

Picky eater?

Is dinner time a war zone at your house?
Do you fight battles with your kids over
vegetables and mac and cheese?

Picky eating is as normal as potty-training.
Even the best of parents can have a difficult
time getting their child to eat. In fact, picky
eating is one of the most common events
in children, often outgrown as the child
reaches adolescence.

But when eating behavior affects normal
development, it could be something much
more serious—a pediatric feeding disorder.

“The difference between a fussy eater and
a child with a feeding disorder is the impact
the eating behavior has on a child’s physical
and mental health,” said Dr. Peter Girolami,
clinical director of the Pediatric Feeding
Disorders Program at the Kennedy Krieger
Institute in Baltimore.

Pediatric feeding disorders are more
common than most think, affecting 1 in 10
infants and children. Some kids just don’t
eat enough calories and nutrients to thrive.

Common symptoms of a pediatric feeding
disorder are these:

- A sudden change in eating habits lasting
longer than 30 days
- Delayed development of skills needed to
feed or eat foods with greater textures
- Weight loss or failure to gain weight
- Choking/coughing during meals
- Unexplained fatigue, loss of
energy
- Disruptive behavior during
mealtimes, throwing utensils

Early diagnosis and treatment is
extremely important.

