

Pediatric Feeding Disorders Program at Kennedy Krieger Institute

Who We Are

The Pediatric Feeding Disorders Program at Kennedy Krieger Institute offers a full continuum of care, including inpatient, day treatment, and outpatient treatment services. We emphasize an integrated, interdisciplinary, and collaborative approach through patient care, research, and administrative services to accomplish our mission. Our methods have become a national standard in the treatment of feeding disorders.

The program is unique in that we combine the medical expertise of gastroenterology with the therapeutic techniques of behavioral psychology, speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, nutrition, and social work.

Who We Serve

We treat infants, children, and adolescents who have a variety of feeding issues, including:

- Gastroesophageal reflux disease
- Failure to thrive
- Esophagitis
- Food allergies
- Feeding tube dependence
- Oral-motor dysfunction
- Food refusal
- Oral sensory issues
- Tantrums at mealtimes

We also specialize in treating children who have feeding challenges along with other disorders or concerns, such as autism spectrum disorder, Down syndrome, or premature birth.

Our Approach

The Pediatric Feeding Disorders Program offers a continuum of services that includes a Feeding Clinic, two intensive therapy programs (Inpatient and Day Treatment), and outpatient services.

Feeding Clinic: Children receiving services in the Pediatric Feeding Disorders Program typically begin their assessment through the outpatient Feeding Clinic, where representatives from multiple disciplines meet with the child and caregivers to conduct an initial evaluation. Based on this assessment, the team will recommend appropriate services. These services could include inpatient, day treatment, and outpatient.



Intensive Feeding Programs: The Intensive Feeding Programs at Kennedy Krieger provide therapy multiple times daily for consecutive days to treat a child's feeding disorder.

Inpatient services are recommended for children with severe feeding difficulties (e.g., failure to thrive, vomiting, G-tube dependence, total food refusal), so that the team can conduct close medical assessments, nutritional monitoring, oral motor assessments, and intense behavioral interventions.

Day Treatment services are usually recommended for children whose medical status is stable, but mealtime behavior is sufficiently problematic to warrant more intensive treatment than what is offered through outpatient services.

Outpatient services: Outpatient services are recommended for children whose nutritional status is not severely impaired, yet who engage in problematic behavior at mealtimes. These children are usually seen by behavioral psychology once or twice per week, with the majority of the intervention implemented by caregivers in the home. Oral motor therapy is also available on an outpatient basis through speech and occupational therapy for children who may have skill deficits that are preventing them from eating a wide variety of foods and textures.

We are all born with great potential.
Shouldn't we all have the chance to achieve it?



Kennedy Krieger Institute
UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

Our Team

The variety of factors contributing to a pediatric feeding disorder demand a coordinated effort from a team of experts assigned to the child's care. The Pediatric Feeding Disorders Program uses an interdisciplinary team approach to evaluate and treat the child's feeding difficulty. Our team includes these specialists:

- Pediatric gastroenterologists
- Developmental pediatrician
- Nurse practitioners
- Behavioral psychologists
- Clinical specialists
- Behavior data specialists
- Developmental playroom specialists
- Speech-language pathologists
- Occupational therapists
- Pediatric nutritionists
- Social workers

Our Success

During the fiscal year ending July 30, 2015, 17 children were treated in our inpatient unit, 53 children received day treatment services, and 254 children received outpatient services through the Pediatric Feeding Disorders Program. Children ranged in age from 1 to 16 years, with an average age of 4. Patients admitted to the inpatient or day treatment programs received treatment for an average of 41 days.

Our program has a proven record of treatment success and patient satisfaction*:

- 94% of goals set at admission were met by discharge.
- 91% of patients met or exceeded their goals for oral intake.
- 97% of patients met or exceeded their goals for increasing food variety.
- 91% of patients indicated overall satisfaction with the program.

*Data is from fiscal year 2015

“We know that you probably hear this all the time, but when we came to the feeding program we were running out of options. With the persistence and proven techniques, along with the highly trained and educated staff, we were able to push through our son's extreme level of resistance. The staff worked wonderfully together as a team and were able to get him eating foods that we could only dream about.”

-Parent

Contact Information

Pediatric Feeding Disorders Program at Kennedy Krieger Institute

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call **443-923-2740**, or toll-free at **888-554-2080**. TTY: **443-923-2645** or Maryland Relay 711

FeedingDisorders.KennedyKrieger.org

Clinic Location

707 North Broadway
Baltimore, Maryland 21205

Kennedy Krieger Institute provides care that preserves cultural, psychosocial, spiritual, and personal values, beliefs, and preferences. Care is free from discrimination based on age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression including transgender. We encourage patients and families to become active partners in their care by asking questions, seeking resources, and advocating for the services and support they need.



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