# In DAILY LIFE

## I REDIRECT their focus

Structure their day with activities at home and outdoors to divert their attention and get them moving:

**LEISURE**

- **LIBRARY**
- **PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES** (scooter, walking, cycling, nature walks…)
- **ARTS AND CRAFTS** (stickers, beads, colouring, making things…)
- **CULTURAL OUTINGS** (visits, shows, museums…)
- **GAMES** (construction sets, dolls, board games…)

**SPARK YOUR CHILD'S CURIOSITY ABOUT INTERESTS OTHER THAN FOOD**

## Eating behaviour in children explained by the doctor

Eating behaviour is the result of many different factors, in particular hormones produced by fat tissue or by the gut, the brain (e.g. the hypothalamus) and environmental factors. A child eats in order to meet his or her needs. When a disease alters this regulation, the child may eat more and find it difficult to limit or control himself or herself. Difficulties with emotional regulation may also be present in certain rare diseases, which can make disordered eating behaviours worse. A comprehensive approach to patient care is therefore essential: nutritional, psychological and environmental.

*Prof. Béatrice DUBERN*

## Find out more

**PRADORT Rare Disease Reference Centre**

**Défiscience National Healthcare Network**

Feel free to talk about it with your care team


Hôpital Armand-Trousseau AP-HP

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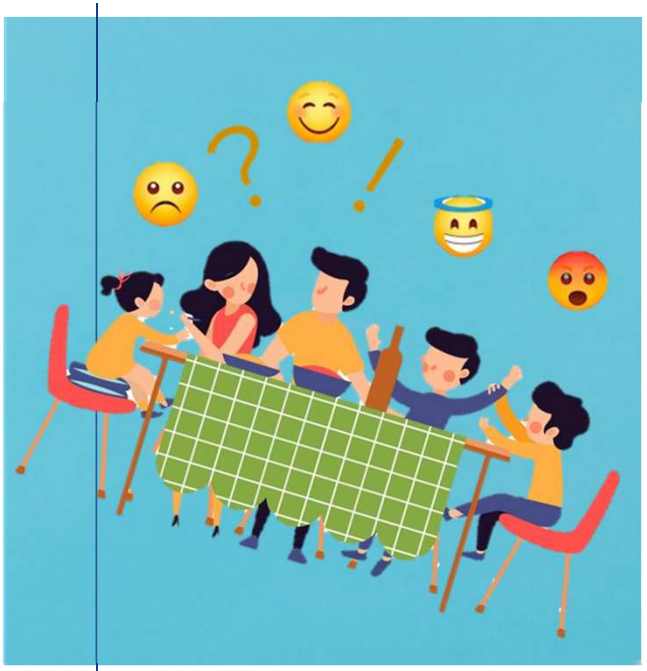
# Specific features of eating behaviour in children

## with a rare disease that carries a risk of excess weight

Recognising the signs and supporting your child to limit excess weight

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# Your child ...



## ... seems to have an obsession with food

- A **constant preoccupation**
- They struggle to accept being told no
- They actively **seek** out **food**, bargain for it or may sneak food

## ... never really feels full

- They spontaneously eat **very large amounts**
- They eat **very fast, chew little** or swallow whole
- They may feel "**hungry**" right after a meal

## ... is very sensitive to anything related to food



the **smell** of food and cooking



the **sight** of food, wherever they are and whatever the time of day



the **sounds** of meals being prepared



# As parents...

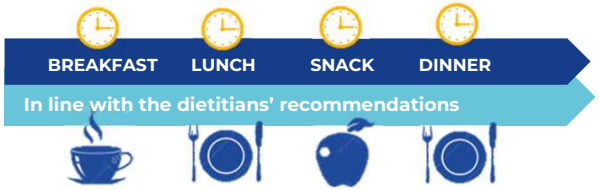
In this leaflet, we suggest some **ideas** to help you take action in daily life:

→ At **home** and **outside**
→ At **mealtimes** and **between meals**

# At HOME

## I establish a STRUCTURED EATING PLAN

Think about their **eating pattern** and the **composition** of their meals: foods, quantities, frequency, tableware.




Choose **the appropriate place** for meals to be eaten and do not allow food anywhere else.

Favour meals **at the table, without screens.**

Mark **the beginning and the end** of the meal by choosing a symbolic action for your child to carry out *(e.g. washing hands, or folding and putting away their napkin…)*

**CREATING A SAFE FOOD ENVIRONMENT IS IMPORTANT TO REDUCE YOUR CHILD'S ANXIETY**

## I reduce my child's EXPOSURE TO FOOD to limit their IMPULSIVITY

**Possible approaches if your child is strongly food-seeking:**

Do not allow any eating outside the 4 meals and **avoid eating in front of them**

No food **accessible or visible** to your child at home



Do the food shopping **without your child**

If your child is too impulsive, **lock** the cupboards, kitchen or pantry, **and explain why**

**Apply the same rules for all** members of the family

# OUTSIDE the home

## I prevent "HIGH-RISK SITUATIONS" in everyday life




**1.EXPLAIN**
the rules and boundaries to your child AND those around them

**2.INVOLVE**
everyone concerned

Ensure
**3.RESPECT**
for the decisions

**A CONSISTENT APPROACH TO FOOD FROM EVERYONE AROUND YOUR CHILD IS ESSENTIAL TO SOOTHE THEM AND CONTROL THEIR WEIGHT GAIN**

## I plan ahead for occasional OUTINGS




**FIND OUT IN ADVANCE** about the facilities and catering arrangements

**PLAN STRATEGIES** to manage non-routine situations

**AVOID**

- All-you-can-eat buffets
- "All-inclusive" packages
- Picnics and snacks

…with freely accessible food

- Activities linked to food

**PREFER**

- Meals at the table
- Being able to keep an eye on what your child eats
- Outdoor activities

**ALWAYS EXPLAIN TO YOUR CHILD IN ADVANCE HOW OUTINGS WILL UNFOLD AND WHICH MEALS ARE PLANNED, AND TELL THEM WHAT THEY WILL BE ALLOWED AND IN WHAT QUANTITIES**