

life is why **Family Health Challenge™**

Top 10 Tips for Dealing With a Picky Eater

When you get home from a long day at work, the last thing you want to do is wage war over broccoli at the dinner table. The good news is, getting a picky eater to eat a nutritious meal doesn't have to be a battle. **Here are some tips for dealing with a picky eater:**

1. **Start by introducing healthier elements into foods that your child already likes.** For example, offer blueberry pancakes, carrot muffins, fruit slices over a favorite cereal, chunks of bell pepper in a potato salad, or shredded veggies over rice.
2. **Include your kids in the prep work.** By being involved in grocery shopping and food preparation, your kids will have more 'buy-in.' If they feel some ownership over the meal, they may be more likely to eat it.
3. **Don't buy unhealthy foods.** Out of sight, out of mind. If the chips and cookies aren't around, your kids can't eat them. They may resist at first, but when they get hungry, they'll start munching the carrot sticks. Keep healthy foods on hand — 100 percent juice instead of colas or sugary drinks, and a bag of apples instead of a bag of chips.
4. **Schedule snack time and stick to it.** Most kids like routine. If your kids know they will only get food at certain times, they'll eat what they get when they get it. Try to have snacks incorporate two food groups. For example, offer cheese and whole-grain crackers or apple slices with low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese.
5. **Have healthy finger foods available.** Kids like to pick up foods, so give them foods they can handle. Fruit and veggie chunks (raw or cooked) are great finger-food options.
6. **Repeal the "clean your plate" rule.** Kids know when they're full, so let them stop. Overeating is one of the major reasons we get too many calories.
7. **Encourage kids to "eat their colors."** This game works well with younger kids. Food that's bland in color often also lacks nutrients. Eating a variety of brightly colored foods provides more nutrients in greater variety.
8. **Don't cut out treats altogether.** Think moderation. A scoop of ice cream or a serving of Oreos is all right occasionally. If you cut out all the goodies, your kids will be more likely to overeat when they do get them. Make sure to moderate the treat consumption.
9. **Veg out at the dinner table, not the TV.** Eating in front of the TV is distracting, and kids may not notice that they're full because they're wrapped up in the show. Eating as a family is a great time to catch up.
10. **Be a good role model.** The best way to influence kids is by example. Don't expect them to eat spinach if you won't touch it.



It starts at home.
It starts with you.

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