

FACTSHEET

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Eating and drinking considerations for children born with OA / TOF: 1 year and older

Children born with tracheoesophageal fistula (TOF) / oesophageal atresia (OA) may need to take extra care with eating and drinking. This resource suggests ways to help your child eat and drink safely to get the right nutrition for their growth and development. If you are worried about your child's growth, chewing or swallowing, please speak with the Surgical Lung Clinic team for support.

Healthy foods for toddlers aged 1 year and above

Children aged 1 year and above should be eating family meals with a variety of foods from the core food groups.

Breads and cereals:	Dairy foods:	Protein foods:	Fruits and vegetables:
Bread, pasta, breakfast cereals, rice, corn, etc.	Milk, cheese, and yoghurt. Breastfeeding can be continued as often as your child desires. Low fat and reduced-fat milks are not recommended before your child is 2 years old.	Meat, fish, chicken, eggs, beans, lentils, tofu, and seed or nut spreads.	Try to choose fruits and vegetables of different colours, textures and taste.

Foods and drinks to limit

Fast food and junk food:

Limit junk foods such as hot chips, pies, burgers, takeaway pizza, cakes, chocolate, lollies, biscuits, doughnuts and pastries.

Sweet drinks:

Your child's main drinks should be water and milk. This promotes good dental health. Avoid fruit juice, cordial, sport drinks, flavoured waters, soft drinks and flavoured milks. These drinks fill your child up but have little nutritional value.

Toddler mealtime behaviour:

- Toddlers love to explore and try new things. Mealtimes can be very messy as toddlers throw, squash and play with their food. This is normal and important for toddler development.
- Choosing and refusing food is a normal way for children to explore foods and show their independence.
- Toddlers may only eat a few tastes of food at some meals, and much more than you expect at other times.
- Toddlers now need less energy as their growth starts to slow down. They are usually very good at independently regulating their intake to maintain normal growth.

Tips to manage fussy eating or challenging mealtimes

- Create a mealtime routine by washing hands and setting the table before sitting down to eat. This helps prepare children for the mealtime and set expectations of them during mealtimes.
- Aim to give structure. Offer 3 meals and 2-3 snacks per day, and eat with your child whenever you can.
- Create a good feeding routine with your child by having a calm and positive mealtime environment. Focus on what they eat, rather than how much they have eaten.
- Let your child eat in their own way! This may be with fingers or utensils, a little or a lot, 1 or 2 foods, and in any order. Always supervise while they are eating. Allow your child to interact with the food as they would like as long as the food texture offered is safe and appropriate for their swallowing ability and age.
- Be consistent. Say no when your child asks for food or drinks between set meal or snack times, except for water.
- Your child may take 10 or more times to learn to be comfortable with and accept a new food. It's important to keep exposing them to new foods, especially those the rest of the family is eating.
- Avoid rewarding or bribing your child with food. This tends to backfire; causing a dislike for 'bribe' foods and a preference for 'reward' foods.

You are responsible for what, when and where your child eats.

They are responsible for how much they eat - if at all!

Further reading

11 to 36 Months Feeding Your Toddler

<https://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/how-to-feed/child-feeding-ages-and-stages/>

For parents with fussy eaters

<http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/national/resource/panicky-parents-fussy-eaters>

Dietary guidelines in pictures: Children 1-2 years

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/nutrition-fitness/daily-food-guides/dietary-guide-1-2-years>