



Children are most successful when meals and snacks are scheduled and offered when the child is hungry.

MEAL TIME STRATEGIES

- Ⓢ Meals should be routine and reliable
- Ⓢ Children should have 3 meals and 2-3 snacks a day
 - ❖ Snacks should be treated as mini meals and should include healthy items rather than only sweets and carbohydrates
 - ❖ Encourage interaction with all foods offered (even nonpreferred)
 - ❖ Initiate a “no thank you” bowl, encourage “kissing [the food] goodbye”
- Ⓢ Start meals with the habit of the child and other family members always being seated
- Ⓢ Limit meals to 25 minutes and snacks to 15 minutes
 - ❖ At the end of the allotted time remove all of the food and liquid and wait until the next meal or snack time (could be only 2-3 hours later)
- Ⓢ Offer 4-6 ounces of a milk/calorie beverage at each meal and snack time
 - ❖ Do not give child *any* food or beverage (except water) outside of scheduled meal/snack times
- Ⓢ Do not offer calories between meals and snacks (no liquid or food)
 - ❖ Offer only water for the 2-3 hours between meals and snacks
- Ⓢ Turn off the TV, radio and put the pets in another place in order to reduce distractions during mealtimes.
- Ⓢ Offer preferred foods just slightly different every other time – different color plate, different utensil, cut into different shape, add cinnamon...
- Ⓢ Offer soft solid foods the size of the child’s thumb for improved oral motor skill demands
- Ⓢ Offer foods with increased sensory flavors for improved bolus transit
- Ⓢ Practice serving food away from the container that the food is purchased in to reduce brand sensitivities and preferences