



HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL'S ROADMAP TO
CULTIVATING HEALTHY HABITS IN MOMS,
BABIES, CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

avocados
LOVE ONE TODAY[®]
naturally good fats • good source of fiber and folate

MATERNAL, INFANT, CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH ARE CRITICAL TO THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Health professionals, including registered dietitians, are a trusted source of health and nutrition advice among consumers.¹ As such, you have an important role in helping guide mothers' food choices for themselves and their growing families.



This workbook is designed to help you best counsel your patients using the latest nutrition recommendations for prenatal, infant, toddler, children and adolescent health. Easy to follow and use, this guide is designed to empower patients with the confidence to make healthy food choices and help health professionals like yourself make a lasting difference in the future of your community.

IMPORTANCE OF DISCUSSING AND FOSTERING HEALTHY BEHAVIORS

- Nutrition counseling during pregnancy is not only the most effective intervention for improving pregnant women's knowledge and understanding but also decreases risks for several maternal and fetal complications, including anemia, increased birthweight and preterm delivery.²
- Information for women about healthy eating patterns during pregnancy is still not reaching many families, potentially putting the health of mothers and their babies at risk.
 - The U.S. population is known to have low intakes of folate, potassium, fiber and vitamins A, C, D and E. This was also found to be true in a national survey of 133 pregnant women.³
- Scientific evidence shows maternal prenatal nutrition and the child's nutrition in the first two years of life are critical factors in neurodevelopment and lifelong health.⁴ Child and adult health risks, including obesity, hypertension and type 2 diabetes, may be programmed by nutritional status during this period.⁵

- Children's eating patterns often resemble those of their household, making it important for parents to model healthy eating behaviors and include nutrient-dense foods as a regular part of family mealtime. In fact, research shows parents' healthy modeling is an important practice in influencing children's diet quality.^{6,7}
- Childhood through adolescence is an important time for establishing healthy dietary patterns that may influence the trajectory of eating behaviors and chronic disease risk throughout the lifetime. Suboptimal nutrient intake and inadequate physical activity contribute to overweight and obesity in this life stage and risk of chronic diseases later in life.



TALK TO YOUR PATIENTS AND ASSESS THEIR NUTRITION KNOWLEDGE. USE THE EXPERT TOOLBOX ON PAGES 14-15 TO GUIDE YOUR CONVERSATION.

NUTRITION FOR MOM

Research has shown key dietary patterns, dietary components and individual nutrients can have a profound impact during pregnancy. Maternal nutrition influences a mother's ability to conceive and maintain a healthy pregnancy, support infant brain and body development and produce nutritious breast milk.

HERE ARE SOME KEY NUTRIENTS FOR MOM TO LOOK FOR:

- **Unsaturated Fats (Monounsaturated Fat or MUFA and Polyunsaturated Fat or PUFA):** MUFAs make up a large portion of an infant's blood fatty acid profile, and research suggests that greater intake of MUFA can help improve a woman's fertility.^{8,9} During lactation, MUFA is critical to breast milk quality because it helps maintain proper liquidity required for breast milk formation.¹⁰ Along with PUFA, it is also necessary for structural and functional brain development in the first year of life. Sources include fresh avocado, fatty fish, nuts, seeds and oils.
- **Folate:** Folate is the best-known nutrient for preventing neural tube defects and some heart defects. The recommended dietary allowance (RDA) for adult women is 400 mcg and needs to increase to 600 mcg during pregnancy. Sources include fresh avocado, dark leafy greens, asparagus, broccoli, oranges, beans, peas, Brussels sprouts and beef liver.¹¹
- **Lutein and Zeaxanthin:** These carotenoids, which are pigments found in plants, are critical for proper eye development in utero, especially in the third trimester. What's more, lutein is preferentially incorporated into breast milk despite not being one of the predominant carotenoids consumed in the diet. It represents roughly 25% of the carotenoids in breast milk during the first few days of breastfeeding and increases to nearly 50% by the end of the first month. Sources of lutein and zeaxanthin include fresh avocado, leafy greens and egg yolks.

