



FOOD & EATING

Five Top Tips from parents to help your neurodivergent child with their food issues

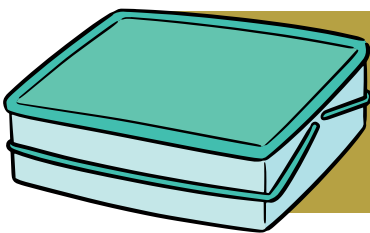


Be Aware of Sensory Differences

Many neurodivergent people have issues with sensory processing, which can affect the way that they respond to food. This means that they might be over- or under- sensitive to the smells, tastes or textures of particular foods. They may also find it difficult to tell when they are hungry or full.

Allergies and Intolerances

Neurodivergent people (particularly autistic people) can be hyper-sensitive to different foods. Two examples are lactose intolerance (a difficulty digesting lactose found in cow's milk) and gluten allergy or coeliac disease (an immune-based reaction to gluten found in wheat products). If someone is reacting badly to these foods, try using alternatives that don't contain these ingredients, and consider contacting your GP to discuss appropriate testing or referral.



Cook in batches

"When you have identified a particular food that your child likes, cook lots of it, and freeze it in containers. That way, you will always have a back-up meal."

Don't Force Food

Whether your child is neurotypical or neurodivergent, it is important that you do not force them to eat, as this might make them feel helpless and out-of-control.



Be Patient

It may feel impossible to introduce new foods and you might worry about the impact your child's diet is having on their health. Try to be patient and remember that it may take time for them to get used to new foods.