



### **Anticipatory Guidance for your One-Year Old**

Feeding a picky eater can be challenging and frustrating. As your child moves from infancy to toddlerhood, s/he tries to become independent. Resistance and refusal of normal routines are common. Feeding can become a battleground! Also, as your child becomes a toddler, the rate of growth decreases so that s/he needs fewer calories (less food) to grow. This is evident by a decreased appetite. Nevertheless, your child needs regular meals and snacks. The following are some tips <sup>1</sup> to help you feed your picky eater.

- Establish a regular schedule for meals and snacks. Do not allow your child to eat or drink between scheduled meals/snacks (except water when thirsty). Three meals interspersed with two snacks should be sufficient.
- Allow your child enough time to enjoy a meal, but if s/he loses interest allow the child to leave after 20 – 30 minutes. Do not offer food until the next snack/meal.
- Serve small portions and allow your child to ask for seconds. A serving for a toddler is 1/4 - 1/3 that of an adult.
- Utensils should be child-size. Use utensils and dishes that your child enjoys and considers his/her own. Provide a comfortable chair and seating area for your child.
- Serve food appropriate for your child. Avoid tough, chewy meats, and serve finger foods when possible. Provide new foods as well as foods you know your child likes.
- Don't worry about mess and table manners with toddlers.
- Do not use food as a punishment or a reward. Avoid arguments and punishment if your child does not eat.
- Establish a quiet time before meals. Overly stimulated children may not eat well.
- Plan meals for the family that include your picky eater.
- Be a good role model!

Occasionally, a child will not eat well despite the above interventions. If your child is not growing well despite all your attempts to feed her, please talk with your pediatrician. Occasionally, foods can be calorie-fortified to help ensure optimal growth.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Children's Hospital's "Feeding Your Toddler" guidelines.

**call time 8:30 – 9:00 am**  
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