Lutein is the most abundant carotenoid in avocados, and, since it is fat-soluble, it is absorbed in greater quantities from avocado relative to other fruits and vegetables with low or no fat content. One study found that avocados, likely due to the unique combination of MUFA, fiber, lutein and other bioactives, increased neural lutein levels (aka macular pigment density) 35x greater than what could be achieved by a lutein dietary supplement.^{12,13}

- **Vitamin A:** Vitamin A is an important antioxidant with a range of functions involving eye health, immune function and neurological development. The RDA for adult women is 700 mcg. These needs increase to 750-770 mcg during pregnancy and 1,200-1,300 mcg during lactation. Vitamin A is available in the diet in two different forms: preformed vitamin A or provitamin A. Both forms must be metabolized and converted to the active form of vitamin A. Sources of provitamin A include fresh avocado, carrots, tomatoes, sweet potato and dark leafy greens, while sources of preformed vitamin A include dairy products, fish, eggs and beef liver.¹⁴
- **Choline:** Choline is an essential nutrient that is needed in greater amounts during pregnancy and lactation compared to other life stages. About 90-95% of pregnant women do not meet recommended intakes. Choline plays important roles in modulating gene expression, cell membrane signaling, lipid transport and metabolism and early brain development. Meat, poultry, fish, dairy products and eggs are top food sources.¹⁵

Pairing fresh avocado with foods containing vitamin A like eggs, spinach and sweet potato can help increase the absorption of provitamin A carotenenes and significantly increase the conversion to vitamin A.



Avocados are a good source of folate (45 mcg per one-third avocado).

WHAT DOES HEALTHY WEIGHT GAIN DURING PREGNANCY LOOK LIKE?

Recent studies found that only about one-third (32%) of women gain the recommended amount of weight during pregnancy, and most women gain outside the recommendations—21% gaining too little and 48% gaining too much.¹⁶ The amount of weight gained during pregnancy can affect the immediate and future health of a mother and their child. Health professionals have the opportunity to determine a woman's body mass index at the initial prenatal visit and counsel them regarding the benefits of appropriate weight gain, nutrition and exercise. Healthy weight gain recommendations from the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine are outlined below.



Pre-pregnancy Weight Category	Body Mass Index (BMI)*	Recommended Range of Total Weight (lb) (For One Baby)	Recommended Rate of Weight Gain [†] in the Second and Third Trimester (lb) (Mean Range [lb/wk])
Underweight	Less than 18.5	28-40	1 (1-1.3)
Normal Weight	18.5-24.9	25-35	1 (0.8-1)
Overweight	25-29.9	15-25	0.6 (0.5-0.7)
Obese (includes all classes)	30 or greater	11-20	0.5 (0.4-0.6)

* Body mass index is calculated as weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared or as weight in pounds multiplied by 703 divided by height in inches.

[†] Calculations assume a 1.1-4.4 pound weight gain in the first trimester. Modified from Institute of Medicine (U.S.). Weight gain during pregnancy: re-examining the guidelines. Washington, DC. National Academies Press; 2009. © 2009 National Academy of Sciences.

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The Role of Avocados in Maternal Diets during the Periconceptional Period, Pregnancy and Lactation

Kevin B. Comerford, Keith T. Apolito, Robert D. Murray, Stephanie A. Atkinson

The Role of Avocados in Maternal Diets during the Periconceptional Period, Pregnancy and Lactation, funded by the Hass Avocado Board (HAB) and published in *Nutrients*, reports that maternal nutrition plays a crucial role in influencing fetal growth and birth outcomes. Moreover, avocados, a unique, nutrient-dense and plant-based food, contain many of the critical nutrients needed for proper fetal and infant development. This review examines the effects of dietary patterns, dietary components and individual nutrients on maternal nutrition during the critical periods of conception, gestation and lactation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MATERNAL DIET DURING THE PERICONCEPTIONAL PERIOD, PREGNANCY AND LACTATION

Maternal nutrition influences the mother's ability to conceive and maintain a healthy pregnancy, support infant brain and body development, and produce nutritious breast milk. As a source of key nutrients found in fruits and vegetables—such as fiber and potassium A. carotenoids—particularly in conception. In the U.S., pregnant women are known to have intakes of fiber, potassium, fiber and vitamins A, D, E and C well below the estimated average requirement.

