

The Fine Points of the New Meal Pattern

September 2017

Previously we let you know what the USDA released regarding the meal pattern changes. The following is a more complete course with the latest information. The New Meal Pattern is effective October 1, 2017.

Infants

There are only two (2) groups for Infants. Birth through 5 and 6 through 11 months. Fruit and Vegetable juices are not creditable for infants ever.

Breakfast

Birth through 5 months

4-6 fluid oz breastmilk¹ or formula²

6 through 11 months

6-8 fluid oz breastmilk¹ or formula²

and

0-4 tbs infant cereal^{2,3}

meat, fish, poultry, whole egg, cooked_dry beans, or cooked dry peas, or

0-2 oz of cheese, or

0-4 oz (volume) of cottage cheese; or

0-4 oz or 1/2c of yogurt⁴ or a combination of the above⁵ and

0-2 tbs vegetable or fruit or a combination of both^{5,6}

¹Breastmilk or formula, or portions of both, must be served; however, it is recommended that breastmilk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months. For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breastmilk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breastmilk may be offered, with additional breastmilk offered at a later time if the infant will consume more.

²Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.

³Beginning October 1, 2019, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of creditable grains.

⁴Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces.

⁵A serving of this components is required when the infant is developmentally ready to accept it.

⁶Fruit and vegetable juice must not be served.



Remember a mother can breastfeed at your home and you can claim that baby's meal.

Snack

Birth through 5 months

6 through 11 months

2-4 fluid oz breastmilk¹ or formula²; and

2-4 fluid oz breastmilk¹ or formula²; and

0-1/2 slice of bread^{3,5} or

0-2 crackers^{3,5} or

0-4 tbs infant cereal^{2,3,5} or

ready-to-eat breakfast cereal^{3,5,6,7} and

0-2 tbs vegetable or fruit, or a combination of both^{6,8}

¹Breastmilk or formula, or portions of both, must be served; however, it is recommended that breastmilk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months. For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breastmilk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breastmilk may be offered, with additional breastmilk offered at a later time if the infant will consume more.

² Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.

³ Beginning October 1, 2019, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of creditable grains.

⁴ Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces.

⁵ A serving of grains must be whole grain-rich, enriched meal, or enriched flour.

⁶ A serving of this component is required when the infant is developmentally ready to accept it.

⁷ Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal)

⁸ Fruit and vegetable juices must not be served.

Lunch and Dinner

Birth through 5 months

6 through 11 months

4-6 fluid oz breastmilk¹ or formula²

6-8 fluid oz breastmilk¹ or formula²; and

0-4 tbs infant cereal^{2,3,5}, meat, fish, poultry, whole egg, cooked dry beans, or cooked dry peas; or

0-2 oz of cheese; or

0-4 oz (volume) cottage cheese; or

0-4 oz or 1/2 C of yogurt⁴; or a combination of the above,⁶ and

0-2 tbs vegetable or fruit or a combination of both^{6,8}

Snacks are now designed to offer greater opportunity for nutrition by including fruits and vegetables. When an infant is developmentally ready, around 6 months of age, snacks must include a fruit, vegetable, or both.

Infants can also have low sugar, ready to eat cereal, like cheerios, at snack time. More variety for infants can be offered because now they can be served meat alternatives, including yogurt and whole eggs, at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The yogurt must be low sugar (less than 23 grams per 6 ounces).

Formula must be made in the USA

A creditable formula must have 1mg of iron per 100 calories

Cheese food or cheese spread is not creditable

Parents may only supply ONE component of any claimed meal

Unflavored whole milk must be served to 1-year olds; unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk must be served to children 2 through 12 years old., or flavored fat-free milk may be served to children 6 years or older. Best Practice is to serve unflavored fat-free milk to all children 6 years and older. It is very difficult for a child under age 6 to understand why their big brother or sister can have chocolate milk but they can't have it.

An alternative milk form must be completed by a parent of any child that needs to be served a non-dairy milk substitute that is nutritionally equivalent to milk. A medical or special diet statement must be completed by a doctor of any child that needs to be served a non-dairy milk substitute.

Child And Adult Meals

BREAKFAST (select all three components for a reimbursable meal)

Food Components and Food Items ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12
Fluid Milk³	4 fluid ounces	6 fluid ounces	8 fluid ounces
Vegetables, fruits, or portions of both⁴	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Grains (oz eq)^{5,6,7}			
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread product, such as biscuit, roll or muffin	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ⁸ , cereal grain, and/or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ^{8,9}			
Flakes or rounds	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup
Puffed cereal	¾ cup	¾ cup	1 ¼ cup
Granola	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup

³ Must be unflavored whole milk for children age one. Must be unflavored low-fat (1 percent) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk for children two through five years old. Must be unflavored low-fat (1 percent), unflavored fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free (skim) milk for children six years old and older.

