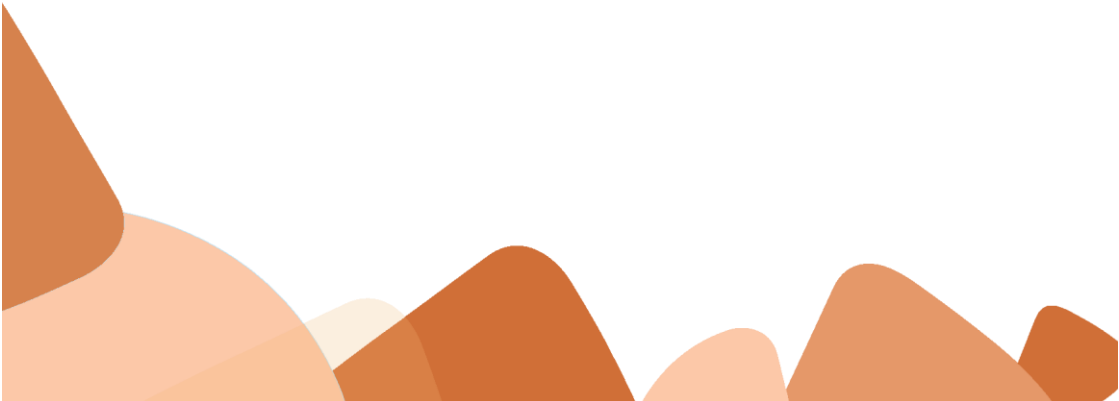




مدينة الملك فهد الطبية  
King Fahad Medical City



## Oral Hypersensitivity



When a child frequently refuses a certain food flavor, consistency, or temperature, this is known as **Food Aversion**.

This refusal could be expressed either physically or emotionally. And suddenly you find both your child and yourself overwhelmed when it comes to mealtime.

### **What is Oral Hypersensitivity?**

A strong and unnatural exaggerated reaction toward oral stimulation, which can lead to texture/food aversions, picky eating, and feeding delays.

Food aversion could appear over a specific time of a child's life, **especially**:

When introducing new flavors, type, or consistency of food to the child.

During teething

Usually it is observed when it is time to **introduce pureed food**.

This may be avoided by introducing pureed food at an appropriate age, **(4-6 months)**, and not delaying it further.

Prolonged hypersensitivity could affect the child's ability to eat and drink, therefore, it is very important to know and understand the different signs of hypersensitivity to be able to find the appropriate intervention.

### **Does My Child Have Oral Hypersensitivity (Symptoms)?**

Persistent crying during feeding.

Persistent turning of head away from food.

Persistent vomiting.

Persistent spitting out presented foodg.

Facial grimacing during meal time.

Gaggin

## What Causes Food Aversion and Oral Hypersensitivity?

---

Prematurity.

---

Developmental Delay.

---

Neurological disease.

---

Delayed introduction of oral feeding.

---

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease and persisting vomiting.

---

Cognitive delays.

---

Unpleasant oral tactile experience.

---

History of feeding tube.

---

History of intubation or suctioning.

---

Behavioral issues.

---

Forceful feeding/ undesired oral medications.

---

Physiologic impairment of pharyngeal esophageal structure leading to difficulties in swallowing.

---

Lack of mealtime structure and routine

## What Treatment Options Can Be Used?

- Tactile stimulation starting from the extremities all the way up to the orofacial structure.
- Oral stimulation of the lips, teeth/gums, cheeks, tongue, and palate with toys, Nuk brush or chewy tubes.
- Develop tooth-brushing protocol for therapy at home.
- Limbs and facial circular/tapping massages.
- Finger tapping around the lips.
- Introduce mild tastes on finger, chewy tubes, and brushes as tolerated
- Gradual introduction to new food textures and flavors to improve tolerance.



- Behavioral management of parent-child mealtime routine.
- Remember mealtimes are a social playful activity, do not force-feed!

**Be aware that ...**

Oral Hypersensitivity causes a burden on the child as well as his family members, therefore; a team consisting of a swallowing therapist, occupational therapist, dietitian, psychologist, and pediatrician work together with the child and family for an intervention plan.

**Remember to have patience and reinforce the little improvements your child achieves.**

# لأن الوعي وقاية ..

إدارة التثقيف الصحي

Communication And Swallowing  
Department

HEM2.17.000466

