Coping with a Picky Eater

All children go through stages of being picky about food. Picky eating is a common behavior that many children ages 2-5 experience. Every parent can relate to the stresses of picky eating: the time your child refused to eat anything but macaroni and cheese for weeks, or the time your child would refuse to eat anything green and they cannot touch other foods on the plate. These stressful behaviors are perfectly normal.

- Some foods are a new experience and it may take time for your child to taste or try them.
- Children want to see and touch it several times before eating it.
- Kids are hesitant and often afraid to try new foods.

As parents, we often wonder if our children are getting the nutrition that they need. You may notice sometimes he/she will only eat a few bites, and other times they may eat more than you can imagine. Here are some tips to help cope with picky eating that have worked for some moms.

1. Don’t be a “short order cook”. Instead, offer at least 1 familiar food that your child normally eats.
2. Make food fun! Making food look more inviting and help break out of food routines. Ask your WIC dietitian for recipes and ideas!
3. Offer dips with veggies.
4. Offer a variety of foods and let your child decide what and how much of the foods to eat.
5. Kids like to try foods they help make. Allow your child to pick out fruits/veggies at the grocery store or allow them to help you set the table at home.
6. Eat together! If children see other family members eating a food they may try it too.
Protecting your Child’s Smile with Fluoride

Taking care of your child’s teeth is an important part of total health. Making sure your child gets the right amount of fluoride is one easy thing you can do to help get your child off to a healthy dental start. Fluoride helps make teeth stronger and helps prevent cavities. One way to get fluoride is through drinking water. Another great way to get fluoride is through a fluoride varnish. A fluoride varnish is a protective coating that is painted on the teeth with a brush. It is quick, easy, and painless! Fluoride varnish is safe and can be applied as soon as your child gets his/her 1st tooth and can be reapplied every 3-4 months. Did you know that La Crosse County has public health nurses than can provide fluoride varnish at no cost to you? To learn more about fluoride varnish or to schedule an appointment call: 608-785-9723.

Sweet Potato Sticks

Ingredients:
- 2 sweet potatoes
- 1 tablespoon canola or olive oil
- Salt
- Cinnamon Sugar (Mix 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon with 1 tablespoon sugar.)

1. Peel sweet potatoes and cut into long strips.
2. Toss sweet potato strips with oil and salt. Place strips on a metal baking sheet.
3. Roast in a 450° oven until golden brown, about 20 to 30 minutes. Turn strips over a couple times while roasting.
4. Remove from the oven and sprinkle with a little cinnamon sugar. Cool and eat.

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