

Simple Steps to Helping Kids Eat More Veggies

Children and adults alike often struggle to get the recommended amount of vegetables each day. Whether it's a question of taste or time, below are some easy tips for incorporating more:

- ✓ **Make a smoothie**—check out our [Green Monkey smoothie recipe!](#) If your child doesn't like that it's green, just add some blueberries to turn it a pretty purple. You can also **make popsicles out of your leftover smoothie mix!**
- ✓ **Puree veggies and add them to soups, sauces, baked goods, and more.** The idea is not to hide them but to naturally work more of them into everyday dishes.
- ✓ **Put washed and sliced veggies and fruit where they're easily accessible to kids**—we all tend to reach for what's in our line of sight.
- ✓ **Encourage your child to "eat a rainbow"** (of whole foods) each day and turn it into a fun challenge to see how many colors both of you can get.
- ✓ **Don't call special attention to veggies or describe them as being "healthy"**—studies have shown that this can actually deter kids from eating them.
- ✓ **Don't tie eating veggies to getting to have dessert**—it sends the message that veggies are the "bad" thing you have to eat to get to the reward.
- ✓ **Get them when they're hungry**—serving veggies as an appetizer, before other foods, is generally a good strategy for helping kids to eat more of them.
- ✓ **Add lettuce, tomato, and other veggies to whole grain sandwiches or wraps** and/or throw leafy greens and other veggies into soups and pasta dishes.
- ✓ **Let kids dip**—they love to, and raw veggies are great with a healthy dip such as hummus. Or dip them in salsa or guacamole for an extra serving of veggies!
- ✓ **Swap creamy pasta sauces for sautéed vegetables or tomato sauce.**
- ✓ **Try using roasted Portobello mushrooms or eggplant in place of meat.**

Remember, certain strategies may work better than others and timing may also play a role. Try to be patient and focus on the bigger picture. The more you can maintain a relaxed attitude about eating, the happier and healthier your household will become.