

Make Mealtime Family Time

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Family meals allow young children to focus on the task of eating and gives you a chance to model good behaviors. Start eating meals together as a family when your kids are young, and it will become a habit.

Plan when you will eat together as a family. You may not be able to eat together every day but try to have family meals most days of the week. A meal together does not have to be the evening meal. Sometimes lunch may work better for your family. Breakfast together can be a terrific way to start the day – these Super Strawberry Muffins would be a great addition!

Super Strawberry Oatmeal Muffins

- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, lightly packed
- 1 cup strawberry applesauce (no added sugar)
- 1 egg
- 1 cup white whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh strawberries, gently rubbed under cold running water
- 1 cup quick-cooking oatmeal



1. Wash hands with soap and water. Preheat oven to 350 °F.
2. Break egg into a small bowl. Wash hands with soap and water after cracking raw egg. Mix oil, brown sugar, applesauce, and egg.
3. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Add to oil mixture to dry ingredients and mix until moistened.
4. Carefully blend in strawberries and oatmeal.
5. Spoon into 12 muffin cups sprayed with cooking spray or use paper muffin liners. Bake for about 20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and cool. Makes 12 muffins. Each contains 164 calories, 7 grams fat, 25 grams carbohydrate and 2.1 grams fiber.

Source: MyPlate, USDA: <https://www.myplate.gov>

This article has been peer reviewed and was updated in 2025. For more information check out the Food Fun for Young Children website at: <http://go.unl.edu/food-fun>

Family Time Tips

Cook together. Have your child help you get ready to eat. Your child can:

- Rinse fruits and vegetables
- Add ingredients
- Help set the table
- Turn off the TV
- Pour milk (with help)
- Clear the table

Eat together. Make family meals enjoyable.

- Focus on the meal and each other.
- Turn off the television.
- Take phone calls or texts later.
- Try to make meals a stress-free time.

Talk together. Involve children in conversation. Ask questions:

- If you could invite anyone to eat with us today, who would it be?
- What made you feel really happy today?
- What is your favorite crunchy food? Why?
- What made you laugh today?