

Healthy Eating  
Tip of the Month  
August 2019

# Overcoming Picky Eating

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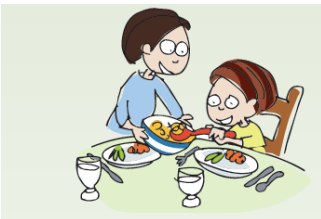
Picky eating is common in young children. Here are some tips and tricks to make the most of the mealtime experience and to help your children develop healthy habits!

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## Healthy Tips for Picky Eaters

Source: USDA



### How to Cope with Picky Eating

Picky eating is common and often temporary. Here are some tips to help make eating a more pleasurable experience.

**Let your kids be “produce pickers.”** Let them pick out fruits and veggies at the store.

**Have your child help you prepare meals.** Children learn about food and get excited about tasting food when they help make meals.

**Offer choices.** Rather than ask, “Do you want broccoli for dinner?” ask “Which would you like for dinner, broccoli or cauliflower?”

**Enjoy each other while eating family meals together.** Talk about what family members did during the day, what made you laugh, or what you did for fun.

**Offer the same foods for the whole family.** Serve the same meal to adults and kids. Let them see you enjoy a variety of healthy foods.

### Trying New Foods

**Start with small portions.** Let your kids try small portions of new foods that you enjoy. Give them a small taste at first and be patient with them.

**Offer one new food item at a time.** Serve something that you know your child likes along with the new food.

**Be a good role model.** Try new foods yourself. Describe their taste, texture, and smell to your child.

**Offer new foods first.** Your child is most hungry at the start of a meal.

**Offer new foods many times.** Sometimes, new foods take time. Kids don’t always take to new foods right away.

### Make Food Fun!

Encourage children to invent or prepare a new snack.

Cut food into fun and easy shapes with cookie cutters.

# Kitchen Helper Activities

Get your preschooler to try new foods by having them help out in the kitchen. Give them small jobs to do and praise their efforts. Children are less likely to refuse food that they help to make. As preschoolers grow, they are able to help out with different tasks in the kitchen. While the following suggestions are typical, children may develop these skills at different ages.

Source: USDA



## At 2 years:

- Wipe tables
- Hand items to adult to put away (after grocery shopping)
- Place things in trash
- Tear lettuce or greens
- Help “read” a cookbook by turning the pages
- Make “faces” out of pieces of fruits and vegetables
- Rinse vegetables or fruits
- Snap green beans

## At 3 years:

### All that a 2-year-old can do, plus:

- Add ingredients
- Talk about cooking
- Scoop or mash potatoes
- Squeeze citrus fruits
- Stir pancake batter
- Knead and shape dough
- Name and count foods
- Help assemble a pizza

## At 4 years:

### All that a 3-year-old can do, plus:

- Peel eggs and some fruits, like oranges and bananas
- Set the table
- Crack eggs
- Help measure dry ingredients
- Help make sandwiches and tossed salads

## At 5 years:

### All that a 4-year-old can do, plus:

- Measure liquids
- Cut soft fruits with a dull knife

# *Phrases that Help and Hinder*

When speaking to children, especially picky eaters, what we say has a large impact on developing healthy eating habits. Caregivers play an essential role in a child’s eating behavior. With eating, positive reinforcement, or rewarding a desired behavior, is an effective tool. Creating a positive environment with positive phrases will encourage children to choose and try various foods and healthy options.

<b>Why?</b>	<b>Instead of this...</b>	<b>Try this...</b>
<b>To avoid teaching children unhealthy beliefs about food and eating for approval, try pointing out qualities of food to spark interest in child.</b>	<p>“Eat this for me.”</p> <p>“One more bite or I’ll get angry.”</p>	<p>“This is a kiwi, it’s a sweet fruit like a strawberry.”</p> <p>“These peppers are crunchy!”</p>
<b>To teach children to listen to their body to recognize fullness to avoid overeating.</b>	<p>“You’re such a big girl; you finished all your peas.”</p> <p>“Look at your sister. She ate all of her bananas.”</p>	<p>“Is your stomach Telling you that you’re full?”</p> <p>“Is your stomach still making it’s hungry growling noise?”</p> <p>“Has your tummy had enough?”</p>
<b>Rewards can be great when motivating a child, especially when used properly. Getting a food treat when upset teaches your child to eat to feel better, which can lead to overeating. Attention and kind words are a better reward for children. Show love by spending time and having fun together.</b>	<p>“No dessert until you eat all your vegetables.”</p> <p>“Stop crying and I will give you a cookie.”</p>	<p>“We can try these vegetables again another time. Next time would you like to try them raw instead of cooked?”</p> <p>I am sorry you are sad. Come here and let me give you a hug.”</p>
<b>Certain questions can tell your child that he or she was wrong to refuse the food. Instead, try phrases that make your child feel like he or she is making the choices.</b>	<p>“See that didn’t taste so bad, did it?”</p>	<p>“Do you like that?”</p> <p>“Which one is your favorite?”</p> <p>“everybody likes different foods, don’t they?”</p>

