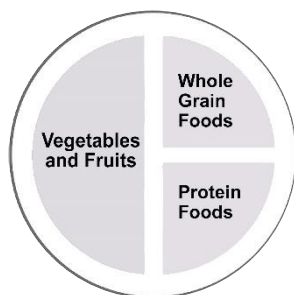
- manage increased hunger
- minimize weight gain
- manage blood sugars
- keep bones strong and healthy
- reduce risk of high blood pressure

## Eat well

### Manage hunger with healthy eating habits

A common side effect of steroids is increased hunger. Healthy eating habits can help manage your child's hunger and may help limit excessive weight gain. Even with healthy habits, some weight gain is expected while your child is taking steroids.

- Eat together as a family as often as you can. This is a chance to try new foods and spend time together.
- Have regular meals and snacks rather than grazing. This helps children to get the nutrients they need and may allow for healthier food choices.
- Serve 3 balanced meals and 2–3 healthy snacks each day.
- Offer water or milk as drink choices.
- Plan meals and snacks to follow the Eat Well Plate:



- Make ½ the plate vegetables and fruits
- Choose whole grain foods
- Include protein foods

- Stock your kitchen with healthy snacks. Try quick and easy options like:

- fresh fruit
- carrots, cucumber, peppers, and celery
- unsalted nuts
- hard-boiled eggs



- Limit highly processed foods, such as chocolates, candies, ice cream, fast food, chips, processed cheese, bakery products like muffins, buns and cakes, deli meats and sausages.
- Avoid sugary drinks like juice or pop.

### Tips for your child:

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### Help keep your child's bones strong and healthy with calcium and vitamin D

#### How much calcium does my child need?

Age	Calcium needed each day
1-3 years	700 mg per day
4-8 years	1000 mg per day
9-18 years	1300 mg per day

**Try to meet your child's calcium needs through foods** like milk, yogurt, cheese, fortified soy beverage, tofu made with calcium, and almonds.

If your child does not get enough calcium from food, your health care team may suggest a supplement.

#### Vitamin D

AHS recommends that all children take a vitamin D supplement year round.

**Give your child a \_\_\_\_\_IU vitamin D supplement each day.**

#### Tips

- Offer 2 cups (500 mL) of milk (skim, 1%, 2%) or fortified soy beverage every day. This is a practical way to help your child get more calcium and vitamin D.
- Choose plain or unsweetened milk or soy beverages most often.
- Include yogurt or cheese at meals or snacks. ¾ cup (175 mL) of yogurt or 50 g (1½ oz) cheese has the about same calcium as 1 cup (250 mL) of milk.



## Limit your child's salt (sodium) intake to help prevent high blood pressure and sudden weight gain from fluid

The amount depends on your child's age:

Age	Sodium limit per day
1-3 years	800 mg per day
4-8 years	1000 mg per day
9-13 years	1200 mg per day
14-18 years	1500 mg per day

- Choose fresh foods and foods with no salt added.
- Choose less processed, packaged and restaurant foods.
- Prepare food at home more often.
- Add garlic, onion, herbs, spices, lemon juice, vinegar, or salt-free seasonings to food instead of salt.
- Limit sauces that are high in salt such as ketchup, mustard, soy sauce, fish sauce, gravy, and salad dressing.
- Limit processed meats like deli meat, ham, bacon, sausages, and hot dogs.
- Limit pickled foods and salty snack foods like chips, pretzels, microwave popcorn, pickles, and salted crackers.
- Read labels. Choose foods with lower % Daily Value and smaller amounts of sodium. Choose foods with 5% Daily Value or lower more often.

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Per 1 cup (30 g)	
<b>Calories 180</b>	% Daily Value*
<b>Fat</b> 2 g	3 %
Saturated 0.4 g	2 %
+ Trans 0 g	
<b>Carbohydrate</b> 35 g	
Fibre 4 g	15 %
Sugars 7 g	7 %
<b>Protein</b> 5 g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0 mg	
<b>Sodium</b> 120 mg	5 %
Potassium 450 mg	10 %
Calcium 30 mg	2 %
Iron 8 mg	45 %
*5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot	
* 5% ou moins c'est peu, 15% ou plus c'est beaucoup	

## Be active every day

### Physical activity promotes overall health and well-being

- Children copy their parents. Make physical activity a fun part of your family life.
- Encourage children to play outside. Get the whole family involved. Try ball games, running games, skipping, or make up your own games.
- Monitor screen time in your home. Limit time spent watching TV and using computers or other devices.
- Keep TVs, video game consoles, tablets, computers, and smartphones:
  - turned off or put away during meals
  - in a central place where the whole family can see and use them
  - out of your child's bedroom

To learn more about how much activity your child needs each day, visit [csepguidelines.ca](http://csepguidelines.ca)