

Help! My Children Won't Eat Vegetables!

By Lanette Kovachi, MS, RD

Trying to get more veggies into your children's diet can be a challenge. One of the most frequent comments I get from other parents is that their kids simply don't want to eat them. So, I've put my parental and dietitian know-how together and come up with some tips to help your little ones eat those veggies.

Give them fun veggies facts

One great way is to give them fun health facts about the veggies they are eating. If kids know that veggies have super food powers, they will be more motivated to try them. For example, spinach has beta carotene, which is needed to see well. Peppers are rich in vitamin C, which helps your body fight colds better and keeps skin healthy. You can arm yourself with more veggie facts by visiting ["Fruits and Vegetables More Matters"](#).

Make snack time veggie time

When kids come home from school or take a break from playing they're usually starving. It can be easy to grab snacks that are high in empty calories. I find that if you have cut up veggies out and ready *before* they have a chance to raid the kitchen cabinets, hungry kids will flock to them. Try pairing veggies with a low fat salad dressing dip, hummus or salsa. Don't have time to cut up veggies? Buy baby carrots, and pre-cut veggies like broccoli and celery.

Sandwiches are a perfect way to get veggies in

Adding veggies like romaine lettuce, sliced cucumbers, shredded carrots or thinly shredded red cabbage can pack on the nutrients and fiber and makes the sandwich colorful and crunchy. Try to have your child involved in the lunch-making process and pick out one veggie to try on a sandwich or even on the side. When eating on the run, stop by SUBWAY® - where kids have an opportunity to pick from more than five fresh veggies – if they pick all five they can get two veggie servings.

Always offer veggies at dinner

Try a variety of vegetables and experiment with different preparation methods – for example, you may find that your kids may not like cooked broccoli, but may like raw broccoli with a light dressing. Or they may like fresh, sautéed green beans over frozen green beans.

Of course you don't want to make dinner-time or any meal a vegetable war zone. Give a small, manageable portion (or even a bite size) of a new vegetable. It may take dozens of times for a child to become accepting of a new veggie, so don't give up. Your kids may turn up their nose at first but eventually they will grow to accept a variety of vegetables if they are exposed enough times. It took about two years for my daughter to eventually like salad, first we started with a few tiny pieces of romaine, a baby carrot and a cherry tomato – now she eats a full-size salad, and she loves it!

You need to eat your veggies too!

Kids learn from you. If you don't make it a priority to eat a balanced diet yourself, they won't either. So eat healthy together as a family!

And remember, if you are on the go or need to get a quick, nutritious meal for you and your child, you can always go to SUBWAY®. At SUBWAY® not only can you both pile those veggies on subs, but you can also get fiber-rich, calcium-fortified bread, delicious apple slices, low-fat milk or 100% fruit juice!