

Sensory Feeding 101: What's Texture Aversion and What's Normal?

Every child reacts to food textures differently

Some love smooth yogurt but gag at lumpy oatmeal. Sensory feeding challenges happen when a child's brain over- or under-responds to how food feels, smells, or looks.

Signs of a true texture aversion

- ✓ Gagging or spitting out foods with small lumps
- ✓ Eating only purees or dry crunchy snacks
- ✓ Covering mouth or turning away when new foods appear
- ✓ Meltdowns at mealtime, not just refusal

What's normal picky behavior

- ✓ Preferences for a few favorite foods
- ✓ Temporary food "strikes" (common at ages 2–3)
- ✓ Curiosity that returns when pressure is removed

Parent tip

Expose, don't enforce. Let your child explore with hands first, describe textures ("It's squishy!"), and celebrate curiosity. If your child gags often or avoids entire texture groups for months, a feeding evaluation can help.



First Rowe offers speech and feeding services in Brooklyn, NY and Fort Lee, NJ. If you're interested in learning more about our services, visit our website or reach out.

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