⁴ Pasteurized full-strength juice may only be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal, including snack, per day.

⁵ At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions, must be whole grain-rich. Grain-based desserts do not count towards meeting the grains requirement.

⁶ Meat and meat alternates may be used to meet the entire grains requirement a maximum of three times a week. One ounce of meat and meat alternates is equal to one-ounce equivalent of grains.

⁷ Beginning October 1, 2019, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of creditable grains.

⁸ Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).

⁹ Beginning October 1, 2019, the minimum serving size specified in this section for ready-to-eat breakfast cereals must be served. Until October 1, 2019, the minimum serving size for any of ready-to-eat breakfast cereals is ½ cup for children 1-2; 1/3 cup for children 3-5; and ¾ cup for children 6-12.

Lunch/Dinner (select five components for a reimbursable meal)

Food Components and Food Items ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12
Fluid Milk³	4 fluid ounces	6 fluid ounces	8 fluid ounces
Meat/meat alternates			
Lean meat, poultry, or fish	½ ounce	1 ½ ounce	2 ounces
Tofu, soy product, or alternate protein products ⁴	1 ounce	1 ½ ounce	2 ounces
Cheese	1 ounce	1 ½ ounce	2 ounces
Large egg	½	¾	1
Cooked dry beans or peas	¼ cup	⅜ cup	½ cup
Peanut butter or soy nut butter or other nut or seed butters	2 tbsp	3 tbsp	4 tbsp
Yogurt, plain or flavored unsweetened or sweetened ⁵	4 ounces or ½ cup	6 ounces or ¾ cup	8 ounces or 1 cup
The following may be used to meet no more than 50% of the requirement: Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds, as listed in program guidance, or an equivalent quantity of any combination of the above meat/meat alternates (1 ounces of nuts/seeds = 1 ounce of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish)	½ ounce = 50%	¾ ounce = 50%	1 ounce = 50%
Vegetables⁶	⅛ cup	¼ cup	½ cup
Fruits⁶	⅛ cup	¼ cup	½ cup
Grains (oz eq)^{7,8,9}			
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread product, such as biscuit, roll or muffin	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast Cereal ¹⁰ , cereal grain, and/or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup

³ Must be unflavored whole milk for children age one. Must be unflavored low-fat (1 percent) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk for children two through five years old. Must be unflavored low-fat (1 percent), unflavored fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free (skim) milk for children six years old and older.

⁴ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements.

⁵ Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces.

⁶ Pasteurized full-strength juice may only be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal, including snack, per day. When two vegetables are served at lunch or dinner, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.

⁷ At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions, must be whole grain-rich. Grain-based desserts do not count towards meeting the grains requirement.

⁸ Beginning October 1, 2019, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of creditable grains.

⁹ Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).

¹⁰ Beginning October 1, 2019, the minimum serving sizes specified in this section for ready-to-eat breakfast cereals must be served.

Until October 1, 2019, the minimum serving size for any type of ready-to-eat breakfast cereals is ¼ cup for children ages 1-2; 1/3 cup for children ages 3-5; and ¾ cup for children ages 6-12

Snack (select two of the five components for a reimbursable snack)

Food Components and Food Items ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12
Fluid Milk³	4 fluid ounces	6 fluid ounces	8 fluid ounces
Meat/meat alternates			
Lean meat, poultry, or fish	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce
Tofu, soy product, or alternate protein products ⁴	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce
Cheese	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce
Large egg	½	½	½
Cooked dry beans or peas	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup
Peanut butter or soy nut butter or other nut or seed butters	1 tbsp	1 tbsp	2 tbsp
Yogurt, plain or flavored unsweetened or sweetened ⁵	2 ounces or ¼ cup	2 ounces or ¼ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce
Vegetables⁶	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup
Fruits⁶	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup
Grains (oz eq)^{7,8}			
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread product, such as biscuit, roll or muffin	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ⁹ , cereal grain, and/or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ^{9,10}			
Flakes or rounds	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup
Puffed cereal	¾ cup	¾ cup	1 ¼ cup
Granola	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup

³ Must be unflavored whole milk for children age one. Must be unflavored low-fat (1 percent) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk for children two through five years old. Must be unflavored low-fat (1 percent), unflavored fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free (skim) milk for children six years old and older.