Avocados are a unique nutrient-dense plant-based food that contain many of the critical nutrients for fetal and infant health and development.

PER SERVING (50g), AVOCADOS PROVIDE:

- ✓ A good source of fiber (11% of the DV)
- ✓ A good source of folate (10% of the DV)

Learn more about nutrition for mom in **The Role of Avocados in Maternal Diets during the Periconceptional Period, Pregnancy and Lactation**

NUTRITION FOR BABY AND TODDLER (FROM BIRTH TO 24 MONTHS)

Nutrition is one of the most important factors when determining the foods to feed an infant or toddler.

In fact, observational studies have demonstrated an association between health benefits later in life and early nutrition choices of infants consuming high amounts of fruits and/or vegetables, such as healthier body weights,¹⁷ lower blood pressure,¹⁸ lower risk of stroke¹⁹ and lower risk for some cancers.²⁰



HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE MANY REASONS AND WAYS TO HELP BOOST NUTRITION DURING THE FIRST 24 MONTHS OF LIFE.

- **Several public health organizations advocate for breastfeeding during the first six months of life, with a transition to a combination of breastfeeding and complementary foods from six months to at least 12 months of age. Human milk provides necessary nutrients, protective factors against disease and benefits for immune health.**
 - The American Academy of Pediatrics and Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend exclusive breastfeeding for approximately the first six months of life and continuation after complementary foods have been introduced for at least the first year of life and beyond, as long as mutually desired by mother and child.^{4,5}
 - It is the position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics that exclusive breastfeeding provides optimal nutrition and health protection for the first six months of life and that breastfeeding with complementary foods from six months until at least 12 months of age is the ideal feeding pattern for infants.²¹
 - The World Health Organization recommends exclusive breastfeeding up to six months of age, with continued breastfeeding along with appropriate complementary foods up to two years of age or beyond.²²

- **If human milk is unavailable during the first year of life, iron-fortified infant formula is an alternative, as it is designed to meet the nutrient needs of infants. If a family wishes to feed their infant human milk, they may obtain it from an accredited human milk bank which offers pasteurized donor human milk that has been properly screened, collected and stored for safety.⁴**
 - There are many reasons human milk may be unavailable. A family may choose not to breastfeed, a child may be adopted, there may be challenges with lactation or latching, unsupportive workplaces or home environments could be a barrier, cultural norms may dictate the decision or other personal reasons.
- **The decision to breastfeed may be easy for some people and challenging for others. Health professionals have an opportunity to educate patients on their options and empower them to choose the feeding method that works best for them.**



Macronutrients are key for infant and toddler health.

- **Fat:** In infancy, research recommends that dietary fat comprise about 55% of energy intake to provide adequate energy for rapid growth as well as the essential fatty acids for brain development.²³ The recommended daily intake of dietary fat is 30 grams per day for infants through 12 months and 39 grams per day for children 1 to 3 years.²⁴ Infants can meet dietary fat needs through human milk or formula.⁴ Specifically, MUFA has been shown to be important for normal growth and development of the central nervous system and brain,²⁵ as well as beneficial for fat-soluble nutrient absorption.
 - **Fiber:** Currently, there is no infant adequate intake established for fiber, but for children 1-3 years of age, the adequate intake of fiber is 19 grams per day. Only 10% or less of adults consume the recommended amount of fiber, so there are benefits to establishing this habit early in life.²³
 - **Protein:** Protein requirements during infancy when rapid growth is happening are higher per kilogram of body weight than those for older children or adults.^{4,23}
- **Dietary bioactive compounds have an impact on healthy growth and development, including brain health.**
 - Carotenoids, like beta-carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin, provide the precursors for vitamin A, an essential nutrient for proper growth,

development, vision, immunity, hair and skin health and mucus membrane formation. They have a functional role in the tissues of the infant brain and may also act as antioxidants.

