Cooking up Some Fun!
For Parents and Caregivers of Young Children

★ Fun, Simple Recipes
★ Meal Planning Tips
★ Nutrition Guidelines

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Public Health
Introduction

This booklet is for parents and caregivers of children one to six years of age. It includes helpful tips for meal planning, simple meal ideas and recipes which will help you and your family develop healthy eating habits.

Children under the age of six are always learning. What they learn in these early years will last a lifetime. You are your child’s most important role model. Provide a positive example by choosing healthy foods for yourself and eating together as a family. Mealtime rituals vary from culture to culture and family to family, but no matter the culture or family, a child’s feelings about food can affect every aspect of his or her life.

Your goal as a parent, when it comes to feeding your children, is to ensure that they grow to be healthy and enjoy eating. You can help them enjoy eating a variety of interesting and nutritious foods by enjoying them yourself. You can help your children feel good about themselves by accepting that healthy kids come in all shapes and sizes.

To ensure that your children come hungry to the table, encourage them to be physically active and provide only water between scheduled meals and snacks. Encourage a positive attitude towards physical activity by not using it as a reward or punishment. Be present and actively participate in physical activities with your children. Limit screen time to less than one hour per day for children between two and four years of age and no more than two hours per day for five and six year olds. Screen time is not recommended for children under two years of age.

Instead of your children watching TV or playing video games while you are making meal preparations, get them involved. This will help them to enjoy cooking as they get older. Children love being in the kitchen with you and working with food. When children are young, find tasks that are easy and safe for them to do. As children get older they can become more and more helpful. Older children can do most of the tasks for simple recipes and you can be the assistant. The main attraction for the child is being with you. Make it fun and even a picky eater will take more of an interest in the food that he helps prepare.

*In addition to solid food, you may still be breastfeeding your child. Breastfeeding is the healthiest choice for your child and should be done exclusively from birth to six months. You can keep breastfeeding when you introduce solid foods at six months and continue breastfeeding up to two years and beyond.

Parents who have a child under the age of one year can refer to Feeding Your Baby: From Six Months to One Year.
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Tips for Healthier Mealtimes

Parents are responsible for:
What, when and where food is offered.

Children are responsible for:
How much they eat, and whether or not they eat.

★ Eat at the table together as a family
★ Keep the TV turned off at mealtimes
★ Make mealtimes pleasant and talk about your day
★ Encourage your child to feed himself even if he makes a mess
★ Respect tiny tummies - serve small portions and let her have more if she wants
★ Be patient - it can take many attempts before your child will accept a new food
★ Let your child help prepare meals or set the dinner table
★ Serve new food along with a food your child likes
★ Let your child eat as much or as little as he wants from what you offer
★ Teach children how to refuse food politely
★ Be positive yourself and try new foods with your child
★ Do not use food as a reward or punishment, or play games to encourage children to eat
★ Be physically active with your children each day

For parents and caregivers of young children.
What Should My Child Eat?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended Number of Canada's Food Guide Servings per Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age in Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables and Fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain Products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk and Alternatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meat and Alternatives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide (Health Canada, 2007)*

Canada’s Food Guide promotes healthy eating and physical activity for Canadians at different ages and stages in life.

Following the healthy eating pattern in Canada’s Food Guide, children age two years and older can get the nutrients and calories they need for healthy growth and development.

For toddlers under 24 months of age, there is no recommended number of servings for each food group. Providing scheduled meals and snacks that provide foods from the four food groups including small amounts of fat is the best way to ensure that children get the nutrients they need.
How Much Does My Child Eat?

Following Canada’s Food Guide helps children to grow and strive. Young children have small appetites and need calories for growth and development. Serve small nutritious meals and snacks each day. Offer a variety of foods from the four food groups. Children have small stomachs. Depending on their age they usually eat one-quarter to one-half of the Canada’s Food Guide serving. Remember to always feed your child according to how hungry they are and never pressure them to eat more or restrict the amount of food.

