

PICKY EATING BASICS

LEARNING THE BASICS

UNDERSTANDING PICKY EATING

Your child may eat only a certain type of food or refuse foods based on a certain colour or texture. They may also play at the table and may not want to eat.

You're not alone. Picky eating is a typical behaviour for many preschoolers.

You can use these tips for a child of any age. It's never too late to start having a healthier and more enjoyable mealtime.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS NORMAL

It is normal if your child:

1. Does not like new foods at first.
2. Asks for the same food over and over again.
3. Eats less food than before.
4. Some days eats a lot and other days eats a little.



If your child is growing, has lots of energy, is healthy and happy he is likely eating enough!

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THE FEEDING RELATIONSHIP

Parents and children have different roles during mealtime. It is important to establish these roles to allow children to become healthy eaters.

PARENT'S JOB

You as a parent have specific roles during mealtime:

- **WHEN** food is served. Offer meals and snacks at the same time every day. When children eat at set times they are more likely to come to the table hungry and try new foods.
- **WHAT** food and drinks are served at meals and snacks.
- **WHERE** food is served. Children will eat healthier when you eat together at the table.

CHILD'S JOB

On the other hand, your child's job is to decide:

- **WHETHER OR NOT** to eat. Your child will not eat until he or she is hungry, do not pressure them to eat when they do not feel hungry.
- **HOW MUCH** to eat. Trust that your child knows when he or she is hungry or full.



Did you know?

35% of preschoolers are described as picky eaters by their parents
so you are not alone!

Source: Dietitians of Canada (2014). Tips on Feeding Your Picky Toddler or Preschooler.

Dietitians of Canada (2017). Take the fight out of food.