

Vegetables for children

Aim for
at least

4-5

servings of
vegetables
every day

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.

Bright ideas with vegetables



Involve children – in buying, preparing, and cooking vegetables. They are then more likely to eat them.



Try 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 child refuses vegetables at first, continue to offer them and show that you enjoy eating them.



Have fun at mealtimes – happy, relaxed children can be more likely to try new foods. If a vegetable is left untouched, offer the vegetable again another time, perhaps in different way or shape.



Offer the same food for all the family – even meals with unusual ingredients or stronger flavours can be offered in small amounts.



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

Top Tips



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



Most children love mash. Try different varieties of vegetables such as mashed kūmara, carrot, parsnip, swede, pumpkin or broccoli.



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.



Add finely chopped or grated carrots, beans, or courgettes to curries, Bolognese, lasagne or nacho sauces. Often children won't realise there are vegetables in them.



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



Try home-baked potato, kūmara, parsnip, carrot, or pumpkin wedges.



Change the texture. A chunky soup may get the thumbs down but if blended until smooth it might be a winner. Once you find a soup your child likes, change the ingredients a little at a time.



Children should aim to have 4 or more servings of vegetables every day (and 2 servings of fruit).

One serve of vegetables is about 75g (about ½ cup of cooked or canned vegetables, or 1 cup of green leafy or raw salad vegetables).

Older children and adults should aim for at least 5 servings of vegetables a day, so keep increasing the amount of vegetables in your child's diet as they grow. Offer as snacks, and with meals.

Encourage a wide variety of different coloured vegetables as this will provide many different essential nutrients for good health.

For more information and recipes visit


vegetables
.co.nz