



NEWS RELEASE

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What Do You Feed a Finicky Food-Allergic Child?

To begin with, be creative; do away with all your traditional ideas about what should be eaten for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. For a picky eater, anything goes as long as it's allergen-free and nutritious. Here are some healthy meal ideas that you can try anytime of the day.

1. Combat cereal boredom by mixing cereals together, creating a cereal of the day. This can be expanded further by adding different mix-ins, such as dried fruits, allergen-free marshmallows, sweetened wheat germ, miniature pretzels, popcorn, etc.
2. Make homemade muffins with nutritious foods, such as whole grain flours, wheat germ, fresh or dried fruits, carrots, zucchini, pumpkin, and sweet potato. Muffins made with these hearty ingredients are a meal in themselves.
3. Fruit shakes are not only good for you, they are quick and easy to make. Blend together your child's favorite fruits with juice or another allergen-free beverage.
4. Children enjoy preparing their own meals, so take advantage of this and try some make-your-own-meals:
Baked potato bar - serve with a variety of toppings, which include vegetables, meat, and sauces.
Shish-ka-bobs - If your child is old enough to handle a skewer, allow him or her to skewer together meat and vegetables; marinate for about an hour in homemade Italian dressing, then grill.
Pizza party - Make individual pan pizzas and allow each child to make an authentic pizza.
5. For a change of pace, load up pita bread or a flour tortilla (if allowed) with your child's favorite sandwich filling. You can also warm these in the microwave for a different taste sensation.
6. If your child is not interested in meat and poultry items, try cooking with legumes. Split peas, lentils, black-eyed peas, chickpeas, and dried beans are not only very versatile, but provide an excellent source of nutrients. Vegan vegetarian cookbooks offer many ideas for preparing legumes without milk, eggs, meat, poultry, and seafood.
7. If vegetables are getting the thumbs down, don't throw them out. Save cooked vegetables and their cooking water to make homemade vegetable soup for those cool fall evenings.
8. To replace cooked vegetables, try stir-frying cut-up vegetables in oil and season them with leftover meat, onion, garlic, ginger, and soy sauce, if allowed. Serve with rice or noodles and you have a meal!

Source: Celide Barnes Koerner, M.S., R.D. Adapted from Food Allergy News, Vol. 4, No.