

ENCOURAGE YOUR FAMILY TO TAKE A BITE

NUTRITION



10 Ideas for Tasting New Foods

Variety is an important part of a healthy diet. Some children, however, are hesitant to take a first bite of a new food. Here are some ideas for providing encouragement:



Get your child involved

Children are more excited about tasting new foods when they are involved. Let your child pick fruits or vegetables at the market, help prepare meals, and set the table.



Follow a mealtime routine

Eat together, whenever possible, in the kitchen or dining room. Put electronics and other distractions away. Enjoy pleasant conversation during meals and snacks.



Offer choices within limits

Ask your family something like: "Would you prefer broccoli or asparagus for dinner?"



Support mindful eating

Encourage your child to pay attention to what they are eating. Ask them to notice the colors, smells, tastes, temperatures, and textures.



Serve your family the same foods

Set a good example by eating these foods yourself! Demonstrate a positive experience when tasting new foods. This removes any pressures for your child to explore.



Make tasting new foods fun

Include dips, sauces, and seasonings to enhance flavor. Make plates colorful and playful. Consider pairing a new food with another food/flavor your child enjoys.



Respect a child's appetite

Children may take longer to eat than adults. Do not rush mealtime. Allow your child to decide how much food to eat. Save leftovers for a future meal or snack.



Be patient

You may need to offer a new food multiple times. Persistence and consistency are key! Don't write off a new food if your child doesn't take a bite the first time.



Offer one new food at a time

Children are more likely to try new foods when they are hungry. Offer the new food early in the meal. Then, offer your child's favorite healthy foods.



Do not get discouraged

Remember that small achievements can add up to big benefits. Praise your child like: "I notice you seem to be enjoying this new food. That's great! Tell me what you like about it."

Children may not like every food.

Teach your child to say "no, thank you," if they don't want to eat something.

If you choose to use incentives for your child, consider family outings, educational prizes, or decision-making privileges. Avoid using food as an incentive.

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