





April 2010

## Health Matters

### Mealtime Challenges

Planning family meals can be challenging when likes and dislikes, food allergies, and vegetarian and non-vegetarian family members are mixed with busy schedules. Here are some common challenges and things that you can try to solve them.

Challenge	What you can do . . .
<p>Vegetarian family member when others prefer non-vegetarian diets</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a personalized, vegetarian food guide using the “My Food Guide” link on the Health Canada website</li> <li>• Plan meals using meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu at least once a week and make large amounts so that extras can be frozen in single size serving containers for non-vegetarian meal times</li> <li>• Keep meat alternatives like veggie patties, tofu “chicken”, canned beans, nuts and seeds on hand to add to rice, pasta, salads, etc.</li> </ul> 
<p>Child won't try new foods</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to offer new foods whenever you're eating them; sometimes it takes many times before a child will try the food</li> <li>• Forcing your child to try the food isn't helpful</li> <li>• Add small amounts of the food to your child's favourite dishes, e.g. vegetables to pasta, soups or pizza</li> <li>• Introduce "new" foods to your child when other children are eating and enjoying that food</li> <li>• Get your child involved in shopping and preparing new foods</li> </ul>
<p>Child won't eat vegetables</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve vegetables at times when your child is hungry, e.g. when you're preparing dinner</li> <li>• Keep washed, ready-to-eat vegetables in the fridge for quick and easy snacks</li> <li>• Serve vegetables raw or lightly cooked</li> <li>• Offer a variety of brightly coloured vegetables</li> <li>• Purée or finely chop vegetables and put them in pasta sauce or soup</li> </ul>
<p>Food allergies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call 604-987-5752 to arrange an appointment with the outpatient dietitian; you don't need a Dr.'s referral</li> </ul>

For more tips and recipes to help build happy and fun mealtimes, visit <http://bettertogetherbc.ca>  
Parents can call 604-984-5752 to arrange a nutrition counselling appointment with the outpatient dietitian for help with meal time challenges.

If you have any suggestions for future topics, please contact Kathy Romses, Community Dietitian at 604-904-6200 or [Kathy.Romses@vch.ca](mailto:Kathy.Romses@vch.ca). If you have general nutrition questions, call **Health Link at 811** and ask to speak to a dietitian or visit [www.HealthLinkBC.ca](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca).