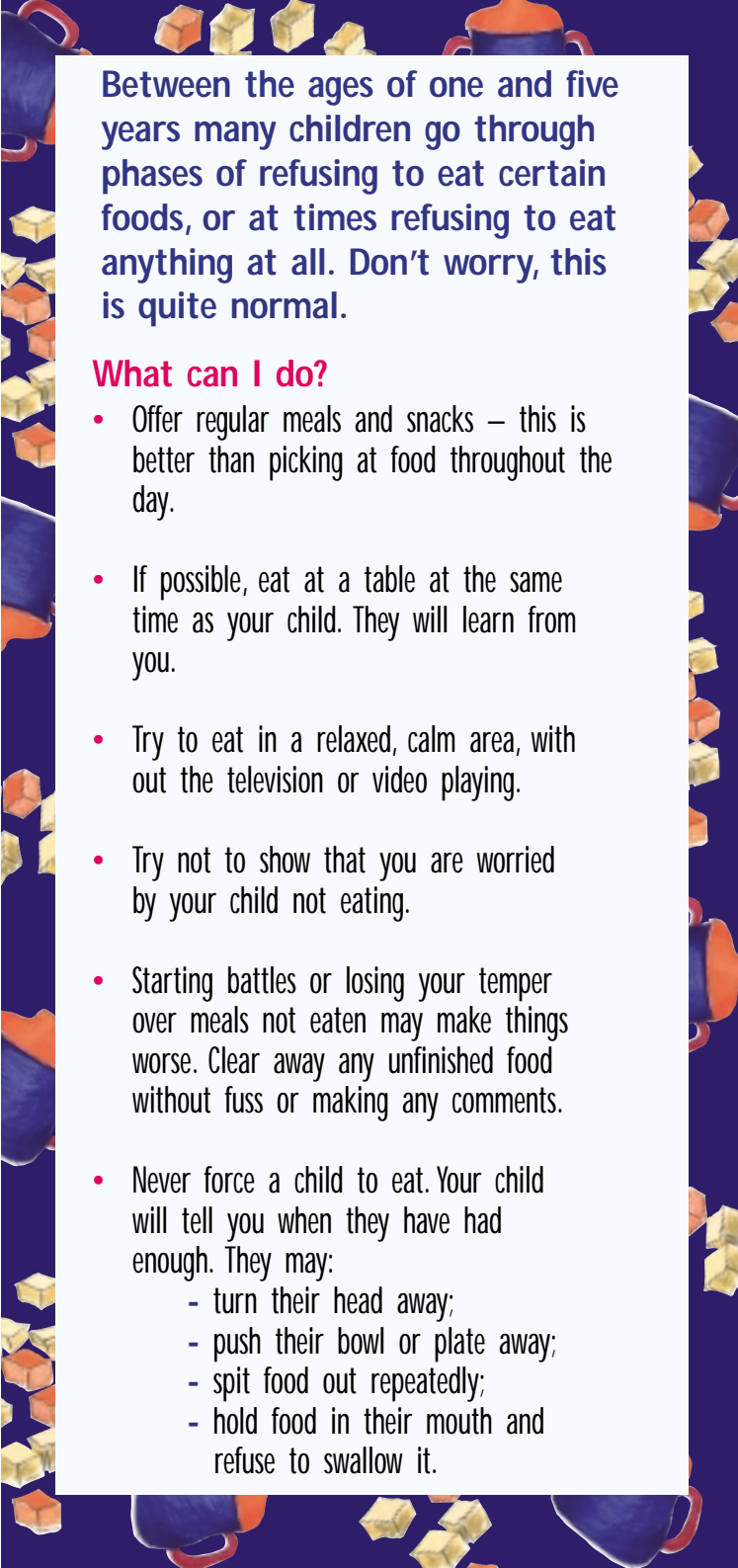


# Help...

my child is fussy with food





Between the ages of one and five years many children go through phases of refusing to eat certain foods, or at times refusing to eat anything at all. Don't worry, this is quite normal.

### What can I do?

- Offer regular meals and snacks – this is better than picking at food throughout the day.
- If possible, eat at a table at the same time as your child. They will learn from you.
- Try to eat in a relaxed, calm area, with out the television or video playing.
- Try not to show that you are worried by your child not eating.
- Starting battles or losing your temper over meals not eaten may make things worse. Clear away any unfinished food without fuss or making any comments.
- Never force a child to eat. Your child will tell you when they have had enough. They may:
  - turn their head away;
  - push their bowl or plate away;
  - spit food out repeatedly;
  - hold food in their mouth and refuse to swallow it.

- Replacing the meal with snacks of crisps, biscuits or sweets is not a good idea.
- Be aware that small children can often feel full after drinking lots of squash and may then refuse a meal.
- Even though it may be messy, start self-feeding as soon as possible e.g. give baby their own spoon.
- Children will not like all foods. If your child doesn't like a food this week try it again at a later date. Remember that children's tastes change all the time.
- Make food interesting and attractive.
- Aim to stop using a bottle for your baby's drinks after the age of one year. Drinking from a bottle after this is bad for baby's teeth and speech development.

**If your child consistently refuses to eat, consult your GP, health visitor or community dietitian.**

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