- **Early exposure to texture and flavor can influence acceptability.**

- Food learning and food preferences start in utero and are heavily influenced by breastfeeding and the infant's complementary diet in the first year of life.
- It is important to provide a variety of soft textures—such as creamy, tender, puréed, mashed or ground—in order to prevent choking and properly develop swallowing abilities.
- To establish a varied eating pattern—which includes neutral, sour and bitter taste acceptance—the ideal initial foods are those that are both nutritious and have a low to moderate sweet and salty flavor profile.

- **Fresh avocados are an ideal food for babies and toddlers.**

- Avocados are a nutrient-dense fruit that contains several key nutrients for toddler health and development, including fiber, unsaturated fatty acids, more than 20 vitamins and minerals and an array of phytonutrients.
- See how avocados stack up against other popular complementary and transitional fruits. (See chart on next page.)

AVOCADOS HAVE A SMOOTH CONSISTENCY AND TEXTURE, AND THEY CAN BE PURÉED, MASHED, SLICED OR CUBED. THEIR MILD, NEUTRAL FLAVOR IS NEITHER SWEET, BITTER NOR SALTY. CHECK OUT IDEAS ON PAGE 11.





MEETING THE DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF BABIES AND TODDLERS

Comparison of nutrients found in avocado versus the most popular complementary and transitional fruits. Nutrient information is based upon 25 grams of avocado and 70 grams for the other fruits.



Potassium (mg)	80	130	250	130	130	80	110
Folate (mcg)	0	20	15	5	5	5	15
Lutein and Zeaxanthin (mcg)	21	68	16	51	63	31	18
Vitamin K (mcg)	2	5	0	10	2	3	2
Vitamin E (mg)	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.2
Fat (MUFA) (g)	0	2.5	0	0	0	0	0
Fiber (g)	2	2	2	<1	1	2	1

Green box indicates fruits that provide more of the selected nutrients per serving.

avocados
LOVE ONE TODAY

The Role of Avocados in Complementary and Transitional Feeding*

Kevin B. Comerford, Keith T. Avonis, Robert D. Murray, Stephanie A. Atkinson

A publication, *The Role of Avocados in Complementary and Transitional Feeding*, funded by the Hass Avocado Board (HAB) and published in *Nutrients*, reports that the avocado, with its smooth texture, neutral flavor and nutrient-rich profile, appears to be one of the most ideal fruits—and possibly foods—for complementary and transitional feeding. This review, which includes more than 100 studies comprised of emerging and conclusive research, examined evidence for key nutrients and their food sources on potential early- and later-life health benefits, and explored the effects of consuming monounsaturated fatty acids and bioactive compounds for children 6-24 months of age.

KEY FINDINGS SUGGEST IDEAL COMPLEMENTARY AND TRANSITIONAL FOODS

As the review suggests, ideal complementary (6-12 months) and transitional (15-24 months) foods should have specific physical and nutritional attributes to encourage toddlers to develop familiarity and taste preferences.

NEUTRAL FLAVOR PROFILE:

In order to establish a varied eating pattern—which includes neutral, sour, and bitter taste acceptance—the ideal initial foods should be those that are both nutritious and have a low to moderate sweet and salty flavor profile.

Avocados have a mild, neutral flavor that is neither sweet, bitter, nor salty.

NUTRIENT DENSITY:

The first food exposures should meet the infant's or toddler's high nutritional requirements for energy, certain fatty acids, and key vitamins and minerals, such as Vitamin A, potassium A and zinc.

Avocados are a nutrient dense fruit that contain several key nutrients for infant health and development including fiber, unsaturated fatty acids, more than 20 vitamins and minerals and array of phytonutrients.

PROPER TEXTURE/CONSISTENCY:

Avocados have a soft texture.



TALK TO YOUR PATIENTS ABOUT FOOD CHOICES AND NUTRIENT NEEDS FOR MOM AND BABY. USE THE EXPERT TOOLBOX ON PAGES 14-15 TO GUIDE YOUR CONVERSATION.

