

Getting enough food



World Vision

When your stomach grumbles and you get an empty, tired feeling, your body is telling you it needs food. If you eat something you feel better because your body has the fuel it needs to keep going. But what happens if there's no food around or you can't afford to buy it?

Our bodies need the right amounts of different foods to be healthy. When children don't get enough food they feel tired and lack energy to play and learn. They stop growing properly and are shorter than they should be for their age.

Hunger also slows the growth of their brain and makes it hard for them to learn. They get sick more easily because their bodies can't fight infection. As they become weaker, their muscles start wasting so they look very thin. Eventually they may die from something like dehydration caused by severe diarrhoea.

Hunger is not always easy to see

Read about Grace, Dilsia and Al Amin and talk about the problems they faced getting enough food.



Dilsia in East Timor

Dilsia is 5 years old. She is at the World Vision nutrition centre being weighed and measured. Her mother goes to classes where she learns how to prepare nutritious meals using local food that is cheap and easy to get. She tries to feed her children three times a day but they don't have rice very often. Dilsia is 94.5 centimetres tall and weighs 12 kilogrammes. Her upper arm measures 11.4 centimetres around it. This means she is still not getting enough of the right food but she is much healthier than she used to be.

See where Dilsia fits on these [growth charts](#) for Kiwi children.

Grace in Swaziland

Grace is in her first year at primary school. She came to school hungry because her mother was too sick to cook meals. Grace was hungry and couldn't concentrate so the teacher let her sleep. Fortunately her school has a lunchtime feeding programme where she'll get a cooked meal. Many schools have started feeding programmes to help children who come to school hungry.



Al Amin in Bangladesh

"I am 6 years old. My mother works hard to look after my brother and me. But since I was a baby I haven't had enough food and I was hungry a lot. Sometimes we only ate one meal a day so I didn't grow very well. A year ago, we got help from World Vision and they gave us extra food. My mother learned how to cook healthy food that doesn't cost much. I wake up at 6 in the morning and eat rice with spinach. I like apples but I haven't had one for a long time."

