



FUSSY EATING

Factsheet

This factsheet will provide you with information and links to websites containing lots of hints and tips to help with fussy eating.

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What children eat and drink during their early years can affect their health for many years to come. General eating habits are formed in the first few years of life, so it is important that we encourage our children to eat nutritious food. If children's nutrition is a sore topic in your household, you're not alone. Many parents worry about what their children eat and don't eat. Children's nutrition doesn't have to be frustrating so by considering the hints and tips below, power struggles can be avoided and the fussy eater in your family can be supported to eat a balanced and nutritious diet

Tip 1. Serve the right amount. Offer your child 1 tablespoon of each food for each year of age. For example, if your child is 3, serve 3 tablespoons of each food. Small portions give your child the chance to ask for more.

Tip 2. Be patient. Offer new foods many times. You may have to offer a food up to 10 to 15 times before your child will taste it so try not to feel disheartened or give in.

Tip 3. Let your child help. Allow your child to choose foods in the supermarket then consider how they could safely help prepare the meal or set the table. Participating in the different parts of mealtime may make your child more likely to eat.

Tip 4. Make things fun. Cut food into shapes with cookie cutters. Display the food in a creative way on your child's plate. Have your child come up with special names for their favourite foods.

Tip 5. Offer choices. Instead of just serving a vegetable to your child, let them choose between two options. "Would you like broccoli or cauliflower for dinner?"

Tip 6. Mix new with old. Serve new foods alongside favourites. This may make trying the new food easier.

Tip 7. Let them dip. Provide healthy dips to encourage your child to try new fruits or vegetables. These could include hummus, yogurt, or low-fat salad dressings.

Tip 8. Be a good example. If your child sees you eating a variety of healthy foods, they will be more likely to try them.

Tip 9. Don't force your child to clear their plate. Once your child is no longer hungry, they should be allowed to stop eating. Making them eat when they're not hungry can interfere with their natural cues that tell them when they're full. Allowing them to choose when to stop eating teaches them how to listen to their bodies and make healthy food choices.

Tip 10. Don't negotiate with or bribe your child. Threats, punishments and rewards aren't a good idea and can lead to power struggles. Avoid making deals. For example, don't tell them if they eat 3 more bites, they can have a dessert. This teaches them that making deals will get them rewards for other things. In addition, making the dessert a reward, gives it higher value in the child's mind and this can lead to an unhealthy attitude towards sweet foods.

Tip 11. Remember most children do grow out of fussy eating. Over time your child will begin to accept a wider range of foods. Very occasionally there might be an underlying problem that is contributing to a sudden loss of appetite and if you are concerned about your child, please seek further advice from a health professional

VISIT THESE USEFUL WEBSITES

Children's Health Services 0 -19 - Healthy Lifestyles

NHS - Fussy eaters

NHS Great Ormond Street - Fussy eaters

British Dietetic Assoc. - Fussy eaters

If you would like any help or support to improve with your child please book an appointment in our E-School Nurse video clinic.

Telephone: 0300 304 9039

Visit our website: [Growing Healthy 0-19 Westmorland & Furness](#)

Find us on Facebook and Instagram: Growing Healthy Westmorland and Furness 0-19

You can also find more information about our service, your child's development and local services by downloading our App.