

# The Resourceful Mother's *Secrets to* Healthy Kids



Understand Food,  
Understand Your Child

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***You might say, "I just learned how to feed him to help him reach his full potential."*** If you can answer in that way, it is obvious that you are doing the very best you possibly can for your child.

## **Our responsibility to our children**

We have a responsibility as parents that the majority of us do not discuss. Many of us were raised by very strict parents and therefore, employ a more relaxed parenting style in raising our own children. As understandable as this is, when it comes to your child's nutrition, I implore you to be stricter.

In our household, our girls have a lot of freedom. They usually choose, with some parental guidance, what they wear, what activities they join, who their friends are, how their rooms look and how they spend their own money. When it comes to nutrition, they get to choose between the foods I offer, at which events they are going to eat unhealthy foods and how much they eat. But they eat nutritious foods every single day of their lives. Nutrition is simply too important to let children make all the decisions. I have told my girls that they mean too much to me for me to feed them badly.

I know children who eat candy every day, never touch a fruit or vegetable and whose beverage of choice is diet coke, consumed multiple times a day. These children are not being given the basics of life. When your child regularly wants to forgo eating vegetables and you let them because it's another battle you do not have the strength to fight, you are telling your child, whether you realize it or not, that their health doesn't matter.

If the job of parenting was unanimously revered as the most important job one could have and we were paid lots of money to do it well, how differently would we view our jobs as parents? How differently would we view our children? For some of us, no differently. For many of us, very differently. I invite you to view your job as revered, as the most important job in the world. You know why? Because it is.

It is our responsibility as parents not only to provide the basics of life to our children but also to help these souls develop into the happiest, healthiest and finest human beings possible. How can we do this without accepting responsibility and giving our children the proper foundation?

***The choices you make concerning what you feed your children will affect every single area of their lives. It will affect how they feel, how much energy, strength and brain power they have, how they look and whether they will age with vitality or not.***

## **Helping your child become healthier begins with you**

No other relationship sets the tone for the life experience of each individual more powerfully than the relationship between parent and child. Therefore, the real

healing of children begins with their parents. I believe in you. I encourage you to believe in yourself and your child. I've seen the incredible healing power of the human body. I've seen the amazing changes families have made to create a healthy, balanced life. It's yours for the taking. Have courage, have patience, and have faith. There is no greater accomplishment than raising a happy and healthy human being.

### **This book**

In this book, you will learn about the symptoms, conditions, and diseases caused by food and help you determine which foods are the healthy ones and which ones are the culprits for your child and why (Chapters 1-4). You will read about how to prevent, detect, minimize or eliminate reactions to food (Chapter 5). You will receive numerous ideas for feeding children healthily, with particular emphasis on the alternatives to the common allergens. Vitamins and minerals, that prevent, minimize and eliminate reactions to food, as well as improve overall health, are described in detail with helpful suggestions for getting them into your child's food or drinks (Chapter 6). When a child eats differently than the majority, a parent needs to know how to discuss these differences with their child and others, so that everyone understands the benefits of eating healthier alternatives to "regular" food (Chapter 7). Whether your child is reacting to foods or is simply eating the healthiest possible diet, you need to know how to handle eating out, holidays and special occasions, as well as travelling, so that your child doesn't miss out on any fun (Chapter 8)! Learn about a whole realm of alternative practitioners who can help minimize your child's reactions to foods and help build their immune system (Chapter 9). Lastly, our relationship to food mirrors our relationship to life. This material provides effective methods for helping your child be nourished by food (Chapter 10). There are also loads of recipes for tasty meals and snacks, devoid of common allergens (Appendix). Food sensitivities and allergies are a hidden epidemic. ***By reading the material within these pages, you will have the tools to improve your child's health for life.***



***becomes more ignored symptoms and more ignored symptoms turn into conditions. Then, often in adulthood, conditions turn into disease. The cumulative effect can be devastating.***

Anyone can react adversely to foods and the majority of people do. Believe it or not, most of you reading this book are probably suffering from physical, mental or emotional symptoms caused by undiagnosed, adverse reactions to food. It is not my intention to alarm you with this information. It is my intention to make you aware of the source of any health challenges that you or your child might be experiencing so that you may quickly restore health to the body!



