



NUTRITION TIPS

Failure To Thrive

The term “Failure to Thrive” is commonly used to describe younger children who are not growing normally. They usually have a weight that is low for their age and a declining growth rate, meaning they are not gaining weight as expected. A child's growth is influenced by his overall genetic potential for growth and/or the presence of any chronic medical problems. Equally important is the need to look at a child's length, in relation to his weight.



Failure To Thrive: Causes

Amongst the conditions that can cause your child to have a diet that does not provide enough calories for normal growth are: Refusal to eat due to the presence of chronic medical problems, such as renal disease, metabolic disorders, liver disease, worm infestation,



infections or reflux.

There are many conditions that can cause an increased loss of calories such as illnesses that can trigger persistent vomiting due to intestinal

obstructions. Apart from poverty that can lead to inadequate access to food, psychological factors can also cause a child to have failure to thrive.

- Failure To Thrive: Paediatrician Evaluation.

Children with failure to thrive should have a comprehensive nutritional history evaluation done by their paediatrician. It includes amounts and types of foods that your child eats and drinks, a physical exam and a review of prior growth records to evaluate your child's rate of growth. If no medical reason is found for your child's failure to thrive, then treatment will consist of nutritional therapy. Have a schedule for meals and snacks, which should include 3 meals and 2-3 snacks each day of high calories foods with lots of nutrients.

Avoid large amounts of juices or sodas. Instead offer 3 glasses per day of Peak 123 growing up milk, which has more calories and protein and has been formulated for growing children.

- Failure To Thrive: Importance of Growth Charts.

Growth charts are useful for paediatricians to monitor your child's growth. It is important to understand that the growth charts are best used to follow your child's growth over time to find a pattern of his growth. Plotting your child's weight and height at different ages and seeing if he follows a growth curve is more important than where he is at a particular time. Factors that influence children growth include - how tall their parents and their family members are and their overall nutritional status.



► For more information on child nutrition

Visit the Olu Akinkugbe
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