

# The Adventures of Sensory Avoider Allie



Allie Only Eats Three Foods

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Hi! I am Allie,  
I am 6 years old.



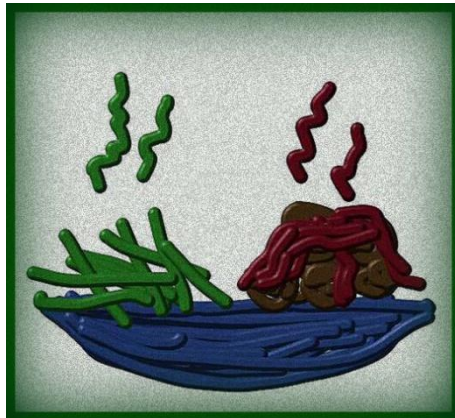
I think I feel things different than  
my friends because I am always  
worried about what is coming next  
and no one seems to understand me.

My brain and body have a hard time feeling good about a lot of things in my life. Some things hurt me and other things scare me. I get frustrated and sad because others do not understand how I feel and don't know how to help me.

Here is my own story about food. I don't really like food too much.

I never have.

I don't like the smell of most foods. I don't like the taste of most foods. And I don't like how most food feels in my mouth when I chew it.



I really only like three foods...apples,  
yogurt (no chunks), and pretzels. I  
also drink almond milk and water.



I only like one kind of yogurt, the one with the cow on it and only the strawberry flavor. I only like one kind of pretzels and they have to be sticks, not twisted. And the apples have to be Fuji apples, nice and crunchy and a little sweet and a little sour. Sometimes my mom tries to change on me, but it doesn't work.

So why does no one understand me?

Why are my parents and grandma always saying “Just try it, you might like it!” or “Just take one bite and you can be done!” ?

I try to tell them no thanks as nice as I can. But they don't seem to listen.





I just want to hide under the kitchen table or run away! Just looking at the mashed potatoes makes me gag!



Sometimes it helps if I don't look at the food or if we are talking about something interesting at dinner rather than the food or a fun thinking game that distracts me.



It also helps when I have my heavy blanket in my lap and I also like it when my mom lets me sit on my big hippity hop ball at lunch time, instead of using a chair.



I always feel better at dinner time if I play outside on the swing set right before dinner. For some reason this makes me feel more calm. Then when I get called in for dinner, I can handle the smells of the other food better.



I also like to play my harmonica and  
take big deep breaths while I am  
swinging.



This makes my brain feel good.

When my mom is cooking, I usually have to stay far away from the kitchen because the smell sometimes makes me shiver inside. And I **KNOW** she is not making one of my three foods, because I can smell it.



Sitting at the table for dinner is hard enough, since even if I do get to have my apples and yogurt, I have to LOOK at the other food since my parents always put new stuff on my plate next to my apples and yogurt. And a lot of times it doesn't smell so good either. I think it would really help if I had two plates! One with the foods I really like and plan to eat for sure.

Then maybe the other new foods  
could be on a different plate next to  
it! That way I don't have to look at  
or taste it unless my brain is ready  
AND I don't have to worry about it  
touching my yummy apples and  
yogurt!



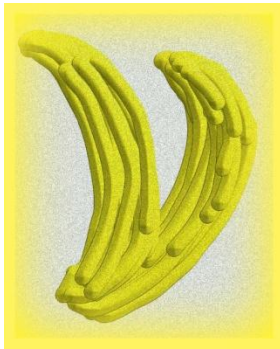


There are two things that my grandma has me do at her house when I eat dinner...she lets me put my napkin over the new foods on my plate. This really helps A LOT! Then I can just peek at them if I am ready to talk about the new foods or touch or taste them.

The other thing that helps at my grandma's house is she loves candles, and also has a nice smelling candle burning at dinner...this really helps me too! That reminds me! I need to tell my mom about this idea!



Oh I forgot to tell you! I used to eat chocolate pudding...until my grandma tried to hide small chunks of banana in it!



That was the WORST idea ever! It was so unexpected when I felt that banana chunk in my mouth! It was horrible...I threw up. I don't think I will eat chocolate pudding again.

It seems like food is everywhere I go.  
I mean everywhere!

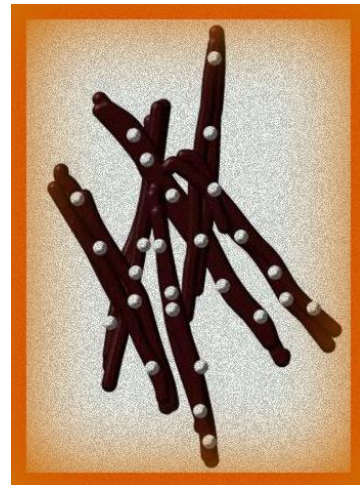


Even when we go to the park,  
someone is eating a ham and cheese  
sandwich and I can smell it and when  
I think about what it must feel like in  
my mouth it makes me feel weird.