**Anyone can react adversely to foods and the majority of people do.**

You may already be thinking this is not the book for you. You may be skipping ahead and seeing the words "food sensitivities" and "food allergies" and seeing that many chapters are written to help the "food reactive child". You know your child is not reacting to food. All I ask before you put this book down is that you first read the list of symptoms, conditions and diseases that can be caused by food.

### **What are some of the symptoms, conditions and diseases that can be caused by food?**

Over 200 symptoms and 50 conditions can be triggered or worsened by food. Those symptoms, conditions and disease include:

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Abdominal bloating or fullness                        | Brain fog                           |
| Acne  | Breathing difficulty                |
| Addiction to any food                                 | Brittle and splitting nails         |
| Anxiety   | Broken blood vessels under the skin |
| Apathy  | Bronchitis                          |
| Arthritis (Childhood rheumatoid arthritis)            | Bruising                            |
| Asthma  | Burping                             |
| Attention Deficit Disorder                            | Canker sores                        |
| Auto-immune diseases (e.g. Lupus, Multiple Sclerosis) | Celiac disease                      |
| Autism  | Cold sores                          |
| Backache  | Crohn's disease                     |
| Bad breath  | Chronic fatigue                     |
| Bed-wetting in children over the age of three or four | Clammy skin                         |
| Behavioural problems                                  | Clearing of the throat repetitively |
| Being easily frustrated                               | Clingy                              |
| Binge eating  | Coated tongue                       |
| Bladder infections (recurrent)                        | Colds or infections (frequent)      |
| Bloating  | Colic                               |
| Bloodshot eyes  | Colitis                             |
| Blurred vision  | Confusion                           |
|   | Conjunctivitis                      |
|   | Constipation                        |

a tightrope. On the one hand, they need to warn their child about which foods to avoid but on the other hand, they do not want to instill fear. So, what can you say to prevent them from harming themselves? This is where trust *and* communication come in. The most powerful tool we can give our children is to teach them how to listen to and respect their own bodies. *They* need to connect with their bodies enough to understand which foods make them feel good and which foods make them feel badly. Today, if I tell my daughter that she cannot have a food, she knows I am telling the truth and she doesn't question it. Parents ask me on a regular basis, "I can't believe your child listens to you when you tell her she can't have that food. What's your trick?" My children know what happens to their bodies when they eat certain foods. They trust me when I tell them which foods will make them feel poorly because they've experienced it for themselves. To show you how I reached this point, I will use my daughter, Paige, as an example.

### How to teach your child the link between food and symptoms

Paige was only two years old and had recently started school. At my girls' school, snacks were laid out on a table for all the children to indulge in whenever they liked. This is the way some Montessori schools work. Talk about the most challenging situation for a child that cannot eat regular food! For two months, Paige only ate her own snacks that I provided for her. She knew not to eat the other children's foods, however tempting they appeared. Then, she started sneaking cups of fruit juice filled with sugar and chemicals. As well, after school, she and her

#### HEALTH FACT

The most powerful tool we can give our children is to teach them how to listen to and respect their own bodies.

friend would head off around the side of the school and Paige would share her friend's snack, thinking that the moms couldn't see them. Remember, Paige was young and hadn't as yet experienced any consequences from eating the wrong foods. The second time that I saw Paige sharing her friend's snack, I asked her to stop. Not wanting to listen to me, yet looking right at me, she rammed a cookie into her mouth faster than I believed possible. Then she proceeded to grab her friend's last cookie and stuff it into her mouth just as quickly as the first. The other moms and I stifled our laughs, while at the same time, trying to control the situation. Sure enough, Paige didn't have any bowel movements for days as a result of her forays. She didn't sleep well and became pale and unhappy. Then, one morning, she started hitting the other children at school and her teacher raised it as an issue with me. That day, while driving home from school, I asked Paige if she was hitting the other children and then "Do you feel good inside when you hit other children?" Her reply, of course, was "No." I asked her if she noticed she wasn't going to the bathroom or sleeping well, either. I pointed out to her that when she doesn't feel well or hits other children, it is because she is eating foods that are bad for her. I then asked her if she would try to eat only her own foods for the next couple of days, just to see if she felt better. She agreed.

