



Understanding Picky Eaters

Homemade Hummus Dip

- 2 cups drained well-cooked or canned chickpeas, liquid reserved
 - 1/2 cup [tahini](#) (sesame seeds + neutral flavored oil)
 - 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus oil for drizzling
 - 2 cloves garlic, peeled
 - Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
 - 1 tablespoon ground cumin or paprika, or to taste, plus a sprinkling for garnish
 - Juice of 1 lemon, plus more as needed
 - Chopped fresh parsley leaves for garnish
1. Put everything except the parsley in a food processor and begin to process; add the chickpea liquid or water as needed to allow the machine to produce a smooth puree.
 2. Taste and adjust the seasoning.
 3. Serve, drizzled with the olive oil and sprinkled with a bit more cumin or paprika and some parsley. Enjoy with pita bread, fresh vegetables or chips.

PRO TIP: If you have a “picky” eater at home, try including your child in the cooking process. Having your child help cook gives them an opportunity to interact and play with their food and they may be more interested in eating it! Also, kids love dipping, so add a fun dip to their favorite veggies or crackers.



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Picky eating is pretty common in young children. This might mean a child doesn't want to try new foods or doesn't eat food they already recognize.

Is it Just Their Age?

There are certain times during a child's growth and development—around age 2 and age 4—when it is natural for them to be pickier or more selective about food. Children may also be less hungry during these same ages because they are growing at a slower rate. The rapid growth and development children experience slows down between ages 2 and 5.

Three Ways Parents Can Help

- **Try not to label your child as a “picky eater”**
Children tend to hear themselves called something, like “quiet” or “picky,” and take on that role. They begin to think of themselves as “picky,” which can make eating new or different foods even harder.
- **Don't nag or pressure**
Nagging or pressuring a child to eat new or different foods may end of backfiring. If a child is focused on the pressure to eat, they may not be able to identify internal signals telling them they are feeling hungry or full. Nagging can actually shut down a child's feelings of hunger; something called “early satiety,” to where they don't feel hungry at all.
- **Control what you can control**
Offer foods on a regular scheduled time without the pressure to eat. Ask your child go through the motions even if they don't want to eat. Have them sit in a chair at the table for 5 minutes. Sometimes this can be enough to trigger a child to eat. Have one familiar choice in the meal so they have some feeling of control about their meal. Remember, it is a process and keep trying!