



What is Normal Eating?

Normal eating is:

- Being able to eat when you are hungry and continuing to eat until you are satisfied
- Choosing foods you like and truly getting enough when you are eating — not just stopping eating because you think you should
- Being able to use some restraint in your food selection to get the right foods, but not being so restrictive that you miss out on pleasurable foods
- Giving yourself permission to eat sometimes because you are happy, sad, bored or just because it feels good
- Eating 3 meals a day most of the time, but it can also be choosing to munch throughout the day
- Leaving some cookies on the plate because you know you can have some again tomorrow, or it is eating more now because they taste so wonderful and fresh

Normal eating is overeating at times: feeling stuffed and uncomfortable. It is also under-eating at times and wishing you had more.

Normal eating means trusting your body to make up for “mistakes” in eating. It takes up some of your time and attention, but it keeps its place as only one important part of your life.

In short, normal eating is flexible. It varies in response to your emotions, your schedule, your hunger and your proximity to food.

To Learn More

- Your child's nutritionist:

- Nutrition
206-987-4758
- Your child's healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

Source: How to Get Your Kids to Eat, But Not Too Much, by Ellen Satter, RD, ACSW, Bull Publishing, 1987.

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

© 2018 Seattle Children's, Seattle, Washington. All rights reserved.