



# NUTRITION NEWSLETTER



My son lives on yogurt, cheese and cereal (occasionally he'll throw in some variety by experimenting with other sources of protein and carbohydrates)! And what about fruits and vegetables you may be thinking...well yes he experiments with those as often as the festive season adorns us!!! I'm sure this is a dilemma many of you face, the awful fate of dealing with a picky eater. It's perfectly normal for young children to suddenly hate everything – even foods they loved yesterday. Children often go on what experts call 'food jags' – eating the same foods over and over again and turning their noses up at anything new or unfamiliar. Children enjoy familiarity and exhibit fear when something new is presented, therefore it may take multiple exposures to a food before they will try it. Bouts of independence are also part of being a toddler. Picky eating may be your child's attempts at making decisions or being assertive. It may also reflect a smaller appetite as your child's growth rate slows. So hang in there and be persistent!



## EATING A WIDE VARIETY OF FOODS

Getting your child to eat a wider variety of foods may be unrealistic. Toddlers enjoy being able to make their own decisions – forcing them to eat certain foods or finish everything on their plate may become a problem in later years. Your child may be just fine living on cheese sandwiches for a couple of weeks. He can't be expected to eat a balanced meal at every meal. If you keep a diary of what your child eats, you will be surprised that in the course of a week he is probably getting all the nutrients he needs.

## PORTION SIZES

Another important point to remember is that sometimes we view how much our child eats in terms of adult portion sizes. Kids portion sizes are much smaller in comparison to what we eat. Also remember that we have become accustomed to bigger portion sizes. One serving of cooked rice is... half a cup! The USDA specifically designed the food guide pyramid for young children based on children's eating habits and nutrient requirements. On a typical day a child should eat 6 servings of grains, 3 servings of vegetables, 2 servings of fruit, 2 servings of milk and 2 servings of meat. Fats and sweets should be limited.

## EXAMPLES OF SERVING SIZES: (1 serving equals...)

GRAINS	FRUITS & VEGGIES	MEAT	DAIRY
2/3 slice of bread	1 1/3 cooked broccoli spears	1 1/2 eggs	2/3 cup of milk
2 graham cracker squares	1/3 cup tomato sauce	3 tablespoons peanut butter	2/3 cup of yogurt
1/3 cup of cooked rice or pasta	1/3 cup blueberries	2-3 ounces of cooked lean meat, poultry or fish	1 piece of string cheese
1/3 cup cooked oatmeal	2/3 of a banana	3/4 cup of cooked beans	2/3 cup of pudding

## GENERAL TIPS FOR PICKY EATERS:

- At mealtime serve at least one food you know your child will eat.
- Don't offer too many choices
- Make food simple, plain and recognizable
- Allow hot food to cool down and cool food to warm up a little (kids don't like extreme temperatures)
- If your child won't eat spinach for example, offer another food from the same food group (foods from the same food group usually offer similar nutrients)

- Don't offer too many options at mealtime – instead of asking your child what he would like, offer a small portion of food from the major food groups
- Let your child be involved in decision shopping and preparation
- Limit table time
- Trust your child's appetite!



***BON APPETIT!***