The rest of the day, I fed her organic vegetables and put supplements in her drinks and food to get her bowels moving and the unhealthy foods out of her system. She had two large bowel movements by the time she was back at school the next day. That day, Paige ate her own food and drinks and was well behaved in the classroom and at home. She continued to eliminate, started to sleep more soundly and the colour returned to her cheeks. My words to her were "Good girl! You see, you're eating your own food and you're going to the bathroom again; you're feeling happy again!" At the age of two, I was teaching my child to be conscious of her own body, to listen to its messages and know that if she didn't, there would be consequences. That is how we teach our children to understand the relationship between food and the body. It is also another way to help our children come to trust us. Most importantly, it is how we teach our children to be responsible for their own health.

You may need to teach this lesson a few times, in this way, before your child reaches a point of total trust, listening when you say, "No, you cannot have that food". Children will give you the necessary guidance on how much detail they need by their questions. Answer their many questions with short and simple statements. Sometimes your child will ask the same question over and over until they fully understand the answer. It is important to avoid overwhelming your child with words or information.

Once that incident was over with Paige, I never spoke to her about it again. We carried on with our lives, did fun things, and talked about all sorts of other matters. If you constantly speak to your child about food and the body, or your child often hears you talking about it, you will incite anxiety in your child around the issue. Always keep this fact in mind.

Helping your child make the connection between food and symptoms is something you need to communicate whenever you observe a new symptom. If you are not certain, you can discuss the possibilities with your child. Maybe your child has sore knees every time he or she eats dairy or has nightmares after swimming in chlorine. Whenever Paige had sore knees, at the young age of two, she would say, "That's because I ate ice cream". I, being most impressed, would be extremely complimentary of her cleverness. This, in turn, encouraged her to put two and two together whenever she had a symptom. "I threw up because of the corn, right Mommy?" "That's right, Paige." I would respond, my voice brimming with pride!

One day, my eldest daughter said, "Is today treat day?" I said, "No, the next one isn't until Saturday". She replied "Oh good, I didn't want another treat day for a while." She knew she didn't feel well, having had all those treats, and she didn't like feeling that way!

For children who are unclear as to how problem foods affect them, they can keep their own food and symptom journal, from age five or six onwards. This is a very effective way to teach your child how their body reacts to foods.



**We teach our children to be responsible for their own health.**



Packing some plain potato chips is also a good idea, if your child is okay with them, as flavoured chips are often served. You may want to keep some “safe” pre-cut cake or cupcakes in your freezer so you can grab some when needed, as opposed to making a cake or cupcakes for every party your child is invited to. Lastly, it would be a good idea to bring one of your child’s treats or something new to try at the party.

3. When your child is young, you will, most certainly, accompany your child to birthday parties. My advice to you is to not say a word about your child eating differently unless asked! When the other children are eating chips or candy, give your child their own chips or safe treat. Once the other children are being served their main course, give your child their version of the main course. You may hear this and think, what will everyone else think? Will it be obvious how different my child is being treated? Not at all. Even if it’s a small group of kids, I have found that the excitement in the air and the constant chatter amongst the kids and parents creates a rather chaotic atmosphere where a lot can go unnoticed. If someone does ask you what you are doing, simply answer, “My child reacts to certain foods” or “My child has food sensitivities” very matter of factly and do not elaborate while everyone, particularly your child, is listening. If a parent wants to question you about it further, ask that you take the conversation to another room so that your child doesn’t hear. Some parents are such kind souls and quick thinkers that they actually will say to your child, upon seeing his or her food, “That looks so good and what you are eating is so healthy!” Bless those souls! When this happens to us, I make sure I thank those individuals, even if I just mouth the words to them over my child’s head.
4. Lastly, parents must contend with the infamous loot bag. Many parents will prepare a loot bag for your child devoid of all food; based on the conversations you had with them prior to the party. If, however, they don’t have time to think about that detail, your excited child may come running over to you at the end of the party, waving a wonderful looking package in your face, pleading, “Can I eat this candy?” You have three choices of answer:
  - A) “Yes”—that candy may be alright for your child to consume
  - B) “Let’s talk about it in the car, okay?” In the car, you will need to remind your child how they will feel once the candy is eaten. Also, remind them of the treats already consumed at the party and the fun that was had.
  - C) “Yes—on treat day” (See Chapter #6) You will usually find that if your child knows they can eat the candy at some point, your child will be happy.

You might ask, “Why not ask the parent to make your child a special loot bag or one without candy?” and avoid this whole fiasco? If you do this, you’d be forgetting the cardinal rule. The only thing that you ask of others is that your child be allowed to eat their own food. That’s it. It’s that simple.

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