Learn more about nutrition for baby in **The Role of Avocados in Complementary and Transitional Feeding.**

MAKING SMART SHIFTS FOR HEALTHIER DIETARY PATTERNS

Dietary choices play a major role in the health of both mother and child during pregnancy and lactation. In addition, foods provided during the first 24 months of life can impact a child's future taste preferences, food choices and overall health. Fresh avocado contains key nutrients that most pregnant women fall short on, such as vitamins A, C, E and potassium, along with folate. With its soft texture, nutrient-dense profile and neutral flavor, avocado makes an ideal first food for children and may serve as a gateway food to more nutritious eating patterns across their lifespan. As a sugar-free fruit option, avocado allows a caregiver to add more fruit to the child's diet while helping to avoid invoking an early preference for sweet foods.



NUTRITION FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS (FROM AGES 2 TO 18)

Childhood and adolescence are times marked by many transitions. Physical, emotional and mental changes lead to a desire for independence amidst increased influence from media and peers. This presents unique and evolving opportunities and challenges related to healthy eating. Dietary habits established during this time set the stage for eating patterns that will impact health throughout the lifetime.

Forty-one percent of children and adolescents have overweight or obesity, which increases the risk for health concerns as soon as childhood and into teenage years. Those with obesity are more likely to experience high blood pressure, high cholesterol and impaired glucose tolerance, as well as have greater risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Development of overweight and obesity is multifaceted, but behaviors such as eating patterns and physical activity can influence the risk of these conditions.⁴

HERE ARE A FEW WAYS TO SUPPORT HEALTHY EATING PATTERNS DURING THIS LIFE STAGE:^{4,6}

Appropriate calorie levels support growth and development.

Calorie needs increase steadily throughout childhood and adolescence and can vary based on size and level of physical activity. During adolescence, daily calorie recommendations begin to differ between males and females to support diverse growth trajectories.

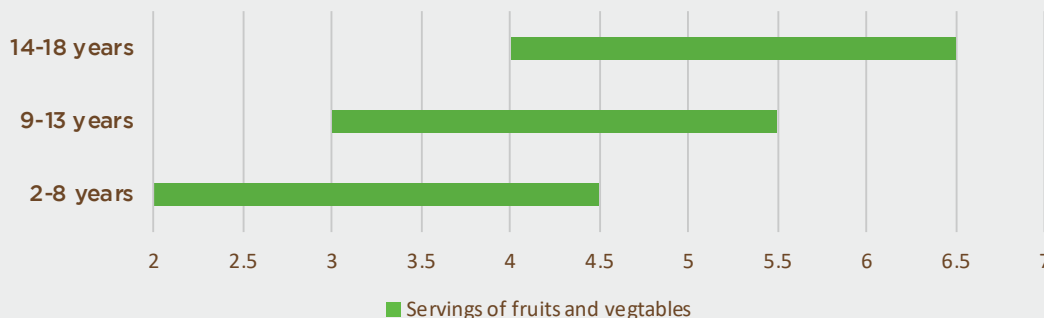
Estimated Calorie Needs for Moderately Active Children and Adolescents, by Age⁴

Age	Males	Females
2	1,000	1,000
3	1,400	1,200
4-5	1,400	1,400
6	1,600	1,400
7-8	1,600	1,600
9	1,800	1,600
10	1,800	1,800
11	2,000	1,800
12-13	2,200	2,000
14	2,400	2,000
15	2,600	2,000
16-18	2,800	2,000



Habitual intake of fruits and vegetables is key for youth health. As children age, fruit and vegetable intake tends to decline. By late adolescence, fruit and vegetable intake is about half of what is recommended, on average, and suboptimal consumption typically persists into adulthood. Fruit and vegetable consumption, as part of an overall healthy diet, is linked to a decreased risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Recommendations for fruit and vegetable intake are based on calorie needs, which increase overtime as children age.

Recommended Daily Servings of Fruits and Vegetables, by Age



Repeated exposure to nutrient-dense foods, especially through snacks, can help support a healthy eating pattern. It can take multiple exposures before children accept a new type of food.⁶ Snacks are an ideal opportunity to promote consumption of nutrient-dense foods, like fruits and vegetables. Snacking is common and beneficial during early childhood when the total volume of food consumed at mealtimes is lower compared to as children age as well as into adolescence when calorie and nutrient needs increase. Fruits and vegetables contain fiber, which makes you feel full and stay satisfied longer.