⁴ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements.

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⁶ Pasteurized full-strength juice may only be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal, including snack, per day.

⁷ At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions, must be whole grain-rich. Grain-based desserts do not count towards meeting the grains requirement.

⁸ Beginning October 1, 2019, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of creditable grains.

¹⁰ Beginning October 1, 2019, the minimum serving sizes specified in this section for ready-to-eat breakfast cereals must

be served. Until October 1, 2019, the minimum serving size for any type of ready-to-eat breakfast cereals is ¼ cup for children ages 1-2; 1/3 cup for children ages 3-5; and ¾ cup for children ages 6-12.

Breakfast

	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12
Milk	½ Cup	¾ Cup	1 Cup
Vegetable Fruit or both	¼ Cup	½ Cup	½ Cup
Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq

Snacks

	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12
Milk	½ Cup	¾ Cup	1 Cup
Meat and meat alternates	½ oz	½ oz	1 oz
Vegetable	½ Cup	½ Cup	¾ Cup
Fruit	½ Cup	½ Cup	¾ Cup
Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq

Lunch/ Dinner

	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12
Milk	½ Cup	¾ Cup	1 Cup
Meat and meat alternates	1 oz	1½ oz	2 oz
Vegetable	¹ / ₈ Cup	¼ Cup	½ Cup
Fruit	¹ / ₈ Cup	¼ Cup	¼ Cup
Grains	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq

oz eq = ounce equivalents

Breakfast now has the option to offer a meat/meat alternate in place of a grain up to 3 times a week. An appropriate meat/meat alternate might be string cheese, yogurt, ham, or egg.

Tofu and soy yogurt are creditable as a meat alternate. The tofu must have the appearance of meat, such as a tofu burger or tofu sausage. Tofu noodles are not creditable. Tofu or soy products must contain 5 grams of protein per 2.2oz, ¼ cup or 62 grams.

Yogurt can be served as a meat alternate. It can be plain or flavored. Any creditable yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugar per 6 oz. Frozen, homemade yogurt, yogurt drinks, and yogurt bars are not creditable.

Fruits and Vegetables are now separate components.

You may serve a fruit and vegetable at lunch and dinner, or you may serve two vegetables (as long as it is two different vegetables). Two fruits are not creditable. At snack you can serve a fruit and a vegetable but not two of either for the meal to be creditable. Dried fruits are creditable – ¼ cup dried fruit = ½ cup fresh.

USDA limits juice to once per day, however, Colorado Healthier Meals initiative still limits juice servings to twice per week.

Grains: One serving of whole grain rich bread/bread alternate is **required** per day. Whole grain (WG) and whole grain rich (WGR) breads must be documented on the menus and production records. Whole grains can be identified on the ingredient list with the words "whole", "berries", "groats", "rolled oats" and "oatmeal". The definition for Whole Grain Rich would be listed on the label where minimum 51% is whole grain and the other grains listed must be whole or enriched. Whole grain rich products may also be labeled as "100% whole wheat" or 100% of a grain. All other grains served during the day must be enriched or whole grain rich.

Grain Based Desserts: These desserts will no longer be creditable. A partial list of these products would be cookies, doughnuts, brownies, cakes, granola bars, etc.

Breakfast Cereals: All cereal must NOT contain more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce. Even if the sugar is low enough, you must also be sure it is enriched or whole grain.

Colorado Best Practices

These are not required but are suggested so that children have a better opportunity to increase their vegetable and fruit intake. We have listed some suggestions to help get children on the right track.

Meat/Meat Alternates

- a- Serve only lean meats, nuts, and legumes
- b- Limit serving processed meats to No more than one serving per week.
- c- Serve only natural cheese and choose low-fat or reduced-fat cheeses.

Milk

- Serve only unflavored milk to all participantes.

Vegetables/Fruits

Snack

- a- Make at least 1 of the 2 required components a vegetable or fruit.
- b- Serve a variety of fruits and choose whole fruits (fresh, canned, dried or frozen), more often than juice.
- c- Provide at least one serving each of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, bean and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables once per week.

Incorporate seasonal and locally produced foods into meals.

Limit serving purchased pre-fried foods to no more than one serving per week.

Avoid serving non-creditable foods that are sources of added sugars, such as sweet toppings (honey, jam, syrup), mix-in ingredients sold with yogurt (honey, candy, or cookies), and sugar sweetened beverages (fruit drinks or sodas).

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program> is an excellent resource for information!

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