

## 5 Tips to Avoid Being a Short-Order Cook For Your Kids

One of the biggest issue mothers run into when raising their children is trying to eat healthy when their child does not like “healthy food”. The solution ends up meaning Mom cooks 2 or 3 different meals... OR mom just eats unhealthy with the kids. For most moms, the desired result would be to just cook one healthy meal for the entire family... but if the kids don’t like “healthy”, what do you do? Apply these 9 tips today and you’ll learn some strategies to avoid being a short-order cook!

### 1. Introduce Healthy Foods to Your Children Early

The earlier you teach your child or children healthy eating habits, the less resistance you will face as they grow up. The earlier the better! On the flip-side, try avoiding giving them a lot of junk food when they are young.

### 2. Introduce New Foods Slowly

Just like adults, children dislike change. Introduce new foods slowly. However, feel free to encourage them by mentioning that their favorite movie character (or any hero they have) also eats their vegetables so that they can be Strong or Tall (or whatever fits that character.). Don’t exclusively do it for the veggies though. Explain to them... “this is for your muscles.. This is so your teeth shine... this is so your brain works... etc.” Stories like this are what kids remember when they are grownups if you repeat it often. Over time, if you ask your children what fruits are for, they should give you the answer back you’ve been telling them. It’s similar to the idea of when you ask “what does the cow say?” and they say, “moo”.

### 3. Stay Persistent

Studies suggest that most children need many exposures (between 5 and 10) to try new foods. If your child refuses something, you don’t necessarily need to keep trying every day of the week, but don’t be afraid to reintroduce it once or twice a week.

### 4. Make Sure Healthy Snacks Are Available

There is an old law in Nutrition that many have forgot. It is... ***“Anything that is in the cupboards, can and eventually will be eaten.”***

It’s important that you exclusively have healthy treats, and really stay away from the unhealthy ones. If you had the choice, what would you go for? The unhealthy ones. However, if there is only healthy snacks and you’re hungry... guess what you’re going to go with! The healthy snacks! Make sure they can access them without your help. Don’t forget to be prepared when traveling in the car as well! Being unprepared can lead to a gas station visit which never ends well! Have sandwich bags around at all times so you can carry cut fruit!

### 5. Don’t Force Things

As hard as this may be, avoid making comments on what your kids are or are not eating. You’ve done your job by giving your child a healthy meal. You can’t force it down their throats... (well you could.. But that’s a sure way to make them hate it). Kids like to do the opposite of what parents say a lot of the times. Just keep exposing it to them.

**Here is another great read that is very helpful!**

<https://www.parent.com/stop-making-separate-meals-kids/>



