

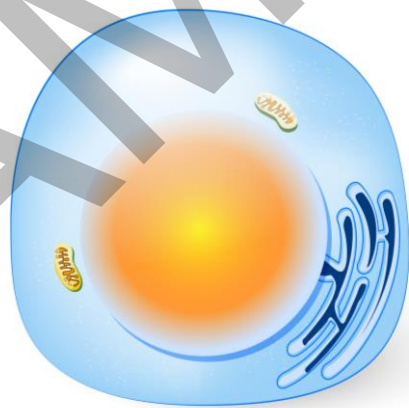
# Growing Healthy in First Grade

## Good Nutrition



### *What is nutrition?*

Your whole body is made up of living cells, which are very tiny organisms you cannot see, but are the building blocks that make up your body. Here is a simple drawing of a cell:



**Nutrition** is when you give these cells in your body the food (the big word is *nutrients*) they need to grow and be healthy! Nutrients are things like proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, and minerals. These are in the healthy food we eat like meat, fish, chicken, fruits, nuts, and vegetables.

Nutrition is not when you just eat a lot of sugar and sweets all the time, because those will not provide the nutrients the cells can use.

### *Why is it important to eat healthy?*

Remember that your body is made up of a lot of cells. Some cells help you to see clearly, others make up your muscles and help you to move, some make up your bones, and some help you smell. Your skin is made of cells; even your blood has many types of cells. Most cells are inside your body where you cannot see them, but they are very important. Some of these are the cells that make up your heart, lungs, brain, and all the other organs your body has. So, you can picture these cells as little workers all doing different things like building, fighting, moving, restoring, messaging, and more.

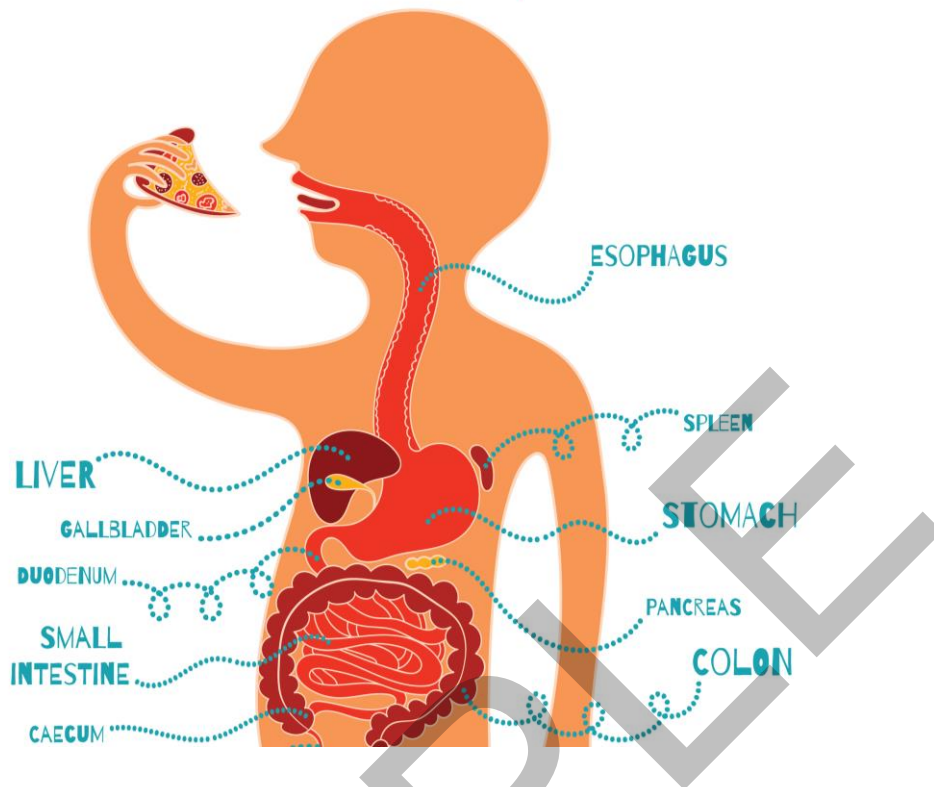


When you feel hungry, you can fill your tummy with anything you like, even sweets and chocolates and a burger or two . . . but your cells will still be hungry if you eat these foods, since they can only work well if they are fed healthy nutrients. When you eat healthy food and drink enough water, the cells are able work like they should so that you can have a healthy body and mind and so that you can play and run around and think clearly!

### *What happens when you eat healthy?*

Have you ever thought about what happens to the food in your mouth when you swallow? Let us try and explain: there may be some big words but use the picture on the next page as a guide.

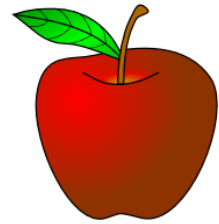
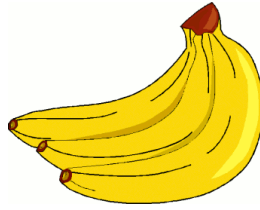
First, you chew your food, and your teeth break the food into smaller pieces. Your spit (**saliva**) also mixes with the food so you can swallow it. This moves down your esophagus (throat area) into your stomach. There, it becomes a liquid solution (**chyme**). This chyme then moves to your intestines, and it is here where all the nutrients are taken up by your blood to deliver to all the other cells in your body! This process is called **digestion**.



***Some ideas to eat healthy:***

In our society today, there are a lot of different opinions on how to eat healthy. You may hear people say different things about what is healthy or not, so let's try and keep it simple so that you can remember it well:

1. Drink more **WATER** and fewer sweet drinks, sodas, and hot drinks.
2. Eat more **RAW** food like fruits and vegetables and fewer processed foods.
3. Eat more **HEALTHY** food like fruits and vegetables, fish, chicken, and meats and less sweets, chocolates, and junk food. Junk food includes foods that are prepared by fast-food restaurants.
4. Eat a **VARIETY** of food and try and include all different colors of food in a meal.
5. Eat at **REGULAR MEALTIMES**, preferably breakfast in the morning, lunch at noon, and dinner in the evenings.
6. Don't **SNACK** on sweets all the time, but on fruits, nuts, or even raw veggies! And only snack when you really have to.
7. Eat **SLOWLY** and think about how you are helping your cells' workers to grow your body!



***What will you do now to eat healthier?***

After learning about good nutrition, what is one change you can make today to eat healthier?

Write it down here:

**Activities:**

1. Visit <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/kids> for a wide variety of games, activity sheets, videos, and songs about eating healthy and ideas to become more active.
2. Print [http://web.archive.org/web/20170131055244/https://www.cnp.usda.gov/sites/default/files/archived\\_projects/FGP4KidsLine.pdf](http://web.archive.org/web/20170131055244/https://www.cnp.usda.gov/sites/default/files/archived_projects/FGP4KidsLine.pdf). It is a food guide pyramid for kids. Children can color them and learn what items fall into which category.
3. Using the food guide pyramid in #2 as a guide, have children explore the refrigerator and pantry and decide which part of the food triangle the food would go in. Which section (grain, fruits, vegetables, milk, meat, fats/sweets) had the most items?