Avocados are a good source of fiber (3g per one-third avocado).

Emphasis on good, unsaturated fats can help optimize dietary fat needs. About 80% of children and adolescents exceed the recommended intake of saturated fat. This pattern tends to continue into adulthood, with more than 70% of adults consuming too much saturated fat. Beginning in childhood (at age 2), experts suggest saturated fat be less than 10% of calories per day. A simple way to limit saturated fat is to focus on sources of unsaturated fats in place of saturated fats. Unsaturated fats are beneficial for health and are found in foods like avocado, nuts, seeds and liquid cooking oils.

Avocados are a virtually the only fruit with unsaturated fats (6 grams per one-third avocado) and can play a dual role in meeting both fruit and good fat recommendations.

Support habits that limit the intake of added sugars.

While added sugars found in foods like sugar-sweetened beverages, desserts, sweet snacks and candy are not necessary in a healthy eating pattern, these foods often play a role in celebrations and traditions, providing joy and satisfaction. On average, added sugars make up more than 13% of total calories per day among the U.S. population, which is equivalent to more than 16 teaspoons of sugar. In order to achieve a healthy eating pattern, it is recommended that added sugars be limited to less than 10% of total calories per day. Added sugar intake tends to increase throughout childhood and adolescence and sugar-sweetened beverages are the top contributor. Promoting beverages that contain no added sugars, such as water, unsweetened milk or soy milk, is key to establishing healthy patterns that can be carried on throughout the lifespan.

Encourage healthy eating by modeling this behavior and involving children and adolescents in meal decisions.

Sharing meals with your child and modeling healthy eating behaviors and practices can help them observe and learn these beneficial behaviors. Family mealtimes are an opportunity for repeated exposure of new foods and to make nutrient-dense foods a regular occurrence. Involving children and adolescents in grocery shopping and cooking can help them feel more empowered in their food choices, which is important during this life stage when they are seeking independence.



THREE Es FOR PATIENT CONSULTATION

EDUCATE*:

Share patient-ready resources like the [Mix, Mash and Love One Today](#) and [Simple Ways to Eat an Avocado a Day](#) handouts as well as the U.S. Center for Disease Control's Food Safety infographics.



FOOD SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

Pregnant women and children under the age of five are at an increased risk for foodborne illness. Food safety precautions should be taken, including proper hand washing, hygiene and education about foods to eat and avoid.²⁶

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ENGAGE:

Work with your patient to identify nutrient-dense foods they enjoy and that are beneficial for mom, babies, children and adolescents. Use the list below to get the conversation going:

- **Salmon (omega-3 fatty acids, protein):** Pregnant women can safely consume 8-12 ounces of low-mercury fish, such as salmon, per week. For young children, try serving flaked fish once or twice a week, starting at age two, to establish a preference into childhood and adolescence.
- **Avocados (naturally good, unsaturated fats, folate, lutein, fiber):** Avocado can be enjoyed fresh or used as a one-to-one ratio as a fat replacement in baked goods and recipes. For infants, avocado makes an ideal first food thanks to its soft texture, neutral taste and rich nutrient profile.
- **Green Leafy Vegetables (folate, iron, vitamin A, lutein):** Dark green leafy vegetables make the perfect side dish or salad for mom, children and adolescents. Puréed leafy greens can be offered starting at about six months as an introduction to a diet varied in vegetables.
- **Beans and Legumes (protein, iron, fiber):** Beans and legumes are a plant-based protein appropriate for all members of the family. Thanks to their neutral taste and soft texture, beans can easily be mashed and spoon-fed to your little one once they are ready to transition to solids.
- **Eggs (lutein, protein):** Egg yolk provides lutein and zeaxanthin, nutrients that play a key role in eye health, while the whites are a high-quality protein. While food allergies are of increasing concern to new parents, limited evidence suggests there is no benefit to delaying the introduction of eggs to your child and discusses a potential benefit to including them during the first year of life (around six months).²⁷
- **Sweet Potatoes (fiber, vitamin A, potassium):** Sweet potatoes are a nutritious addition to the diet. Enjoy them roasted, baked, sautéed or mashed.
- **Bananas (potassium, fiber):** Bananas are a terrific grab-and-go option for the busy new mom or active children and adolescents. For baby, the soft texture makes for easy mashing to be enjoyed alone or mixed together with other soft foods.
- **Almonds, Peanuts, Walnuts* (naturally good fats):** Mom, children and adolescents can enjoy as a snack or mixed into salads, trail mix or smoothies. For baby, powdered nut butters and flours can be incorporated into soft foods to enhance flavor and nutrient profile as early as six months of age. Nut butters should be reserved for older children to prevent choking, or they can be thinned by adding a few teaspoons of warm water to make a warm purée.

