

## Helping Picky Eaters Pick the Right Thing

Do you have a picky eater in your home? Is dinnertime a struggle? When dealing with a picky eater it's so important to be patient. You want to make sure that you, as the caretaker, are modeling by example. Children watch closely what we are doing, and they want to do the same. In essence, don't ask your child to eat steamed broccoli and carrots if you're not adding them to your diet as well! When it comes to picky eaters, remember to praise your child when they make good choices. Did they finally take a bite of brown rice? High fives all around! Make it a spectacle. This will encourage your child to do more of that behavior. Children want to be praised and awarded for their good behavior.

If you have a picky eater, offer the same food multiple times—repeat exposure is key. It could take up to 10 times of offering, let's say peas, for them to actually want to try it and maybe even enjoy it. Be patient with children, they're experiencing the world for the first time and we want to encourage them to try new, nutritious foods. If you feel like you're really struggling to make your picky eater consume nutritious foods, you could always try hiding them or presenting them in fun ways such as "ants on a log" (which is celery filled with peanut butter and topped with raisins.)

Here is a recipe for an easy tomato sauce with some special ingredients your kids won't even notice!

### Easy Tomato Sauce

#### **Ingredients**

1 1/2 teaspoon vegetable oil  
1 onion, chopped  
1/2 cup chopped carrots  
1/2 cup chopped celery  
2 medium tomatoes, chopped  
1 tablespoon garlic powder (or 2 cloves garlic, chopped)  
1/2 teaspoon oregano (optional)  
1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)  
Black pepper to taste (optional)

#### **Instructions**

1. In a large frying pan, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion, carrots, and celery and cook until soft. Stir often.
2. Add tomatoes, garlic, oregano, salt and pepper.
3. Simmer for 15-20 minutes or until thickened.
4. Serve over pasta, rice or cooked vegetables. Enjoy!
5. Refrigerate leftovers.

Why not have Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables (JSY) visit your agency? We provide free nutrition education, cooking demonstrations, and produce. Please call the nutrition educator in your county listed below.

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