

My child refuses to eat certain foods – especially the healthier ones

It is important that young children eat a variety of foods from the main food groups each day but we all know that it's not always that easy. Try not to make mealtimes a battleground by insisting certain foods are eaten, banning favourite snacks or using treat foods to encourage them to eat a healthier diet. Try these tips;

- Eating healthier meals yourself and as a family, and eat with your child when you can. Seeing others (especially siblings) enjoying something new can be really helpful.
- Talking about the health benefits of certain foods such as carrots to make you see in the dark and spinach to make you strong can be really motivating for children.
- Try and make mealtimes fun. Let your child choose some new foods based on colour shape or healthy benefit and let them help prepare them if they are old enough. Using cutters to make foods into fun shapes such as stars or hearts can be a fun activity.
- Foods for Superhero strength or a bunny lunch adding carrot sticks can be a fun way for your child to try something new. Ask them if they feel more like jumping after eating their bunny lunch, or if their nose twitching can be really fun.
- Eating a rainbow can also be fun for children.
- Even if they don't eat the new food straight away they may have enjoyed making something new and the more often they see it on their plate and everyone else's the more likely they are to try it, especially if no one makes a fuss about eating it or leaving it. Children and babies may take more than 10 tries before they accept something new.
- No matter how hard you try there will be some things your child doesn't like – just like us adults. You could try offering them later on as a snack – cucumber or raw vegetables with a little hummus is a good one. Or it may be that your child likes something cooked rather than raw.
- If your child really doesn't like a vegetable, it can always be blended and used up in meals such as soups or a [pasta dish](#) and fruits can be made into healthy lollies or mixed into [porridge](#).

Eat a **rainbow** everyday



How many portions of each colour can you eat each day?

	red <i>strawberry, pepper, tomatoes, grapes, apples, watermelon, pomegranates, radishes, cherries</i>	green <i>cucumber, peas, lettuce, pepper, apples, broccoli, kiwi, avocados, courgettes, okra,</i>	yellow <i>bananas, plantain, pineapple, pepper, sweetcorn, melon, onions, yellow courgettes,</i>	orange <i>pepper, mango, squash papaya, oranges, carrots, peaches, apricots, sweet potatoes,</i>	blue/purple <i>grapes, blueberries, red cabbage, aubergines, blackberries, red onions, beetroot, figs, plums, raisins,</i>
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					