



PICKY EATING

Picky eating is a typical behavior for many toddlers. Your child may refuse foods she liked as a baby. Or she may refuse to eat at a meal. This is a normal step to growing up and becoming independent!

WHY IS MY CHILD SO PICKY?

- In her first couple of years, she grew fast. Now her growth is slowing down, and her appetite may slow too.
- Toddler's tummies are the size of a fist, so they fill up fast. When your child is fussing, she may just be full.
- Being tired can make mealtime more difficult.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO? TRY THIS IF SHE...

...Throws food you put on her plate.

- Throwing food usually means she is full or finished eating. Try to follow her cues.

...Turns away when you try to feed her.

- Remember you choose what foods to serve, when and where to eat. She decides how much to eat from what you offer.
- Toddlers want to be independent. Allow her to feed herself!





...Is not hungry at meals, but wants to snack all day.

- Offer healthy meals and snacks about every 2-3 hours and at the same time everyday. Your toddler will eat the right amount and be more likely to try new foods.
- Avoid snacks right before meals. Offer snacks two hours or more before the next meal. Choose healthy snacks like fruits, vegetables, cereal, yogurt, cheese and toast. Limit sweets.
- Stick to only eating at meals and snacks. Kids who are allowed to get food out of the refrigerator or the cupboard all day long do not eat well at meals.
- Offer water between meals. Toddlers should only have up to 4 ounces of 100 percent juice a day and only about 2 cups of milk – any more will fill up your child’s small tummy.

...Says she does not like a particular food anymore.

- Try serving foods in different ways. Keep offering foods, even if she does not like them today. Remember food likes and dislikes change over time.

...Refuses new foods.

- Offer one new food at a time, with foods she likes.
- Give a small amount of a new food. Do not worry if your child does not eat it. Offer it again at another time. You may need to offer it many times before she will eat it.
- Sometimes offer 2 choices, and let her pick one.

If you know this phase is coming, you will be less likely to worry and can enjoy meals with your child. Be a good role model by having an open and curious attitude about food and eat a healthy variety.

