

Volume 2

Great Lunches for Our Kids

Do you ask yourself?

How can I provide a healthy lunch my child will enjoy eating in 20 minutes at school?

How can I make lunch preparation easier?



Working together so lunch will be enjoyed

When our kids help to choose their food, they are more likely to eat it rather than throw it away or trade it.

How much choice should we give our kids?

Our job is to provide healthy meals.

Our child's job is to decide how much to eat.

We can talk to our kids and prepare a list of healthy foods they like. Keep looking for new ideas. Their favourite foods may change.

We are often pressured by our children, media ads or others, to buy convenience foods high in fat, salt and/or sugar. We should limit these foods, even if our children say all the other kids are eating them.

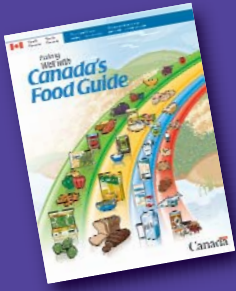
What do they enjoy eating?

Children like plain foods they can eat quickly or with their fingers. Avoid messy food. Simple lunches take less time to make and eat.

Kids love 'crunchy' foods. Try different cut up vegetables and fruit. Offer whole grain breads, crackers, rice cakes and cereals .

Go to www.healthyeatingpeel.ca for more ideas

If children help make or pack their lunch, they are even more likely to eat it.



What's in a Healthy Balanced Lunch?

Choose healthy foods from at least 3 of the 4 food groups from Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide. Some choices kids enjoy include:

Vegetables and Fruit

Yummy Vegetables (we all need to eat more)

- **Fresh** celery, cucumber, baby carrots, pepper strips, broccoli, cauliflower and tomatoes
- **Cooked** in a stir-fry, spaghetti sauce, lasagne and soup, or alone roasted, baked or boiled

Delicious Fruit

- **Fresh** apples, oranges, bananas, pears, grapes, kiwis, mango, cantaloupe and seasonal fruit
- **Canned**, jarred or frozen fruit that are packed in their own juice and with no added sugar
- **Sauces** (example, apple sauce) with no added sugar
- **Juice** (avoid punches, cocktails or drinks)
- **Dried** fruit like raisins, cranberries and 100% fruit rolls that contain no added sugar or fat

Grain Products

- **Rich variety of whole grains:** bread, buns, bagels, pita, crackers, noodles and naan
- Serve rice or roti with vegetable curry or cold pizza slices
- Buy whole grain crackers or granola bars that are lower in fat and salt

Milk and Alternatives

- **Refreshing Milk:** skim, 1% or 2%
- Include a yogurt with 2% or less milk fat (M.F); either by itself or mixed with fruit
- Buy cheese that has 20% milk fat (M.F) or less
- Shake fortified soy beverages to mix the calcium and vitamin D

Meat and Alternatives

- **Favourite sandwiches** from planned leftovers and sliced chicken, roast beef, turkey, or pork
- Serve a hummus spread, lentil soup, hard boiled eggs, or beans
- Put canned tuna or salmon mixed with mayonnaise and celery in a pita pocket

Sweet Treats

- Most children enjoy a treat, but keep it small so it doesn't spoil their appetite if they eat it first
- Healthy treats such as pudding, yogurt, sweet cooked rice, canned/dried fruit, fruit-based squares, or a handful of granola are yummy
- Surprise your child with a secret note, sticker, cartoon or joke in their lunch bag
- Foods high in fat, sugar or salt can be offered sometimes (for celebrations) rather than everyday
- Sticky food can cause cavities. Suggest cleaning teeth by eating crunchy food, chewing gum, rinsing mouth with water or by brushing teeth

Thirst Quenchers

- Water is best. Try using a refillable water bottle. Keep it safe – wash it daily with soap and water
- Offer milk for lunch. Help your kids meet their calcium needs
- Give your children vegetables and fruit more often than juice
- Skip the pop, sweetened beverages, sports drinks and energy drinks



Shopping for Healthy Packaged Foods

Read the Food Label...

to look for more or less of certain nutrients

A lot...

Choose foods with **more than 15%** Daily Value (DV) per serving for fibre, calcium, and iron more often

A little...

Choose foods with **less than 5%** Daily Value (DV) per serving for fat and sodium more often

Choose foods with less than **10%** Daily Value (DV) per serving for saturated fat and trans fat more often

Nutrition Facts			
Per 1 cup (34g)			
Amount	% Daily Value		
Calories 80			
Fat 0.5 g			1 %
Saturated 0 g + Trans 0 g			0 %
Cholesterol 0 mg			
Sodium 0 mg			0 %
Carbohydrate 18 g			6 %
Fibre 2 g			8 %
Sugars 2 g			
Protein 3 g			
Vitamin A	2 %	Vitamin C	10 %
Calcium	0 %	Iron	2 %

What's in the Lunch Bag?

example,

- Apple cut in slices (dipped in orange juice to stop browning)
- Baby carrots
- Leftover chicken pieces in a whole wheat pita pocket
- Berry yogurt
- Water (for thirst)
- Small piece of paper with a joke written on it



Help your Child Succeed!

Packing healthy food may lead to:

- Greater willingness to learn
- Better ability to concentrate, remember and use information
- More positive relationships
- Fewer discipline issues
- Less sickness

Organize for easier preparation

- Know what your child wants. Keep an up-to-date list of favourite lunch choices.
- Create a lunch menu for the week, before grocery shopping.
- When cooking, plan for leftovers. Ideas include meats, pizza, dahl, chilli, boiled eggs, spaghetti and curry.
- Package food when you are less busy. Cut vegetables and fruit, put crackers in small bags and/or pack leftovers in lunch containers.
- Organize special lunch-preparation areas to help make quick lunches:
 - Fridge Shelf for prepared items - yogurt, veggie sticks, sandwiches and portioned leftovers
 - Packaged Shelf - fruit cups, pudding, juice, crackers and granola bars
 - Supply Drawer - sandwich bags, napkins, cutlery and small lunch containers
 - Container Cupboard - clean, insulated lunch bag, thermos and refillable water bottle
- Find the best time to make and pack lunches. Try while making supper, after supper before bed or when making breakfast.

Keep It Safe

Hot food Hot:

Heat your thermos container by adding hot water for a few minutes, drain it and then add your hot food.

Cold food Cold:

Use small cold packs or frozen juice boxes in your insulated lunch bag.

Clean and Safe:

Use containers that are easy to clean with soap and hot water. Store and microwave food in containers that are meant for these purposes.

Go litterless checklist

Save the environment; avoid disposable plastic, styrofoam and paper. Use:

- Cloth, nylon or thermal lunch bags
- Reusable containers for sandwiches, water and other foods
- Washable cutlery
- Cloth napkins

For more nutrition information,
please call Region of Peel – Public Health at 905-799-7700.
www.healthyeatingpeel.ca

May be reproduced without permission provided source is acknowledged.

 **Region of Peel**
Working for you
Public Health