Overview

- Definition
- Epidemiology
- Development
- Assessment
- Management
 Definition

“An unwillingness to eat familiar foods or try new foods, severe enough to interfere with daily routines to an extent that is problematic to the parent, child, or parent-child relationship”
Figure 1 Percentage of caregivers who perceived their infant or toddler as a picky eater.

Betty Ruth Carruth, Paula J Ziegler, Anne Gordon, Susan I Barr

Prevalence of picky eaters among infants and toddlers and their caregivers' decisions about offering a new food

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http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jada.2003.10.024
Prevalence

- 50% by 24 mo
  - more likely to be older
  - less likely if higher weight for age
  - NO difference in household income, race/ethnicity, sex
- 36% of toddlers overall
- Tends to decline after 3 years of age
What does a picky eater look like?

- Less likely to eat vegetables
- Negative temperamental traits, behaviorally inhibited, anxious
- No significant overall nutrient intake. Adequate RDA
- NOT associated with eating disorder
- +/-socioeconomic class
- No association with race, gender, or sex
Feeding Goals of Development

- **Toddlers and preschool children**
  - transition to cup and utensil feeding
  - fluctuations in appetite
  - adequate iron and zinc intake
  - avoiding overconsumption of juice and sweetened beverages
  - developing routines for healthy eating and activity

- **School-age children**
  - adequate intake of fruits, vegetables, calcium, vitamin D, and fiber
  - avoidance of energy-rich/nutrient-poor snacks and overconsumption of sugar-sweetened foods and beverages
  - development of a healthy body image
Development Timeline

- Liquid → solids (6mo) → adult food (24mo)
  - 12-15mo: Wean from bottle
  - 1 year: Thumb and first finger grasp
  - 3-4 years: Sit at table. Less choking risk. Use utensils
  - 4 years: Grinding motion, food sensory
  - School age – understand nutrition concepts, help make choices, assist in food planning/preparing
Expected behaviors

- Appetite decreases at 1 year
- Small variety of foods at 2 year
- Play with food
- 3-4 years: environmental cues affect eating
History Taking

- Diet History
- Pattern of refusal
- Mealtime atmosphere
- Parent expectations
Physical

- Height/Weight
- Constipation history
- +/- anemia screen
Food for Thought

- Lactose intolerance
- Oral hypersensitivity
- GERD
- Child-parent relationship
- Limited resources
- Autistic spectrum disorder
- Unrealistic expectations
- Difficult temperament
Management

- Reassurance
- Reassurance
- Reassurance
Management

- Provide healthy food choices
- Offer variety, 8-15 times, “try one bite”
- Combine foods that your child likes with ones previously refused
- Offer foods the child can eat by him/herself (finger foods)
- Have children help prepare the food
- Add eye appeal
- Family meals, calm pleasant atmosphere
- Positive reinforcement
- Provide information, “sweet” “soft” “crunchy”
Resources

- www.healthychildren.org
- AAP
- Augustyn
Thank you!