# Healthy Recipes for Your Picky Eater

## Breakfast

### Ham, Egg, and Cheese Breakfast Pizza

Yield: 6 servings

#### Ingredients:

- 6 large eggs, whisked
- 1 tbsp. butter or oil
- 2 personal sized pizza crusts
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese
- 4 slices diced Canadian ham

#### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 400 F.
- In large, non-stick skillet melt butter or oil and add whisked eggs. Cook 2-3 minutes stirring slightly.
- Sprinkle  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cheese on each crust and cover each crust with half egg mixture.
- Top with ham and remaining cheese.
- Bake directly on rack for ~ 7 minutes.



### Blueberry Baked Oatmeal

Yield: 8 servings

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups oats
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup honey
- 2 cups milk
- 1 large egg
- 2 tbsp. melted butter
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup blueberries

#### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 375 F and grease 9x9 baking dish.
- Combine oats, baking powder, and salt.
- In another bowl, combine honey, milk, egg, melted butter, and vanilla extract.
- Mix dry ingredients into wet ingredients.
- Fold in blueberries.
- Pour mixture into baking dish and bake ~35 minutes until top is golden.



## Snacks

### High Fiber Chocolate Bites

Yield: 12 servings

#### Ingredients:

- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup rolled oats
- 1 cup dried prunes
- 3 tbsp. peanut butter
- 1 tbsp. honey
- 2 tbsp. cocoa powder
- 1 scoop (28 g) chocolate protein powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup mini chocolate chips

#### Directions:

- In food processor, blend oats into flour-like texture. Add prunes, peanut butter, honey, cocoa powder, and protein powder and process until combined. Add water until a sand-like consistency is reached.
- Gently fold in the chocolate chips.
- Roll dough into balls by hand, about a tbsp. at a time and place into container. Refrigerate for 30 minutes until set.



### Baked Sweet Potato Chips

Yield: 4 servings

#### Ingredients:

- 4 sweet potatoes
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt

#### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 425 F
- Peel and evenly slice potatoes to desired thickness.
- Combine olive oil and salt in a bowl. Add sweet potatoes and toss gently to coat.
- Cover a lightly oiled nonstick baking sheet with single layer of potatoes.
- Roast, turning once, until golden and tender (about 10 minutes each side).



# Healthy Recipes for Your Picky Eater

## Lunch and Dinner

### Perfect Tomato Soup



Yield: 4 servings

#### Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 large carrot, peeled and chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 large tomatoes, diced
- 1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- 2 tbsp. tomato paste
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### Directions:

- Heat oil in large soup pot over medium heat. Add onions and sauté until softened. Add carrots and garlic and sauté for 3 more minutes.
- Add fresh tomatoes, canned tomatoes, broth, tomato paste to pot and bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, uncovered, for another 20 minutes.
- Use immersion blender or food processor to puree soup until smooth.

### Crunchy Turkey Pinwheels



#### Ingredients:

- 1 large whole grain tortilla
- 1 tbsp. hummus
- Handful of spinach or any green
- 2-3 slices deli turkey
- Shredded carrots

#### Directions:

- Spread hummus on one whole side of tortilla. Top with spinach, turkey slices, and carrots.
- Beginning on one end, roll tortilla tightly. Slice into one-inch pieces.

### Parmesan Crusted Baked Fish



Yield: 6 servings

#### Ingredients:

- ¼ cup milk
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ cup breadcrumbs
- ½ tsp. paprika
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 pounds fish fillets, thawed
- 2 tbsp. butter, melted

#### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 375 F and grease 9x13 baking dish.
- Blend together milk and salt in bowl.
- Combine breadcrumbs, paprika, and Parmesan cheese in another bowl.
- Dip fish fillets into milk mixture then into crumb mixture.
- Arrange fillets in single layer in baking dish and drizzle with melted butter.
- Bake for 25-30 minutes until fish is flakey.

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Elsie Myers

Patient Food and Nutrition Services

300 N. Ingalls Street

NIB NI8E20

Ann Arbor, MI 48109-5407

(734) 936-5197

