

EATING UTENSILS

Eyas Landing & Blue Bird Day

Price

\$5-\$25

Resources

Autism Speaks: Parents seek advice: 7-year-old with autism no longer uses utensils

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/blog/2015/12/04/parents-seek-advice-7-year-old-autism-no-longer-uses-utensils>

CerebralPalsy.org: Eating Utensils for Children With Cerebral Palsy

<http://www.cerebralpalsy.org/blog/eating-utensils-for-children-with-cerebral-palsy>

What are they?

Adapted eating utensils are a variety of spoons, forks, and knives that have been changed to assist a child with eating independently. They come in many varieties including:

- Weighted handles
- Built-up handles/Adapted grips
- Curved handles
- Vibrating handles

Each offers a different benefit to children who are having trouble eating by themselves. Eating is a difficult task to learn that incorporates fine motor skills, visual motor integration, grip, oral motor skills, sensory tolerance, and much more. Adapted eating utensils can reduce the challenge to any one of these areas to allow a child to feed themselves independently.

Why use them?

Since eating is so complex, modifying the eating utensil can make the task less challenging.

- If your child has difficulty knowing where their body is and appears clumsy, a weighted utensil or vibrating utensil may be appropriate. Weighted utensils increase the amount of input to the hand which increases awareness of where the hand is in space.
- If your child has weak hands or difficulty with fine motor tasks, a built-up handle or adapted grip may help. Built-up handles allow for a gross grasp to help a child hold onto the utensil. This reduces the fine motor challenge of eating so your child can be successful.



- Eating involves visual motor integration of bringing the hand from the plate to the mouth without dropping food. Curved utensils make it easier for a child to bring the food from the plate to the mouth without turning the fork or spoon. This makes the child more successful while self-feeding.

Who can use them?

Adapted eating utensils can be used by a variety of children. The goal is to remove some of the demands in an area the child has trouble with in order to create success. Each type of eating utensil reduces sensory, fine motor, or visual motor challenges to the child. Speak with your therapist to discuss which eating utensils may be appropriate for your child if you have noticed they have difficulty eating.

Types of Eating Utensils



From left to right, top to bottom: curved eating utensils, built-up and weight eating utensils, vibrating spoon, adapted grasp spoon.

