



# Faddy Eaters

Without warning your child may begin to refuse once loved food. This is likely to be their first individual choice. Don't panic, remember that they will always eat when hungry. Run through the following checklist to see if there is anything you can do to help.

- Make sure meal times are happy and relaxed. If meal times become associated with anger they will become more stressful for both of you, with your baby even less inclined to eat. Don't insist that your child finishes everything. If they refuse food do not offer substitutes but wait until the next meal.
- Children are creatures of habit. Keep meals to regular times and give them their own chair and utensils. If they seem unsettled and won't eat, consider if there have been any recent changes that have threatened their security.
- Try disguising nutritious food your child has rejected by mixing it in with an old favourite such as mashed potatoes.
- Serve small portions, giving seconds if they are asked for. Three small meals and two snacks daily suit most children better than three dauntingly large meals. Don't put too much on the plate and always try to make it look attractive.
- Any child who is upset, tired, teething or not feeling well is unlikely to want to eat.

**First Contact**

and

**Support Hub**

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To find your nearest children's  
centre call: **01429 284284**





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- Remember that children have growth spurts. A baby grows a proportionately large amount in his first year but you will find that a five year old often only eats as much as a one year old.
- Has your child been given snacks throughout the day? Too much milk or fruit juice will take the edge off any appetite. Two cups of orange juice are equivalent to four oranges.
- Encourage appetite through fresh air, exercise and sleep, perhaps as they have been less active than usual and are not as hungry.
- Genuine dislikes are often formed early, if certain foods are always left on the plate or spat out, this may be a sign to avoid these for a while. Always try them again at a later date.
- To encourage good eating habits, don't always serve a sweet dessert after savoury. Stick to one course meals with desserts occasionally. Don't bribe children with sweet foods, this only makes them seem more special.
- Most children are hungriest mid-afternoon. Don't fill them up on cakes, and biscuits but if it is practical serve the main meal of the day to accommodate the hungry times.
- Encourage your toddler to take an interest in food by helping with preparation. Talk about the food as you cook and let them add herbs and spices then taste for flavour. Offer a choice of food to make them feel grown-up.

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