



Nutrition Tidbit: Picky Eating

10 Pearls for Picky Eating:

1. Most kids are picky eaters at some point in their life. Food consumption is one thing they can control. The biggest factor in picky eating is parental response to the pickiness.
2. Food jags are normal for toddlers; they may have 1-2 preferred foods for a week and then abruptly switch their preferences.
3. Serve balanced meals with a variety of food options. If a child is picky, serve at least one thing you think they will like along with 2-3 others they may or may not like.
4. Encourage parents to be patient, it may take 10-15 exposures to a food before a child even decides to taste it or accept it. Don't take no as a rejection, let the parent know they are making progress by exposing them to new flavors and foods.
5. It is important for families to eat meals together and for parents to model healthy eating habits, making mealtimes enjoyable and low stress.
6. Add eye appeal to foods: create a face out of vegetables, cut sandwiches into shapes with cookie cutters
7. Get kids involved in meal prep and shopping, kids are more likely to try something if they have been involved in preparing it.
8. At mealtime, stick to the planned menu. If a parent doesn't give in to special requests kids typically will eventually start eating what is served.
9. Offer snacks, but avoid constant nibbling. Children will eat more and be more likely to try new foods when they come to the table hungry.
10. View food as nourishment, not as a reward or punishment. Doing so sets up unhealthy patterns of eating later in life.

[Healthy Tips for Picky Eaters Handout](#)