

Vegetables for children

Establish healthy eating habits early - for life.

Children often take time to like vegetables - they are more likely to enjoy them when their family also eats and enjoys a variety of vegetables.

Make eating vegetables normal and expected - don't call children 'good' or make a fuss because they are, or are not, eating vegetables.

Bright ideas with Vegetables



Involve children in buying, preparing and cooking vegetables - they are then more likely to eat them. Growing vegetables can also make children more interested in eating them.



Different tastes and textures: Children may not like every vegetable, so give your child many different vegetables to try. Taste preferences change over time so keep trying.



Go with the flow: don't worry if your children refuse vegetables - continue to offer them and show that you enjoy eating them.



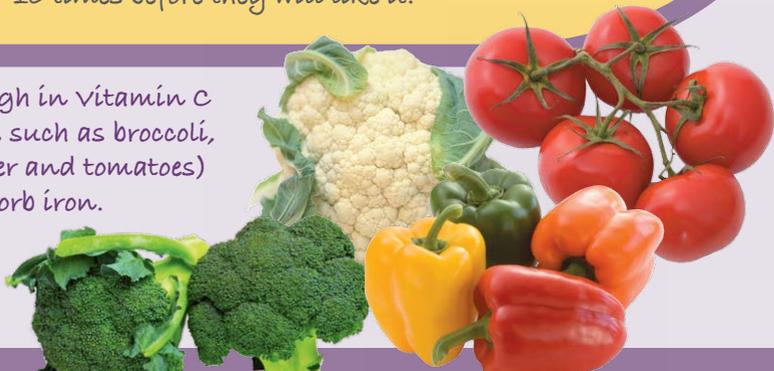
Have fun at mealtimes - happy relaxed children are more receptive to eating and to trying new foods. If a vegetable is left, try that vegetable again another time and maybe try preparing it in a different way, shape or form.



Same food for all the family, even when a meal has ingredients that your children may not like, or has flavours that are strong or spicy, still give them a little.

Keep trying - some children will need to try a new food 7-10 times before they will like it.

Eating vegetables high in vitamin C (found in vegetables such as broccoli, capsicum, cauliflower and tomatoes) helps the body to absorb iron.



Top tips



Serve vegetables in different ways - new shapes or raw as a snack with hummus, yoghurt dip, or cottage cheese.



Tortillas and tacos are a fun way for children to eat vegetables - serve a selection of sliced cucumber or celery, grated carrots, tomato wedges, etc and let the children make their own.



Try roasting capsicums, courgettes, beetroot and eggplant. Start with small amounts.



Change the texture. A chunky soup may get the thumbs down, but blended to a smooth consistency it may be a winner. Once you find a soup that children like, change the ingredients a little at a time.



Home baked potato wedges are usually popular with children. Also try kumara, parsnip, carrot or pumpkin wedges.



Most children love mashed potato.

Provide variety by adding small amounts of kumara, carrot, parsnip, swede and pumpkin to the potatoes.



Add finely chopped or grated carrots, beans, onions to curries, bolognese, lasagne or nacho sauces - often children won't realise there are vegetables in them.



For good health, eat at least five servings of vegetables and fruit each day i.e. three or more servings of vegetables and two or servings of fruits.

A serving is about a handful and everyone uses their own hand so a child's serving is much smaller than an adult's.

Choose a variety of colours of vegetables and fruits as the different colours provide different nutrients and benefits.

For more information and recipes visit vegetables.co.nz