*Parents of food-allergic children or expectant mothers with a family history of food allergy should consult with a pediatrician or allergist before initiating any dietary changes.

THREE Es FOR PATIENT CONSULTATION

(continued)

ENJOY:

EASY-TO-FOLLOW MASH UPS, BOWLS and FINGER FOODS FOR YOUNG ONES

- [Avocado, Squash and Pear Baby and Toddler Mash Up:](#) Avocado combined with squash and pear provides new flavors and nutrients that make for a perfect start to your child's culinary adventures.
- [Sweet Potato and Avocado Baby Food Mash Up:](#) A quick mash up of two of baby's favorites, avocado and sweet potato.
- [Avocado, White Bean and Spinach Baby and Toddler Food:](#) This yummy first food blend will provide nutrients and help expand your child's taste buds.
- [Colorful Banana, Strawberry and Avocado Smoothie Bowl:](#) Delight the kids with this delicious meal that includes bright colors and fun textures.
- [Fun-Tastic Avocado-Apple-Peanut Butter Crepe:](#) Savory meets sweet in this fun-tastic snack that is perfect for fueling your little one's adventures and making their taste buds dance!



QUICK AND NOURISHING RECIPES FOR MOM

- [Heart-Healthy Avocado and Mango Kick-Starter Smoothie:](#) After baby arrives, you may find it hard to find time for meals. With this quick and simple smoothie, you won't have to compromise good nutrition, no matter how busy life gets.
- [Heart-Healthy Chocolate Avocado Energy Bars:](#) Afternoon chocolate craving? With 5 grams of fiber and naturally good fats, these no-bake bars deliver on-the-go energy to help keep you fueled and satisfied.
- [Avocado Banana Pancake Stacks:](#) Creamy avocado and bananas come together for a smooth batter that makes scrumptious pancakes and provides a good source of potassium, iron and folate. This delicious recipe can also make the perfect finger food for growing toddlers.
- [Sweet Potato Fries with Guacamole:](#) Dip into flavor with these savory sweet potato fries and guacamole dipping sauce, an excellent source of vitamin A.
- [Avocado Pita Pocket:](#) Make lunch or snack time easy with this recipe that comes together in 5 minutes and provides a good source of fiber, folate and vitamin A.



NUTRIENT-DENSE RECIPES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

- [Avocado and Veggie Scramble:](#) A delicious nutrient-dense breakfast that packs in fruit, veggies and protein.
- [Cheesy Avocado Flatbread with Mushrooms:](#) Simple, delicious and nutritious meal made in under 20 minutes. This flatbread is sure to impress the family as a quick meal or snack. The unexpected, yet the star-of-the-recipe ingredient - fresh avocados - adds smooth texture and great taste.
- [Fiesta Avocado Mac and Cheese:](#) Avocado goodness can make any dish better - even classics like macaroni and cheese. Ready in 20 minutes, this easy recipe makes quick work of dinner and is rich in both protein and fiber.
- [Berry Delicious Avocado Snacks:](#) These quick snacks are easy to share with kids and a delicious way to boost fruit intake.
- [Avocado Dark Chocolate Mousse:](#) This decadent chocolate mousse comes together easily in minutes. It is sweetened with dates and bananas and has a rich, creamy texture thanks to avocado.



