

A Clinical Treatment Guide to 10 Common Pediatric Behavioral Problems

Eating Too Much



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Eating too much

1. *Control snacking.*

In many cases, the problem with children who eat too much is the number and amount of snacks they are afforded (or obtain by other means). If you believe your child needs a snack, you should schedule a healthy snack and require some effort to earn it. If needed, a nutritionist can help with your meal plan for your child. **You should also consult with your physician on a reasonable projected weight loss program for your child prior to starting this program.** *Trying to make weight loss occur rapidly can be dangerous, and should not be considered.* Missing meals is not wise and can be dangerous for children. A reasonable (and consistent) loss of weight is preferred.

2. *Designate a child-size portion for each meal.*

Does your child take huge portions during mealtime? In addition to possibly designating smaller portions for the meal, a new rule to institute is no seconds! When your child is done with the meal, have him or her immediately walk away from the table. In effect, remove temptation to fill the plate again. It would be helpful if there is an engaging planned activity for your child immediately after mealtime.

3. *Slow down the rate of eating.*

Does your child eat quickly? Slowing down the rate of eating can bolster the desired result to eat less. By slowing down the rate of spoon to mouth, many people find that it reduces the amount of food they eat at any given meal. To accomplish this, after each bite or spoonful, your child should put down the utensil. Have your child count to 10 and then proceed to take another bite or spoonful. Additionally, after every five bites or spoonfuls, have your child drink a little bit of water or other liquid (one with few calories).

4. *Activity rewards for weight loss.*

Having your child get on a weight scale periodically is a good way to monitor weight loss (or gain). In addition to the above three recommendations, it might be helpful if your child is weighed one to two times a week, and such information is posted on a chart (like a calendar) in plain sight. Setting weekly weight loss goals in collaboration with your physician is a good start, but it needs follow-through. Having a special weekend activity conditional upon achieving the target weight loss for that week could be very helpful

(read Section IV in free downloadable ebook, Punishment on Trial, for further information on arranging consequences). **It is strongly advised to have your physician plan, monitor, and follow-up with your child's weight loss.** Ask your physician how frequently he or she would like to monitor your child's weight loss. It is imperative that a reasonable weight loss program for your child be designed and supervised by your physician. Rapid weight loss can be dangerous for children!