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## MEAL TIME STRATEGIES

* Meals should be routine and reliable
* Children should have 3 meals and up to 3 snacks a day
  + Snacks should be treated as mini meals and should include healthy items rather than sweets and carbohydrates
* Start meals with the habit of the child and other family members always being seated
  + Use appropriate sized chairs: highchair or booster seat
  + Use appropriate child size utensils
  + Use straw or open cup for all liquids
* Limit meals to 25 minutes and snacks to 15 minutes
  + At the end of the allotted time remove all of the food and liquid and wait until the next meal or snack time
* Offer 4-6 ounces of a pediasure beverage at each meal and snack time
  + Do not give child *any* food or beverage (except water) outside of scheduled meal/snack times
    - No milk, juice, pop or tea at all
* Do not offer calories between meals and snacks (no pediasure or food)
  + Offer only water for the 2-3 hours between meals and snacks
* Turn off the TV, radio and put the pets in another place in order to reduce distractions during mealtimes.
* Do not be a short order cook – prepare at least 1 of your child’s preferred foods at every meal and have your child at least tolerate the other, possibly non-preferred, foods either on the table and/or on his plate.
* Practice serving food away from the container that the food is purchased in to reduce brand sensitivities