

Living on thin air

How to get
your Asperger kid
to eat a healthy diet



Asperger kids are picky eaters.

Why?

Their senses are too sensitive,
as if the volume has been
turned up too high.

They taste tastes, smell smells,
and feel textures
too strongly.



Every bite is an
assault on
their senses.

They restrict
the food they eat
to protect themselves.



The background of the image is a dense, close-up view of uncooked, light-colored macaroni pasta. The pasta pieces are curved and tubular, filling the entire frame. A bright yellow rectangular box is centered over the image, containing text.

Many Asperger kids eat nothing but
pasta, white bread,
crackers, and dry cereal

Experts might tell you

Don't worry!
He's fine.

As long as he eats
something.

WRONG

Nutrition matters.

- Kids need a full range of healthy food in order to grow properly.
- Asperger kids need high levels of key vitamins and minerals to help feed their struggling brains.
- Good nutrition translates into good energy, which means better physical fitness.



Eating matters too.

Food textures are good for stimulating the brain and senses.

cold foods

crunchy foods

chewy foods

The mouth senses need to be exercised to promote full sensory development.



Besides, kids need **FIBRE**.
Otherwise...

well, you know.



Some experts say

Don't worry.
She'll outgrow it.

No, she won't.

- Kids keep the eating habits they learn as children.
- Asperger kids don't "outgrow" their issues without considerable time and effort, and many never outgrow them.
- She needs nutrition now, not years from now.

If you want your kid to eat well,
you have to teach her.



So what do we do?

when they say



I'm not eating

THAT!

This is the
WORST
SUPPER
EVER!



Here is a simple program
to help your Asperger kid
learn to eat a wide variety
of nutritious foods.

They may not be the foods
you are used to eating.
But keep this in mind
as you try these ideas...

You just might learn something.

Before you start

If your kid hardly eats
anything

If she is pale,
lethargic, thin,
and listless

You need to get
emergency nutrients into her now



Shortcut

Buy instant breakfast packets.

Start small – offer a tiny amount along with supper.
Give an extra dessert as a reward for trying it.

Work up to a full glass with every meal.



In a couple of weeks,
your kid will have
color and energy.

And you can relax,
knowing that
he's not starving.

Then,
when you're ready...



RULE #1

No sauces,
gravies, and
dressings

A.K.A. **slime**



RULE #2

No spices, herbs,
parsley, or **pepper**





RULE #3

No combined foods

No burgers

No sandwiches

No pasta with sauce



RULE #4 **No junky food**

No hotdogs

No pizza

No nuggets

No pre-fab frozen food

**Don't waste your time
teaching him to eat junk.**

RULE #5

One TINY BITE.

Put it on **Plate 1**.



Fill **Plate 2** with foods she likes.



Put desserts on **Plate 3**.



Then say...



You can have
Plate 2
when you eat
Plate 1

(RULE #6 Don't back down.)



Once she can eat the New Bite
without any difficulty,
move it to Plate 2
and put a new New Bite
on Plate 1

TIP

Start at lunch
on a Saturday
so you have all day
to wait for her to eat
that first bite.

And be prepared to wait
a long time.



Offer incentives
like extra desserts.

Offer to cut the bite
into as many pieces
as he wants.



Offer a fork so that
he doesn't have to touch it.



Be encouraging and positive.
This is hard for your kid.

For older kids

Get him involved in the decisions.

What does he really want?

A new computer game? A book? A trip?

Let him earn points toward this prize.

Every person has their price.

Find out what your kid's price is

and pay it.



How long will it take?

It depends.

About three days for each new food.
It may take several weeks to go through
all the foods you want to introduce.

Remember, you are going
just one bite at a time.

Getting Started



Start with fruits.

1. One **grape**
2. One **canned orange wedge**
3. One small dice of **apple** (peel removed – you can introduce peel later on)
4. One small slice of perfectly ripe **banana**
5. One small dice of **pear** (peeled)
6. One dice of **canned peach** (no sauce)
7. One teaspoon of **applesauce**
8. One half **cherry** (pit removed)
9. One **raisin**



DELAY OR AVOID sour-sweet fruit (**pineapple, grapefruit, tangy grapes, most berries, kiwifruit**)



Move on to vegetables.

1. One pea
2. One 1-cm piece of fresh green bean (lightly steamed)
3. One thin slice of baby carrot (raw)
4. One 1-cm square of red pepper (raw)
5. One 1-cm square of broccoli stem (peeled, lightly steamed or raw – avoid the heads for now, since they have too much texture)
6. Carrot “worms” (grated carrot)
7. One small piece of iceberg lettuce
8. One 1-cm piece of snowpea (string removed)
9. One tsp vegetable cocktail juice



AVOID: strong-flavored vegetables such as tomato and celery.

Also avoid corn – it’s low-nutrient and not even a vegetable at all.

Then easy proteins.

1. One **peanut**
2. One **cashew**
3. One **kidney bean** (canned, rinsed)
4. One **romano or pinto bean**
5. One **chick-pea**
6. A thin smear of **refried beans** on a small wheat cracker
7. A thin smear of **pâté** or **liverwurst** on a small wheat cracker or a spoon
8. A thin smear of **peanut butter** on a small wheat cracker or a spoon
9. One teaspoon fruit-flavored **yogurt** (no bits of fruit)
10. One tsp **scrambled egg**
11. Cheese “worms” (**grated mild cheddar**)



Hurray!

Your kid is now eating
a variety of
nutrient-rich proteins!



Gradually reduce the amount of
starchy foods on Plate 2

to make more room for fruits,
vegetables, nuts, beans, and spreads.

LAST ONE...

Meats.

(You can do it!)

1. One small dice of **ham**
2. One small dice of **meatloaf** or **beef patty** (no topping)
3. One small dice of **roast chicken**, dark meat
4. One small dice of **roast turkey**, dark meat
5. One small dice of broiled or poached **salmon** (lightly salted)
6. One small dice of broiled or lightly pan-fried **fish fillet**



That's it?
We're done?



Two champagne flutes filled with bubbly champagne, clinking together. The glasses are filled with a golden liquid and numerous small bubbles. The background is plain white.

Congratulations!

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