



GCSE

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**ENGLISH/ENGLISH LANGUAGE
FOUNDATION TIER
UNIT 1 (READING)**

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Resource Material

Boy of 15 who eats nothing but jam sandwiches



His daily bread: Craig Flatman with a week's supply of meals

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Fussy baby turns into a towering teenager who still can't face his greens

At 6ft 2in and with a flashing white smile and a thick shock of hair, Craig Flatman appears the picture of health and enjoys nothing more than a game of football with his mates.

But the strapping 15-year-old exists solely on a diet of jam sandwiches. He has refused to eat any meat, fish, fresh fruit or vegetables since he was tiny. So while his family sit down to fresh, nutritious meals, he has sandwiches made from white sliced bread and margarine with strawberry, raspberry or blackcurrant jam (without bits).

He also drinks two pints of semi-skimmed milk a day. His mother, Almira, 42, buys four loaves of bread and a 1kg jar of jam every week to make the five rounds of sandwiches Craig gets through for breakfast, lunch and dinner. He supplements these with a bowl of chocolate cereal and a slice of chocolate cake every day.

Over the years, he has managed to vary his diet marginally, sometimes spreading his jam into rolls instead of bread.

Craig said, "I never get bored of jam because I like the taste so much. My mum and dad have tried everything to get me eating other things but nothing seems to work. I begin to feel sick if I put anything else into my mouth. It is a shame because I would love to eat things like burgers and chips."

His worried parents went to a dietician who examined Craig's eating habits but said he was receiving enough protein and sufficient vitamins and minerals in his unusual diet to remain healthy. They also arranged for him to go to the Nuffield Hospital in Ipswich to have tests to see if there had been any long-term damage to his body. Consultants there were surprised to see that the tests showed him to be in excellent health.

At a healthy 11 stone, his bizarre diet has certainly not affected his weight. However, for the sake of his long-term health, one doctor suggested he take vitamin supplements and see a psychologist to encourage variety in his diet.

His mother and father Alan, 41, eat a normal diet with plenty of meat and vegetables. His 13-year-old sister Amy, however, has declared herself a vegetarian. Mrs Flatman first became concerned about Craig when he was sick after she introduced him to solid foods as a baby.

Doctors told her to persevere but he rejected everything until his grandfather made him a sugar sandwich when he was nine months old. Mrs Flatman fed him these for a month until he started eating chocolate spread sandwiches instead. She constantly tried to give him proper food but he refused everything. By the time he was four, Craig had tired of chocolate spread and asked to try jam. Seventy thousand jam sandwiches later, he has never looked back.

At seven, his parents sent him on a six-month course for youngsters with eating disorders at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital in London. But they stopped the treatment because he kept being sick.

Mrs Flatman said at the family home in Stowmarket, Suffolk, "He would gag on anything they tried to give him, even things children usually enjoy like chips or baked beans. I've virtually given up trying to change him now. His diet does not seem to have done him any harm and has not affected his growth. He has perfect teeth with no fillings and has never been ill apart from childhood things like chickenpox."

A spokesman for Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital said, "We believe his problem could be due to a fear of food, probably going back to when he first started eating solids as a baby and gagged on some lumps."