

## TRYING NEW FOODS

**Many children dislike a new food when it is first introduced; this is a normal part of development.**

- Children tend to like foods that are already familiar to them and dislike foods that are unfamiliar to them.
- Although it may seem like your child is a picky eater, he or she may just need to become more familiar with the food before he or she decides to try it. This is a normal part of development.
- Children are born with a preference for sweet and salty foods and to reject bitter and sour foods.



**Introduce new foods to children when they are young.**

- Children are more likely to accept new foods when they are younger.
- It is more difficult to get children to try and accept new foods beyond toddlerhood.

**Introduce a variety of foods.**

- Children are more likely to have a varied and balanced diet later in life if they are introduced to a variety of foods, tastes, and textures during weaning and in early childhood.

**What you eat during pregnancy can influence what your child eats!**

- Research has shown that the flavors you eat when you are pregnant are transmitted to breastmilk and amniotic fluid.
- Since infants consume more foods that are familiar to them, mothers should eat a variety of foods during pregnancy and while breastfeeding. This helps babies become familiar with a variety of flavors before they begin eating solid food, and they may be more accepting of new foods when they are introduced.



## TIPS TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO TRY A NEW FOOD

**Try pairing the new food with a food they already like or with which they are familiar. For example:**

*For babies:*

- Add breastmilk or formula to pureed foods.
- Add a new food to an already familiar pureed food.

*For older children:*

- Pair a new vegetable with a dip they already like.



### **Role modeling.**

Children are more likely to try a new food if they see an adult eating the same food rather than just putting the food out for the child to see.

### **Encourage your child to describe the food.**

This carrot is crunchy; this strawberry is sweet; this pear is juicy; this broccoli is colorful.

### **Don't give up too soon!**

It can take 8-10 tries before your child accepts a new food. Although your child might make facial expressions that show dislike for the food he or she may still be willing to eat it. Continue to provide opportunities for him or her to taste the food and other foods within that food group.

### **Provide a variety.**

Your child should eat a variety of foods because he or she gets different nutrients from different foods. Fruits and vegetables are particularly important because children's diets are usually low in these foods.

### **Try introducing new foods at snack time.**

This may be a good time to introduce other foods from the same food group or similar foods. For instance, provide a snack of 2-3 different fruits or vegetables that your child can choose from and try.