With a picky eater, mealtime can seem more like a battle than a relaxing way to spend time with your family. If waging war over vegetables has pushed you too far, don’t give up by dialing for a pizza or cruising to the nearest drive-thru. With these tips, your picky eater can also be a healthy eater.

**Lead by Example**
- As a parent, you are your child’s most important role model—especially when it comes to making healthy choices. If you eat healthy and try new foods, your child will, too.

**Stock Up on Healthy Choices**
- Buy plenty of fruits, veggies, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products.
- Keep healthy foods where they’re easy for your kids to see.

**Limit Junk Food in Your Home**
- Limit the number of foods high in fat and added sugar that you bring into your home.
- Your child won’t choose junk food if it’s not around.

**Don’t Force It**
- Forcing your child to eat certain foods will only cause stress for you and your child.
- Serve a few fruits and veggies at mealtimes. Let your kids find the foods they like.
- Encourage your kids to try everything you serve.
- Set a “one-bite rule”—Kids must try at least one bite of each food on their plate.

**Try New Foods**
- Try different textures and flavors to help your kids find foods they like.
- Instead of sliced apple, try sliced avocado or sliced kiwi.
- Instead of carrot sticks, try snap peas, sliced bell peppers, or cucumbers.
Get Creative
• Add fruits and veggies to foods your kids already like.
• Mix blueberries and oats into pancakes.
• Add sliced fruit to your child’s favorite cereal.
• Serve sliced veggies over rice or whole wheat pasta.
• Make smoothies with fresh or frozen strawberries, a banana, and low-fat yogurt.

Make Healthy Food Fun to Eat
• Cut baked chicken, low-fat cheese, and veggies into bite-size pieces. Let kids “dip” these pieces into dunking sauces. Try hummus, low-fat ranch dressing, ketchup, and mustard.
• Cut sandwiches into fun shapes.
• Give your kids the ingredients to “build” their own healthy taco or pizza.

Let Kids Help With Meals and Snacks
• Children are more likely to eat food that they help make.
• Have your kids prepare meals and snacks with you. Let them help—
  • Make the shopping list;
  • Pick out food at the grocery store; and
  • Slice, mix, bake, or cook the food.
• Your kids will have fun and learn about healthy eating.

For more information, visit:
http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov
or call 1-866-35-WECAN.