

June 2010 Newsletter



Tor Hassell takes food as seriously as his dad. Judging by his look of intense pleasure, he's probably eating his favorite blend – kale, sardines, and brown rice. Yum.

Feeding children *and* other people

How do we get children to eat good food? We serve it. That's not just the short answer, it's the *only* answer. The fact that children start off small and helpless and not responsible for their own choices should make us take *really* seriously what we offer them – especially with the explosion of type 2 diabetes in children.

The approach to feeding children should be pretty much the same as people of any age should follow – eating lots of vegetables and whole fruit (as opposed to juice), plenty of beans, whole grains, and fish, but avoiding processed (preserved) meats (like hot dogs, lunch meats, and bacon) and refined carbohydrates (as in sugar, sweet drinks, white flour, and white rice). Sadly, this does incriminate Goldfish crackers (which don't count as fish), and even Cheerios. (For more on 'whole grain' breakfast cereal, see page 14 of *Good Food, Great Medicine*, 2nd edition.)

Feeding Tor *(with Anna Hassell)*

People have been asking, 'What does Tor (Dr. Hassell's son) eat?' Simply put, our philosophy has been to feed Tor a wide variety of whole foods as soon as he was able to eat solids. This includes lots of fish and vegetables, legumes (like lentils and baby lima beans), whole grains like

cooked oat and barley groats, ground-up nuts and nut butters,¹ and eggs. We avoid any sugar or refined carbohydrates, of course. We don't think young children even need to know what sweets are! (Once they do, of course, it can be a bit of a struggle – but children are adaptable.)

We also feed Tor cultured dairy products such as plain yogurt and kefir daily, and minimize milk. (We want to avoid dairy intolerance, and cultured dairy products are less associated with allergies.) We also give him water to drink, but no juice, which is not as healthy as whole fruit, and will only help develop his sweet tooth.

We prepare Tor's food ourselves with the help of a hand food-mill, immersion blender, and mini food processor. Every evening we make a smoothie for Tor, with a yogurt/fruit/whole grain base. Tor loves them – and blending his food into a smoothie also allows us to sneak in some of the foods he's not so fond of.

Tor also loves his hot cereal in the morning – usually whole oats or barley cooked overnight in the crock pot. (Page 76 in *Good Food, Great Medicine*, 2nd edition.) We have not given Tor store-bought baby foods or boxed cereals, because they are highly processed (even when labeled 'whole grain' or 'organic').

The biggest challenge has been to have healthy options for Tor when we're on the road, but we've come up with some good solutions. We usually bring a smoothie in a modified thermos sippy-cup (some suggestions tips are on the next page under 'feeding tips'), as well as easy-to-eat foods that Tor thinks are delicious cold, like oatmeal or chunks of yam and squash.

Other take-along snacks include a banana, *Serious Muffins*, a slice of *Brown Rice Bread* (pages 235 and 226 respectively in the second edition of *Good Food, Great Medicine*) or our whole grain sourdough bread (a recipe for which will be in the next edition of the cookbook). By the way, Tor would like us to mention that he is now seventeen months old and is feeding himself with skill and precision. (*See photo.*)

¹ For discussion about peanut allergy and baby food, see BMJ 2010;340:c 424.

Smoothies for littlies

(Excerpted from Good Food, Great Medicine)

■ Why a smoothie?

The smoothie strategy is possibly the easiest way to significantly boost a small child's daily nutritional intake, especially on a hectic day when an instant infusion of good calories is called for. And when you have to pack a child in the car and go somewhere, few things are as convenient as a cup or two of smoothie to feed him on the road.

■ Start young

Children generally aren't as conflicted by preconceptions about textures and flavors as adults, so a child's smoothie can be more basic and sensible. A child who is started on fiber-packed smoothies very young has no expectations, and will cheerfully suck down a smoothie fortified with his leftover breakfast oatmeal or yesterday's brown rice, and maybe a half tomato thrown in.

■ Smoothies are not milkshakes!

Think of them as meal replacement drinks with all the probiotic benefits of yogurt or kefir and low in carbohydrates. *Whatever you do, don't make them taste sweet!* And don't worry if it doesn't taste good to you. You may be amazed at the adaptability of a child in the hands of a cunning and confident parent.

■ Feeding tips

Sippy-cups with spouted lids make wonderful smoothie receptacles. You may find that the spout won't allow the free flow of a thick smoothie, so just cut down the plastic mouthpiece about 1/4-inch with a sharp knife; they virtually never get clogged that way. For leak-proof traveling, just seal it with plastic wrap before you screw the lid down.

■ Fortification suggestions

Cooked oatmeal, 'good' fats in the form of a tablespoon of extra-virgin olive oil or ground flax seeds, silken tofu or egg for a protein boost, vegetables like fresh tomato or spinach and even a tablespoon or two of cooked beans or lentils.

(For much more on the subject of smoothies for grown-ups, see pages 78-81 in *Good Food Great Medicine*, 2nd edition.)

June 16th weight loss class!

As promised, we have scheduled another class for those of you who couldn't come in April. Dr. Hassell will talk about the significance of carrying too much weight around your middle, and why a whole food Mediterranean diet, healthy fats included, is an evidence-based approach for *sustainable* weight loss. The class will be Wednesday, June 16th at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center in Souther Auditorium from 6 – 8 pm. To pre-register, please call our office at (503) 291-1777.

Book update: we're in Powell's!

Good Food, Great Medicine is finally available through **Powell's** bookstore! You can also find it on **Amazon.com** as well as at **Annie Bloom's Books** in Multnomah Village, **Broadway Books**, the **Providence Integrative Medicine Programs** at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center and Providence Portland Medical Center, and, of course, at our web site, www.goodfoodgreatmedicine.com.

Upcoming Speaking Events

6/16/2010 – Good Food, Great Medicine Weight Loss Class: Miles Hassell, MD. Providence St. Vincent Medical Center, Portland, Oregon. Please call (503) 291-1777 to register.

6/25-27/2010 – Cardiology Update for the Primary Care Provider Conference:
Miles Hassell, MD: *What to do when statins aren't tolerated or don't work;* and *Nutritional Supplements*.
Mea Hassell: *Good Food, Great Medicine Cooking Demonstration*. Leavenworth, Washington.

7/6/2010 – NEXT Steps against Breast Cancer:
Miles Hassell MD and Kenneth Weizer, ND: *Nutrition and Exercise Today to Reduce Risk and Improve Survival*. Providence St. Vincent Medical Center, Cancer Center. This event is free. For reservations or more information, please call the Providence Resource Line (503) 574-6595.

7/30/2010 – Multnomah County Annual Adult Care Home Conference: Miles Hassell, MD: *How a Greek Grandmother Would Solve the Health Care Crisis: Which Diet and Lifestyle Choices Really Matter?* Portland, Oregon. *Conference attendees only*.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good"

1 Thess. 5:21(KJV)