Picky Eater vs PFD vs ARFID Differential Diagnosis Decision Tree



Is this child's nutrition appropriate for his/her chronological age?



Picky Eater or PFD or ARFID

- Inappropriate for chronological (vs developmental) age would include reliance on a nutritional supplement, an NG or G-tube and/or being only bottle or puree fed in a child older than 12 months.
- A Registered Dietitian consultation may be required to verify appropriate/inappropriate nutrition.
- Children with micro nutrients deficiencies frequently have adequate height and weight gain, but inadequate nutrition.

Picky Eater (15-30 foods) or Typical (>30)



Is this child's chronological or cognitive/developmental age < 3 years?

• Children < 3 years don't have anticipatory anxiety/Theory of Mind



Did this child have Infant Feeding Problems?

• E.g. unable to accept bottle; difficulties gaining weight; repeated arching and/or crying during meals; fussy eater; irritable eater; problems transitioning to purees, finger foods, or table foods; difficulties transitioning to a cup?



Does this child have a skill deficit?

 To diagnose ARFID, a multidisciplinary evaluation of this child's feeding skills is required because skill deficits are an EXCLUSIONARY criteria for ARFID.

Picky Eater or PFD or ARFID



Did this child USED TO eat normally and now has an extreme worry about germs, vomiting or choking OR recently had a physical trauma around the face/ mouth to where they now cannot eat with their family or peers?



Does this child have chronic PFD that is not resolving with appropriate medical, nutritional and/or skills-based treatment and mental health support for the family?



 May need to add other therapies and/or a different treatment approach may be needed if child is already in therapy)





PFD/Unresolved PFD