

## The Truth About Convenient Pouch Foods

One of most current trends is pouched food for infants and young children. They are promoted as healthy fruits and vegetables. Children love them! They gobble them up. They are convenient and clean with no spoon needed.

### **BUT ARE THEY THE BEST FOR YOUR CHILD?**

- Food pouches are consumed through sucking, not chewing. Children need to learn how to eat. Simply sucking the goo out of a package skips out on a learning experience and a whole range of oral skills.
- Children learn through touch and being able to see and smell the food they are about to eat. This is impossible when food is disguised in pouches, blended together and hidden behind a label.
- Many children who consume an excess of puree foods for a long time become picky with solid foods later on.
- Children develop fine motor skills when they pick up their food and play with it. This is a vital way of learning about food and how to eat it.
- Many of the exciting things about eating such as the way it looks and smells are altered because children can't see the food in the pouch. They really don't know what they are eating, so they can't make proper choices in the future. Mashed banana in a packet doesn't look like banana in a peel.
- Pouches tend to be higher in calories and sugar compared to the real fruit and vegetable. They are often lower fiber, which gives you that full feeling. This means that children eat a lot of fructose in a short period of time, and are at risk for eating more than they need which can cause obesity.
- Children need to learn about portion control through trial and error. A pouched food doesn't allow them to do so.
- There is an increased risk of cavities and other dental issues, especially for children who suck on pouches for long periods of time. Pureed food tends to sit on teeth. Pieces of food have an abrasive quality that helps clean them.
- The child doesn't learn what the individual food tastes like on its own. Most food pouches offer a mix of different fruits and vegetables.
- Pouches may seem relatively inexpensive, though purchasing fruit and vegetables in its natural state is often cheaper. A lot of what you are paying for is convenience and packaging.

- Pouches are bad for the environment. The packaging ends up in a landfill.

**Resources:**

[Baby Food Pouches](#)