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RESOURCES



The Role of Avocados in Maternal Diets



The Role of Avocados in Complementary & Transitional Feeding



Infant and Toddler Feeding Practices: Caregiver Perspectives



Avocado 101

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EXPERT TOOLBOX:

ASSESSING PATIENT KNOWLEDGE

It's important to assess your patient's current understanding of healthy eating and personal preferences so you can customize your recommendations. Use the prompts below to begin the conversation.

ASSESS

ASK

DURING PREGNANCY AND LACTATION

Understanding of and Feelings Around Nutrition Recommendations

What comes to mind when you think about healthy eating during pregnancy (or lactation)?

How are you feeling about food choices during this time?

Are you familiar with which nutrient needs increase during pregnancy (or lactation)?

Are you familiar with food sources that contain these nutrients? Do you enjoy any of these foods?

Lifestyle, Behaviors and Personal Preferences

Tell me about a typical day of eating for you.

Any food sensitivities or allergies?

Any new cravings or aversions?

Have you made any recent changes to your typical eating pattern? If so, why have you decided to make these dietary changes? How is it going?

FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

Understanding of and Feelings Around Nutrition Recommendations

How are you feeling about transitioning your baby to solid foods?

Do you have questions or concerns about introducing certain foods to your child?

Are you familiar with which foods are most important during infancy and the first 24 months of life?

Do you and your child enjoy any of these foods?

Lifestyle, Behaviors and Personal Preferences

Tell me about your child's current eating behaviors.

Is your child open to trying new foods?

How often do you eat together with your child?

When you do eat together, how is this time? What is it like?

FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Understanding of and Feelings Around Nutrition Recommendations

What comes to mind when you think about healthy foods to offer your child?

Are you familiar with the nutrient needs of growing children and adolescents?

Lifestyle, Behaviors and Personal Preferences

Tell me about your child's current eating behaviors.

Is your child open to trying new foods? What is your current approach to introducing new foods?

How do you encourage healthy eating behaviors?

How often do you eat together with your child?

When you do eat together, how is this time? What is it like?

What types of meals do you and your family enjoy?

Who does the cooking and who inputs on the grocery list?

EXPERT TOOLBOX:

EXAMPLE SCENARIOS FOR DISCUSSING NUTRIENT NEEDS AND HEALTHY EATING BEHAVIORS

Help empower your patients to make healthier choices for the family. Use the sample prompts and responses below to spark conversation.

DURING PREGNANCY AND LACTATION

ASK your patient: “Are you familiar with how your food choices during pregnancy (or lactation) influence your child’s future food preferences, as well as the quality and quantity of breast milk?”

EDUCATE your patient: “During pregnancy (or the first 24 months after birth), it’s important to maintain a healthy, balanced diet that will nourish both you and your child. Adding plant-based sources of dietary fat, like fresh avocados, may aid in important nutrient absorption (vitamins A, D, E, K) while also providing good nutrition (lutein, folate) for the healthy growth and development of your child.”

EMPOWER your patient: “As a new or expecting mom, healthy eating can be a challenge. Look for foods that can help you achieve your health goals simply and boost nutrition in a way that you enjoy. Salads, soups and smoothies [or other customized meal examples] are all easy ways you can incorporate a variety of nutrients for both you and your little one.”

FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

ASK your patient: “How are you feeling about transitioning your baby to solid foods?”

EDUCATE your patient: “It is important to provide a variety of soft textures—such as creamy, tender, puréed, mashed or ground—in order to prevent choking and properly develop swallowing abilities.”

EMPOWER your patient: “Fresh avocado has a naturally soft texture and neutral flavor, making it an ideal first food for baby.”

FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

ASK your patient: “What is dinner like in your household? What types of meals do you and your family eat?”

EDUCATE your patient: “Establishing a habit of regularly eating fruits and vegetables is important for overall health and reducing the risk of chronic diseases later in life.”

EMPOWER your patient: “Family meals are an opportunity to expose children and adolescents to new fruits and vegetables. Involving children and adolescents in grocery shopping, the meal planning process and/or cooking can increase their interest in trying new fruits and vegetables.”



avocados
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