

## Coping with Picky Eaters

Picky eating is typical for many children as they grow up and become more independent. Try the following tips to help:

- **Lead by example:** As a parent or caregiver, you are your child's most significant role model, especially when it comes to making healthy choices. If you eat healthy and try new foods, children will, too.
- **Stock up on healthy choices:** Buy plenty of fruits, veggies, whole grains, lean protein, and low-fat dairy products. Keep healthy foods where they're easy to see.
- **Don't force it:** Forcing a child to eat certain foods will only cause more stress. Serve a few different fruits and veggies at mealtimes. Let kids find the foods they like.
- **Try new foods:** Try different textures and flavors. If you normally serve sliced apples, try sliced avocado or sliced kiwi. Instead of carrot sticks, try snap peas, sliced bell peppers, or cucumbers.
- **Get creative:** Add fruits and veggies to foods your family already likes. Mix blueberries and oats into pancakes. Add sliced fruit to a favorite cereal. Serve shredded veggies over rice or whole wheat pasta. Make smoothies with fresh or frozen strawberries, a banana, and low-fat yogurt.
- **Let kids help with meals and snacks:** Children are more likely to eat food that they help make. Encourage children to help prepare meals and snacks. Let them help make the shopping list, pick out food at the grocery store and slice, mix, bake, or cook the food.
- **Make healthy food fun to eat:** Cut baked chicken, low-fat cheese, and veggies into bite-size pieces. Let kids "dip" these pieces into dunking sauces. Try hummus, low-fat ranch dressing, ketchup, and mustard.

## Animals in the Swamp

8 ounces vanilla yogurt

1 tablespoon chocolate instant pudding mix

24 animal crackers

1. Wash hands with soap and water. Combine yogurt and pudding mix.
2. Serve 1/4 cup of "swamp" to each child.
3. Dip crackers into the "swamp" and enjoy.
4. Refrigerate any extra "swamp" within 2 hours and eat within to 3 to 4 days. Makes 4 servings. Serving Size (1/4 cup dip and 6 animal crackers): 140 calories, 3g fat, 210mg sodium, 22g carbohydrates, 0g fiber, 4g protein.



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