



NEW Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns

Child and Adult Meals



USDA recently revised the CACFP meal patterns to ensure children and adults have access to healthy, balanced meals throughout the day. Under the new child and adult meal patterns, meals served will include a greater variety of vegetables and fruit, more whole grains, and less added sugar and saturated fat. The changes made to the meal patterns are based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, scientific recommendations from the National Academy of Medicine, and stakeholder input. CACFP centers and day care homes must comply with the new meal patterns by October 1, 2017.

New Child and Adult Meal Patterns

Greater variety of vegetables and fruits:

- * The combined fruit and vegetable component is now a separate vegetable component and a separate fruit component; and
- * Juice is limited to once per day.

More whole grains:

- * At least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich;
- * Grain-based desserts no longer count towards the grains component; and
- * Ounce equivalents (oz eq) are used to determine the amount of creditable grains (starting October 1, 2019).



More protein options:

- * Meat and meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component at breakfast a maximum of three times per week; and
- * Tofu counts as a meat alternate.

Age appropriate meals:

- * A new age group to address the needs of older children 13 through 18 years old.

Less added sugar:

- * Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces; and
- * Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.

Making every sip count:

- * Unflavored whole milk must be served to 1 year olds; unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk must be served to children 2 through 5 years old; and unflavored low-fat, unflavored fat-free, or flavored fat-free milk must be served to children 6 years old and older and adults;
- * Non-dairy milk substitutes that are nutritionally equivalent to milk may be served in place of milk to children or adults with medical or special dietary needs; and
- * Yogurt may be served in place of milk once per day for adults only.



Additional improvements:

- * Extends offer versus serve to at-risk afterschool programs; and
- * Frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods on-site.

See a side-by-side comparison of the old and new child and adult meal patterns on the other side. For more information on the new CACFP meal patterns visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>.



NEW Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns

Infant Meals

USDA recently revised the CACFP meal patterns to ensure children and adults have access to healthy, balanced meals throughout the day. The changes to the infant meal pattern support breastfeeding and the consumption of vegetables and fruit without added sugars. These changes are based on the scientific recommendations from the National Academy of Medicine, the American Academy of Pediatrics and stakeholder input. CACFP centers and day care homes must comply with the new meal patterns by October 1, 2017.

* * * * *

New Infant Meal Pattern


Encourage and support breastfeeding:

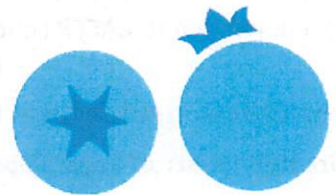
- * Providers may receive reimbursement for meals when a breastfeeding mother comes to the day care center or home and directly breastfeeds her infant; and
- * Only breastmilk and infant formula are served to infants 0 through 5 month olds.

Developmentally appropriate meals:

- * Two age groups, instead of three: 0 through 5 month olds and 6 through 11 month olds; and
- * Solid foods are gradually introduced around 6 months of age, as developmentally appropriate.

More nutritious meals:

- * Requires a vegetable or fruit, or both, to be served at snack for infants 6 through 11 months old;
- * No longer allows juice or cheese food or cheese spread to be served; and
- * Allows ready-to-eat cereals. 



See a side-by-side comparison of the old and new infant meal patterns on the other side. For more information on the new CACFP meal patterns visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>.

For more information on infant development and nutrition, check out Team Nutrition's Feeding Infants Guide:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-guide-use-child-nutrition-programs>