Now that I am in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, I go to the lunch room. It is soooooooooo hard! My mom packs my lunch with my three foods everyday, but sometimes I can't even eat it because I am sick to my stomach from the smell of the school pizza and I can only imagine how bad it would taste.



And snack time in the classroom is hard, since the teacher and my friends don't understand why I won't try the snacks each day. I always just have my pretzels. I like it that way!



I only like to go to one of my friend's houses because her mom understands me. She is so sweet to me and always has yogurt, pretzels, and apples with a glass of milk when I go over to play. This makes me really happy.



I REALLY don't like going out to eat with my parents. Even when my mom packs my three foods. It seems like the restaurant is so much worse. So many new and strange smells and it is also really loud which makes it worse I think.

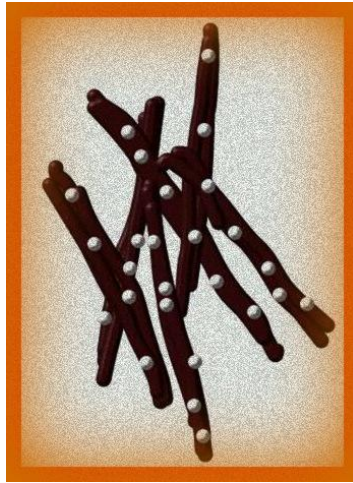


And when my parents have people over for dinner I would rather just be alone and play in my room. When company comes over, I don't even feel like eating my favorite foods.



I am not really hungry. May I go to my room please?

Now if only I could get my parents  
and everyone else to understand me!



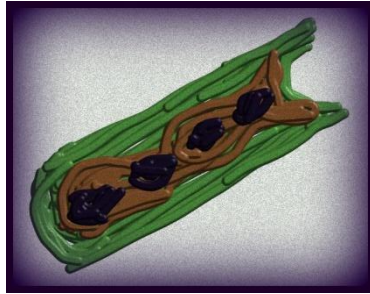
Food is not too important in my life.  
I really am happy with just eating my  
three favorite foods.

I really think if everyone would stop forcing me, I would want to try on my own. This has happened a couple times....

One time for lunch I decided to dip my apple in peanut butter and I liked it! I remember that I was feeling really happy that day, and my brain was feeling good and strong.

The only bad part was that after that wonderful day of peanut butter, my mom started including everything you could think of with peanut butter on my plate! It made me not like it again.





I think it is fun to play with food,  
like make celery boats with raisins  
for people in the peanut butter. We  
did this at school one time for snack  
and it was so much fun!



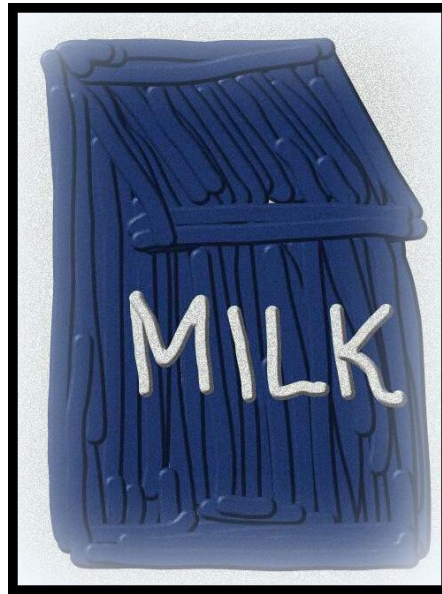
And the best part is this lady came in to help us and she understood me!

I think someone said she was a therapist who helps kids. I don't know, I really just care that she understood me! She didn't make me try it! Not even one bite!

It seems like when I get a chance to play with food and explore it, I feel more calm about it. As long as I am having a day when my brain feels good and strong.

One other time that I played with food, I had a babysitter who wanted to make playdough made of honey, peanut butter, and powdered milk. It was so much fun! I loved squishing it and the smells didn't even bother me! I think because the babysitter was just having fun with me, and not worrying about me eating it or tasting it.

Well, maybe one day I will eat more food. But I seem pretty healthy, at least that is what my mom says. I do drink almond milk and water.



Drinks don't bother me as long as they are not too cold or too hot.



But for now, I just want everyone to love me for me, and not worry so much about what I eat. If everyone would stop talking about it, maybe I would try something again! But my brain and body have to feel ready to do it, and feel strong about it.

# The End!

