

Nutrient Gap Identifier Worksheet

Score your child's intake across the 10 nutrients that matter most for brain development — find the gaps before they become deficits

Most toddlers have at least 2–3 significant nutrient gaps — and parents don't know until a problem surfaces. This worksheet helps you identify gaps proactively. Score your child's typical weekly intake, not a perfect day. Honesty serves your child better than optimism here.

Scoring Guide

For each nutrient, rate intake 0–3. 0 = Rarely or never gets this nutrient. 1 = Gets it 1–2 times per week. 2 = Gets it 3–5 times per week. 3 = Gets it daily or near-daily.

Iron (Target: 7 mg/day for ages 1–3)

Score: ___ / 3

Red meat (beef, lamb, bison) — 2+ times per week

Organ meats (liver, heart) — any frequency

Dark poultry meat, eggs, or fish — 3+ times per week

Beans, lentils, tofu, or fortified cereals — most days

DHA / Omega-3 Fats (Target: 100–150 mg/day)

Score: ___ / 3

Fatty fish (salmon, sardines, mackerel) — 2+ times per week

Fish oil or algae DHA supplement — daily

Chia seeds, flaxseed, walnuts — regularly (note: conversion to DHA is only ~5%)

Eggs from pasture-raised hens (higher omega-3) — regularly

Choline (Target: 200 mg/day ages 1–3)

Score: ___ / 3

Eggs — 3+ times per week (2 eggs = ~300 mg)

Beef, chicken, or fish — regular servings

Liver — any frequency (richest source: 350 mg per 3 oz)

Beans, cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, Brussels sprouts)

Zinc (Target: 3 mg/day ages 1-3)

Score: ___ / 3

Red meat or dark poultry — 3+ times per week

Cheese, yogurt — most days

Pumpkin seeds, cashews — regularly

Beans, chickpeas, whole grains — regularly

Vitamin D (Target: 600 IU/day)

Score: ___ / 3

Daily vitamin D supplement (400-1,000 IU)

Fatty fish — 2+ times per week

Regular outdoor play in sunlight (skin exposed, no sunscreen for 10-15 min)

Fortified milk or fortified foods — daily

Calcium (Target: 700 mg/day ages 1-3)

Score: ___ / 3

Milk or fortified milk alternative — 2 cups per day

Yogurt or cheese — daily

Calcium-rich foods: sardines (with bones), broccoli, tofu, fortified OJ

Not excessive — more than 3 cups dairy/day blocks iron absorption

Magnesium (Target: 80 mg/day ages 1-3)

Score: ___ / 3

Nuts/seeds or nut butters — regularly

Whole grains (oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat) — most days

Bananas, avocado, sweet potato — regularly

Dark chocolate (small amounts), beans, leafy greens

B Vitamins (B6, B12, Folate)

Score: ___ / 3

Animal protein (meat, fish, eggs, dairy) — daily (B12 source)

Leafy greens, beans, lentils — regularly (folate source)

Bananas, potatoes, chickpeas — regularly (B6 source)

Fortified foods or multivitamin if vegetarian/vegan

Fiber (Target: 19 g/day ages 1-3)

Score: ___ / 3

Fruits with skin (apples, berries, pears) — daily

Vegetables — at least 2 servings per day

Beans, lentils, chickpeas — 2+ times per week

Whole grains (oats, brown rice, whole wheat) — most days

Vitamin A (Target: 300 mcg RAE/day ages 1–3)

Score: ___ / 3

Orange/yellow vegetables (sweet potato, carrots, squash) — 3+ times per week

Leafy greens (spinach, kale) — regularly

Eggs, full-fat dairy — regularly

Liver — any frequency (richest food source of vitamin A)

Interpreting Your Score

TOTAL SCORE (OUT OF 30)	ASSESSMENT	ACTION
24–30	Strong foundation	Maintain variety. Consider targeted supplements only if specific gaps exist.
16–23	Some gaps to address	Identify nutrients scoring 0–1 and focus meal planning on those specific gaps.
8–15	Significant gaps	Consider a high-quality children's multivitamin while working on dietary improvements. Prioritize iron, DHA, and choline.
0–7	Critical gaps	Supplement immediately (multi + omega-3 + iron if low). Work with pediatrician or pediatric dietitian.

MOST COMMON GAPS

In typical toddler diets, the three biggest gaps are: (1) DHA/omega-3 — most kids eat almost no fatty fish, (2) Iron — milk-heavy diets crowd out iron-rich foods, and (3) Choline — if eggs aren't regular, this nutrient is nearly impossible to get enough of. Start there.