### Food Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Group</th>
<th>Examples of One Food Guide Serving</th>
<th>Examples of One Child-Size Portion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables and Fruit</td>
<td>1/2 cup of squash 1/2 cup of green beans 1 medium banana</td>
<td>1/8 – 1/4 cup of squash 1/8 – 1/4 cup of green beans 1/4 – 1/2 of medium banana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain Products</td>
<td>1 slice of whole grain bread 1/2 of pita bread, whole grain 125 ml (1/2 cup) cooked rice, pasta, couscous</td>
<td>1/4 – 1/2 slice of whole grain bread 1/8 – 1/4 of pita bread, whole grain 1/8 – 1/4 cup cooked rice, pasta, couscous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk and Alternatives</td>
<td>250 ml (1 cup) of milk 50 g (1 1/2 oz.) of cheese, paneer 175 ml (3/4 cup) of yogurt, kefir</td>
<td>1/4 – 1/2 cup of milk 13 g – 25 g (3/8 – 3/4 oz.) of cheese, paneer 1/8 – 1/4 cup of yogurt, kefir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and Alternatives</td>
<td>75 g (2 1/2 oz.) of cooked meat, chicken, fish 2 eggs 3/4 cup of cooked legumes or tofu</td>
<td>25 g (1/2 – 1 1/4 oz.) of cooked meat, chicken, fish 1/2 – 1 egg 1/8 – 1/4 cup of cooked legumes or tofu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Offer one dark green and one orange vegetable daily.

Provide at least half of the grain products as whole grain each day.

Children age two and older need two cups of milk or fortified soy beverage each day for adequate vitamin D and calcium.

Remember: Provide homogenized milk to children less than two years of age. Do not give your child skim or low-fat milk products or soy, rice or vegetarian beverages if they are under two years of age.

Basic Foods to Have on Hand

It helps to have some basic ingredients on hand. You can use them to put together a quick nutritious meal anytime.

Tips: Cook in larger batches and freeze the rest.
Choose whole grain products more often.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetables and Fruit</th>
<th>Grain Products</th>
<th>Milk and Alternatives</th>
<th>Meat and Alternatives</th>
<th>Seasonings</th>
<th>Baking Needs</th>
<th>Fats and Oils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fresh vegetables and fruit</td>
<td>Whole grain Crackers</td>
<td>Pasteurized – Milk</td>
<td>Dry legumes (beans, peas, lentils)</td>
<td>Pepper</td>
<td>Flour (white, whole wheat)</td>
<td>Vegetable oils (olive oil)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potatoes</td>
<td>Cereal</td>
<td>Skim milk powder</td>
<td>Canned legumes (choose BPA free cans and no added salt when possible)</td>
<td>Garlic powder</td>
<td>(white, brown)</td>
<td>Margarine (non-hydrogenated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onion</td>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>Canned tuna and salmon</td>
<td>Onion powder</td>
<td>Baking powder</td>
<td>Butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carrots</td>
<td>Pita</td>
<td>Yogurt</td>
<td>Peanut butter</td>
<td>Herbs (basil, oregano, thyme, parsley)</td>
<td>Baking soda</td>
<td>Tofu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apples</td>
<td>Bagels</td>
<td>Kefir</td>
<td>Hummus</td>
<td>Spices (paprika, cayenne pepper, cinnamon chilli powder, curry, turmeric, ginger)</td>
<td>Cornstarch</td>
<td>Eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bananas</td>
<td>Pasta</td>
<td>Paneer</td>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>Vinegar</td>
<td>Rolled oats</td>
<td>Ground beef</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frozen vegetables and fruit:
- peas
- broccoli
- spinach
- berries

Canned vegetables and fruit:
- peas
- corn
- peaches
- pears
  (choose BPA free cans when possible, vegetables with no added salt, and fruit packed in fruit juice instead of syrup)

Couscous
Quinoa
Bulgur
Barley
Kamut
Rice
(white or brown)

Baking Needs:
- Flour (white, whole wheat)
- Sugar (white, brown)
- Baking powder
- Baking soda
- Cornstarch
- Vanilla
- Rolled oats
- Natural bran

Spices:
- paprika
- cayenne pepper
- cinnamon
- chilli powder
- curry
- turmeric
- ginger

Vinegar
Ketchup
Mustard
Worcestershire sauce
Low sodium soy sauce, chicken, beef or vegetable soup cubes
Salt – limit

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Menu Planning

Simple Meal Solutions for a Healthy Balance

Preparing and eating healthy meals together as a family while juggling life’s many demands can be challenging. A little planning can go a long way to ease the stress of preparing healthy meals. Spending just 15-20 minutes to plan your weekly menus can make it a lot easier to stay organized and have a healthy balance.

Get your family involved in meal planning. Ask them to suggest one or two of their favourite meals. Be sure to include foods from all four food groups—Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives, Meat and Alternatives. Once you have your menu for the week completed, writing your grocery list will be easy!

Children love to get involved and help you prepare meals. They can help you with shopping, washing vegetables, stirring and pouring ingredients, setting and clearing the table, and cleaning up.

