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Five Tips For Getting Picky Kids To Eat Fruits And Vegetables

By Teresa Kolvek

Is your child super-picky? It's sometimes tough to know whether cautious eaters, as I like to call them, are getting proper nutrition. Here are a few strategies that have worked for getting my toddler to eat her fruits and vegetables. Every kid is different, but some of these tips might just work for you, too.

1. Bake fruits or vegetables into quick bread or muffins. My daughter's favorite are apple-banana muffins.
2. Make a yummy casserole. My girl likes rice and cheese, so I make her a cheesy broccoli and brown rice casserole. She won't eat broccoli by itself, but doesn't seem to mind it in this dish.
3. Stir some pureed carrots or sweet potatoes into macaroni and cheese. The trick with this is to be careful not to change the color or the taste much. Orange or yellow veggies work best here.
4. Offer dried fruits. For example, some kids won't eat grapes, but like raisins. These are highly portable, too. (Caution – may be a choking hazard for young toddlers.)
5. This may sound strange, but try offering a single bite-sized bit of fruit on a dish by itself. My daughter seems to like for her food to be separated and neat-looking. When she eats the first piece of diced peach, I put down the second, and so on. She ends up eating more than she would have had I given her the entire serving at once.

I've also found that if you offer the fruit or vegetable at the beginning of a meal when your child is hungriest, as an "appetizer", he or she is much more likely to try it. Also, remember never to force your child to eat. It can take a lot of extra effort and creative thinking to get your kids to eat what's good for them. But hey, one day they might thank you for it.

Teresa Kolvek and her husband, Tony, are the proud parents of a beautiful and spirited toddler named Amelia. Visit Teresa's website at

<http://www.toddlerdish.com>

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for great information, tips, and recipes for toddlers.

Eat a variety of veggies for a healthier you

By Ronald Goodpaster

The new food guidelines issued by the United States government recommend that all Americans eat between five and nine servings of fruits and vegetables each and every day. When you first hear that number, it may seem like a lot, but it is actually much easier than you think to fit that many servings of fruits and vegetables into your daily diet. For one thing, the shelves of the grocery stores are fairly bursting with fresh fruits and vegetables. In addition, vegetables and fruits are some of the least expensive, most nutrient rich, foods in the supermarket. With all these fruits and vegetables to choose from, it is very easy to make these nutritious, delicious foods part of your daily meals and snacks.

When you take into account how much a serving really is, it is actually quite easy to get five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables per day. For instance, the recommended daily amount actually equates to a quite reasonable two cups of fruit and two and a half cups of vegetables every day. When you consider how many fruits and vegetables are available, and how low the prices usually are, it is easy to see how easy to reach this daily goal really is.

One great way to get the nutrients you need from fruits and vegetables every day is to take full advantage of the variety of these foods available. Eating the same thing every day quickly becomes boring, so why not pick a variety of fruits and vegetables, in every color of the rainbow and in every conceivable shape, size and texture, to give yourself a varied diet every day.

When shopping for fruits and vegetables, it is important to choose a variety of different colors. This is for more than purely artistic reasons. Different color fruits and vegetables have different types of nutrients, and choosing a variety of colors will help ensure you get all the vitamins and minerals you need each and every day.

Finding new recipes is another great way to ensure you get those five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables every day. Everyone likes to try out new recipes, and these new recipes may just provide the impetus you need to eat all those fruits and veggies.

New recipes can also provide you the important opportunity to try out some fruits and vegetables you have never tried before. For instance, everyone has eaten oranges, but have you tried kiwi fruit or mangoes? How about spinach or kale? Trying new things is a great way to find new favorites while getting the best nutrition available.

Many people mistakenly think that they do not need to eat five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables every day if they just take a vitamin supplement. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. That is because fruits and vegetables contain far more than the micronutrients identified by science and synthesized in vitamin pills. While these micronutrients, such as vitamin C, vitamin A and vitamin E are

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important to good health, so too are the hundreds of other elements that are contained in healthy foods like fruits and vegetables. These elements are not available in any pill, they must be ingested through a healthy, balanced diet that contains plenty of fruits and vegetables.

In addition, fruits and vegetables are much less costly than vitamin pills. Fruits and vegetables are very inexpensive, especially when purchased in season and grown locally. In the long run, getting the nutrition you need from the food you eat is much less expensive, and much better for you, than

popping those vitamin pills every day.

So don't forget to get your five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables every day. It may seem like a lot, but you can meet this quite reasonable goal simply by including fruits and vegetables as snacks, as garnishes, as side dishes and as meals.

Ron Goodpaster is a freelance writer, an entrepreneur and a self-proclaimed health nut. He has written many health related and weight-loss articles. He is the webmaster at

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