

Forcing food could lead to negative food associations

• from TRY on page 18
prefer the taste of raw vegetables to cooked ones.
If they do, that's how to serve them.

Along the same lines, don't wage war during meal times.

Parents do their part by simply providing a variety of good, nutritious foods for snacks and meals. After that, let the kids take over.

In other words, don't force them to eat what they don't want to. The less pressure they feel, the more likely they are to look forward to meal times — and that means the more likely they are to eat.

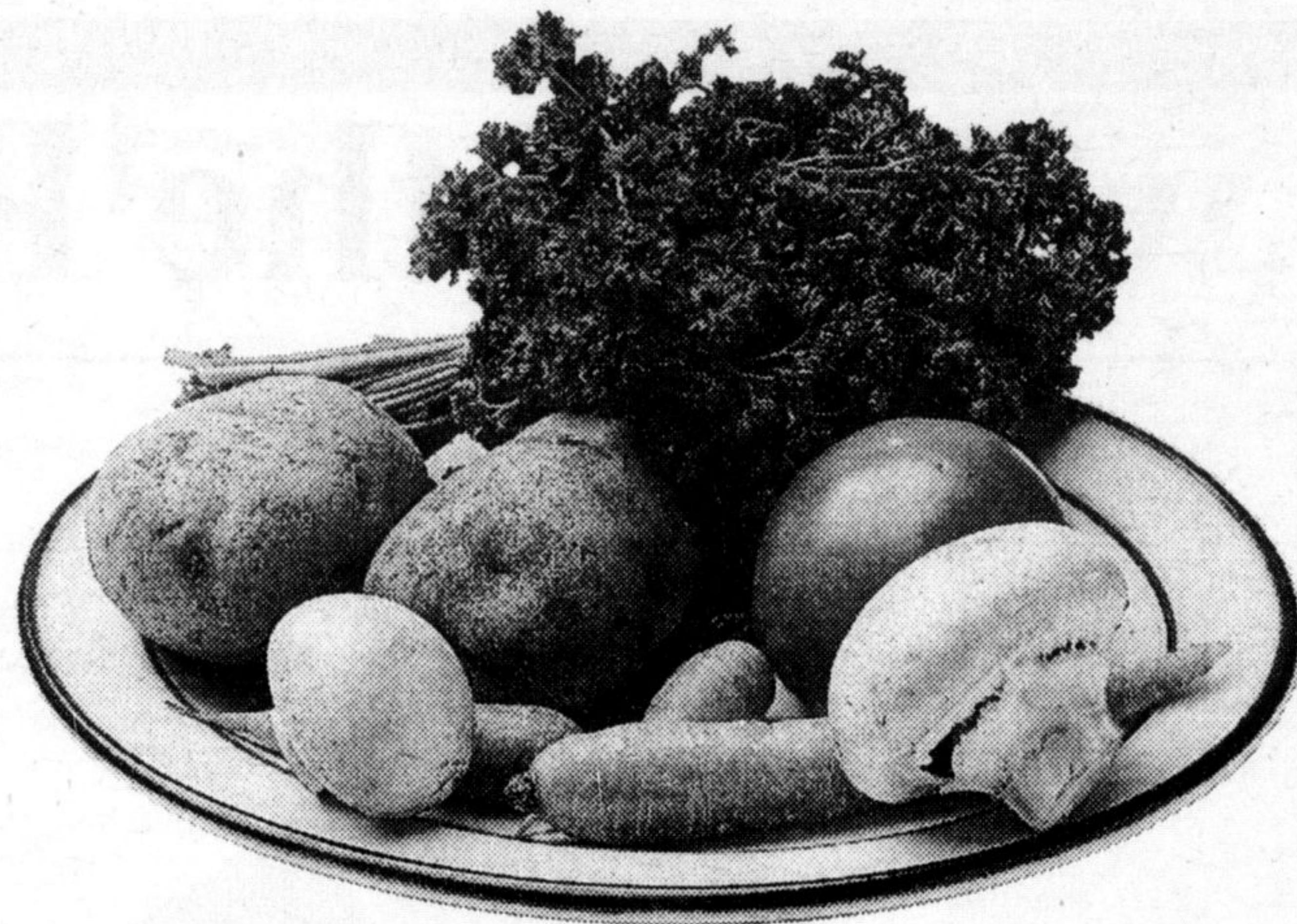
Bribery no good

And forget bribery. "Eat all your carrots and you can watch TV" doesn't work in the long run. Like forcing children to eat when they don't want to, it leads to negative food associations that can be tough to crack.

Equally important, eat with them. Kids are kids and that means they like being around their parents. Cut out distractions like the television set and turn meals into a family time.

And keep in mind that kids like routine.

They may be suspicious of new foods and balk at tasting them, but hardy parents should take that as a cue to just keep trying.



Research has showed it can take up to ten exposures before kids accept a new food.

So just slap it on their plates and urge them to take a tiny taste. But don't force the point, and don't be afraid to cheat a little.

Kids are tuned into sweet tastes — so sprinkle a little sugar or dribble some maple syrup on vegetables to enhance their appeal.

And don't go overboard right away — just a teaspoon or so of a new healthy food on a child's plate is enough. Remember, they can always ask for seconds.

Increasing acceptance of new foods can open up new and creative avenues of communication.

Even small children can get involved in some aspects of the buying, preparing and cooking of new foods.

Not only will this effortlessly up their exposure to it, but kitchens are age-old places for families to open up to one another.

All worth it

If all that seems like work, it's worth it, since even young kids can develop early signs of heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and obesity.

For more help and to discover recipes that appeal to both kids and adults, log on to www.5to10aday.com.

Vials could be life-saver

In the event of an emergency, health professionals should know a patient's medical history cold.

And the simplest way is through an emergency information vial to be stored in the home refrigerator.

The vial is designed to hold vital health information including current medications. That way emergency health workers can act on sometimes crucial personal and medical information even when the patient is unable to speak.

The idea is to enable seniors and others who are medically fragile to live alone longer.

"This project is one of many resources

available to assist seniors to continue living independently in their own homes for as long as possible," said Mary Siegner, community relations manager at the Community Care Access Centre of Halton.

The vials can be picked up at seniors' centres, clubs and community support agencies as well as police departments.

Community health and information fairs also carry the vials.

Funding for the program has come from local MPP offices as well as fire, ambulance and police stations. Cash was also received from the Healthy Community Fund.

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