

Keep your brain fed to be your best at visits

By eating before the visit with your child, your brain can think better and you can have a better visit. Research shows when you don't eat, you are more likely to be anxious, irritated, and say and do things that are not helpful.

Eating protein every 2–3 hours during a stressful day keeps nutrients going to your brain, so you can stay calm and focused.



When you have not seen your child for a while, **it is normal to feel upset**, nervous, shaking, have a headache, and to not feel like eating.

Food will help decrease the physical symptoms of being upset because your brain will have more nutrients. **It is important to eat breakfast** and meals throughout the day.

Prepare for your visit by eating some breakfast. **If you are not feeling hungry and/or your stomach has butterflies**, you can **drink some nutrients**, such as

- Milk
- Juice
- Protein shakes: Muscle Milk or Odwalla

Protein is smart brain food. Foods that have protein in them are chicken, hamburger, pork, turkey, eggs, peanut butter, beans, tuna, tofu.

Eating anything is better than eating nothing, and protein helps you think and perform best.

Be careful about drinking more caffeine or energy drinks than you normally drink. Extra caffeine can add to your anxiety, irritation or agitation.

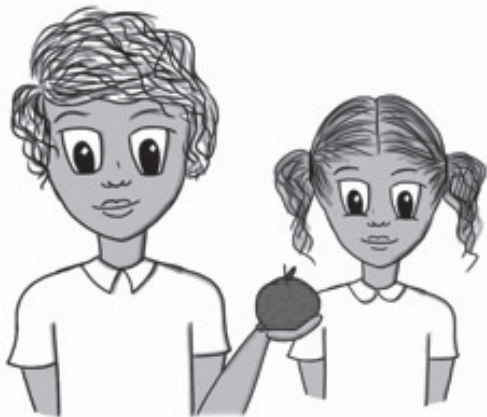
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Please consult with your doctor before changing your diet.

Tips for great visits with your child

Activities

- Plan some things you can do together, such as draw, read aloud, play a game or sing songs.
- Ask the visitation agency what toys and activities are available at the visit location.
- Bring a favorite toy, book or game to each visit.
- Make a Visitation Bag or Backpack to hold everything you need for visits.
- Help your child with their homework or pre-school activities. Ask them what they are learning and show them you support their education.
- Turn off your cell phone during visits so you won't be distracted by texts or calls.



Food for visits

- Share nutritious food that your child will enjoy.
- Ask your social worker or the foster parent to tell you what your child is eating these days.
- Feeding your child is something that all parents do. Bring food that is part of your culture and family tradition.

Staying Connected

- Attend all of your visits. Your children will miss you and won't understand if you aren't there.
- If you can't make a visit due to an appointment, let your social worker and the visit provider know as soon as possible. Sometimes a makeup visit can be scheduled.
- This time is for bonding with your children. Do not vent your frustrations about your case, social worker or others.
- Use a notebook that travels with your child to ask your child's foster parent or caregiver questions about your child's care. Ask about nap times, meal times, favorite activities, preferred food, and behavior.
- If you have questions or concerns about your child, talk to the visitation staff or your social worker before or after the visit, or at another time.

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Created by the Court Improvement Training Academy at www.uwcita.org and Dr. Kristen Allott at KristenAllott.com