Adapted from Healthy Start For Life: Dietitians of Canada, 2007.
Meal Planning Tips

Start every day with breakfast. Breakfast is important to “break the fast” after a night’s sleep. It provides energy and nutrients that help children and parents concentrate and learn better at school and at work.

★ If you don’t like the typical breakfast foods, try grilled cheese, pizza, crackers, peanut butter, pita with veggies, or leftovers from the night before.
★ Remember to set an example by eating a healthy breakfast yourself!

For all meals:
Include food from at least three different food groups:
★ Vegetables or Fruit e.g., tomato sauce, apple slices
★ Grain Products e.g., pasta, whole grain cereal or bread
★ Milk and Alternatives e.g., milk, yogurt
★ Meat and Alternatives e.g., chicken, chickpeas, eggs or tofu

For snacks:
Include food from at least two different food groups.
★ Choose nutritious snacks such as bread, cereals, fruits, vegetables, milk, cheese, yogurt, meat or meat alternatives.
★ Limit 100% fruit juice to no more than ½ cup once a day
★ Serve whole milk to children under two years of age and lower fat milk (1% or 2%) to older children.
★ Provide water when children are thirsty.
★ Avoid sticky, sweet foods such as dried fruit and candy, which can stick to teeth and cause cavities. They are also a choking hazard for children under four. If you offer these foods, encourage children to brush their teeth right after eating them.

Cooking up some fun!
Meal and Snack Ideas

Healthy snack foods
★ Whole grain breads, buns, bagels, pita, tortillas
★ Bran, oatmeal, corn or whole grain muffins
★ Bread sticks or whole grain crackers
★ Whole grain, low-sugar cereals
★ Fruit, fruit salad and individual serving containers of fruit or unsweetened applesauce
★ 100% fruit juice popsicles
★ Raw vegetables, vegetable juice
★ Milk, fortified soy beverage, yogurt, cheese, milk-based pudding
★ Peanut butter (unless children with allergies are present; smooth is preferred over chunky to reduce the risk of choking)
★ Plain popcorn (for children four years and older)

Healthy quick meals
★ Applesauce, cheese slices and whole wheat crackers
★ Bran or oatmeal muffin, yogurt, pear
★ Bean burrito with shredded lettuce and cheese, fruit
★ Bagel with lean beef or cheese slices, tomato juice
★ Garden salad with shredded cheese or chicken Caesar salad in a whole wheat pita
★ Cheese, turkey or egg sandwich on whole wheat bread or bun, banana
★ Lentil and pasta soup, crackers and cheese, orange
★ Cold pizza, fruit cup, milk

Adapted from Healthy Start For Life: Dietitians of Canada, 2007.
How to Prevent Choking

Some foods can block your child’s breathing and cause choking. These foods are usually round, hard, sticky or crunchy and should not be given to children under the age of four years. Make sure your child eats sitting at the table, with adult supervision.

★ Avoid raisins (unless soaked in water until soft), popcorn, nuts, chunky peanut butter, seeds, hard candies, chewing gum.
★ Sausages and hot dogs should be cut lengthwise into strips then cut into bite-sized pieces.
★ Grapes should be cut in half, and seeds removed.
★ Meat bones and fish bones should be removed.
★ Raw vegetables should be cut into narrow strips or grated. Remove pits, seeds and peel from raw fruit and cut into bite-sized pieces.
★ Spread smooth peanut butter thinly on toast (avoid serving chunky peanut butter to children under the age of four years). Never serve peanut butter on a spoon.

Drinks for Young Children

Drinks are important to help keep young children healthy, especially when the weather is hot or they are very active. For hikes and family outings, take along your own water bottle and fruit to avoid buying expensive sugary drinks.

★ If children are thirsty, offer tap water
★ Serve milk with meals (whole milk to children under two years of age and lower fat milk to older children)
★ Avoid flavoured water, pop, and sugary drinks such as fruit punch or fruit drinks.
★ Read the ingredient list. Look for the words “100% fruit juice”, “unsweetened”, “pure juice from concentrate,” and “no artificial flavours or colours”.
★ Avoid juice drinks that have sugar, corn syrup, sucrose, fructose or glucose (forms of sugar) as one of the ingredients.
★ Avoid drinks that contain caffeine such as energy drinks, sport drinks, colas, coffee or tea. They can over-stimulate a child and may cause insomnia and irritability (a can of cola for a child can have a similar effect as three cups of coffee on an adult).

