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Meal time woes solved

The biggest concern of every mother is the eating habits of her child. Most of the time it has been noticed that children show disinterest in normal eating habits. Let's find out how to make it interesting for a child for adequate nutrients.

What disturbs a mother most about her child? Eight out of ten mothers will answer eating habits. Mothers love to fuss around their child with food. Growing kids need extra nutrition. How do we ensure that? Dr Rajeev Chhabra, Consultant Paediatric at Artemis, Gurgaon says, "Roughly children's meals should be divided as: morning breakfast, mid day snacks, lunch, evening snacks, dinner and post dinner feed." Giving your child milk on waking up and before going to bed has been approved by paediatricians as well.

Meal time battles

- This isn't easy to resolve. 'Dr. Arvind Taneja, Advisor Paediatrician, is frank on the subject. He says, "Many times children use food as a medium to get back at parents. Avoid dancing in front of prancing kids to shove a few morsels down their gullet. Do not use TV either to feed your child. Take away the plate from the child, whether she finishes the meal or not. For this you need to be firm. Controlling snacks before dinner and lunch time will help too."
- Involve your older child in menu decisions. Allow her/him to experiment with food under your supervision. She is going to like the stuff more if she/he dishes it out. Appreciate her/him effort.

MENU PLAN

Breakfast—Cereals/ Poha/ Paratha/ Sandwich/ Idli
Mid day snack—Fresh fruits/ Handful of dried fruits
Lunch—Portion of vegetables, bowl of pulses and rice or chapatti
Evening snack—Glass of juice or milk with cookies/ puffed rice/ sweet corn/ banana
Dinner as lunch
 If your child eats non-vegetarian food substitute chicken or fish with legumes.
 To increase protein intake in growing kids 5 eggs per week is recommended. If a child is vegetarian good sources of protein are—paneer, cheese and legumes.

displeasure over a fruit, vegetable or a particular kind of legume; be certain that your child will inculcate the dislike.

Then there are children who won't touch anything but junk food. Though, we all will agree that kids will be kids. Like everything in life, junk food can be eaten in moderation. If you make something out of bounds you make it more attractive for the child.

Researchers have discovered that you can educate the palate of your child by starting early. For this, introduce your child to semi-solid foods which has mashed bits of foods, like-vegetables, legumes and rice or daliya to ten-month when she/he is ten-months-old.

Milk Additives

"Normally, children avoid drinking plain milk. With so many advertisements shouting about their products and claiming it's superiority over others, mothers are in a fix. Almost all brands available by any name contain milk solids, malt extracts, a sugar source (liquid glucose, dextrin, etc), flavouring, and are fortified with vitamins, especially B-complex vitamins and minerals. The common property of B- vitamins is that they are essential for the metabolism and proper utilisation of energy, carbohydrates, proteins, and fat," says Dr. Neelima Mohan, Paediatric Gastroenterologist at Ganga Ram Hospital.

- For younger kids give them a star each time they polish off their plate. Introduce them to new veggies and this can be done by shopping with them. Appreciate more and reprimand less. The formula works everywhere.
- All said and done your child will imbibe your eating habits. So, if you express your