Cooking up some fun!
Fibre-filled Tips

Fibre is important to help prevent constipation, stabilize blood sugar, lower blood cholesterol and keep you feeling full between meals. You can easily add more fibre to your family meals with a few additions or changes to recipes. Remember to drink water, which helps fibre do its job better.

Natural bran

★ Add 1/2 - 1 teaspoon of natural bran to any baked goods, sauces, scrambled eggs, etc. Natural bran can be found in the cereal aisle of grocery stores. You may also be able to buy it in bulk and save a few pennies.

★ If you are adding bran to liquid recipes such as sauces or milkshakes, add it just before serving. Bran acts like a sponge and will absorb liquid in the recipe.

★ Add bran gradually to your family’s meals to avoid abdominal cramps.

Vegetables and fruit

★ A variety of vegetables and fruit can be added to your regular recipes by 'sneaking' them in smoothies or sauces, or by freezing juice in popsicle molds. Every little bit counts!

★ Offer a variety of cut up vegetables and fruit with a yogurt or hummus dip.

Nuts, seeds and legumes

★ Offer nuts and seeds to your family for snacks or food on the run. Keep in mind your child’s age for choking risks.

★ By adding sunflower seeds, almonds or sesame seeds to salads or stir-fries, you are boosting the amount of fibre as well as other nutrients such as calcium.

★ You can add a variety of beans to soups, salads or sauces. A creative way to offer beans is to mash them before adding them to a sauce.

★ Nuts and seeds are also a great source of “healthy” fat.

Whole grain products

★ Whenever possible, buy 100% whole grain products instead of white flour products, for example, whole wheat flour, whole wheat pasta, brown rice, 100% whole grain bread, tortillas and pitas.

★ Look on the ingredients list for a fibre content of at least 2 grams per serving. An excellent source of fibre would contain 6 grams per serving.
The Story on Fats

Let's start by saying that all fats are not created equal! There are different types of fat. Some are good for your health (olive oil and canola oil) and some need to be limited or avoided. Anything that says hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated should be limited. Animal fats, like chicken skin and lard, are not as healthy as vegetable fats. It is best to trim all fat from meat, poultry and fish.

Children under the age of two need fat for healthy growth and development. Higher fat foods that are also nutritious, like cheese and non-hydrogenated peanut butter, help children meet their energy needs. After two years of age, you can gradually reduce the amount of fat in their diet. Lower fat products, such as 2% milk, should not be given to children under two years of age.

What about omega-3 fatty acids?

We all need omega-3 fatty acids in our diets for good health. The first source of omega-3 fatty acids a baby gets is from breast milk. Omega-3 fatty acids can also be found in flaxseed, vegetable oils, walnuts, soybeans, whole grains, fish, omega-3 eggs and products fortified with omega-3 fatty acids or DHA (docosahexaenoic acid). DHA is a type of omega-3 fatty acid that is especially necessary for the development of the brain, vision and nerves of infants and older children. The best source of DHA is fish.

Limit unhealthy fats

A process called hydrogenation changes healthy fats into unhealthy ones called trans fats. Read the ingredient list on packaged foods and choose products that list non-hydrogenated fats. Trans fats may be found in some commercially fried, baked and processed foods such as fish sticks, chicken nuggets, muffins, cookies, granola bars, crackers, packaged popcorn, ready meals, pasta mixes and desserts.

If you see the phrase “partially hydrogenated oil,” “hydrogenated vegetable oil” or “vegetable shortening” in the list of ingredients on the label, it means the product contains trans fats.

Trans fats are also naturally present in very small amounts in foods such as dairy products, beef and lamb. These naturally occurring trans fats do not have the same unhealthy effect as the commercially made trans fats.

Cooking up some fun!
How Can I Help My Child Eat Well and Be Active?

★ Offer a variety of healthy foods and beverages from Canada’s Food Guide at regular meal and snack times.
★ Offer water from a cup when your child is thirsty.
★ Serve legumes (peas, beans, lentils) and tofu often.
★ Serve fish at least twice a week.
★ Serve a variety of whole grains such as brown rice, oats, quinoa.
★ Serve at least one dark green and orange vegetable each day.
★ Limit 100% fruit juice to ½ cup once a day.
★ Avoid sugar-sweetened beverages (e.g. pop, fruit drinks).
★ Avoid using food as a reward or punishment.
★ Cook and enjoy family meals together.
★ Children learn much more by doing than by watching so let them help.
★ Be active with your children.
★ Encourage active, physical play (including outdoors) several times a day.
★ Children should not be sedentary (inactive, sitting) for more than one hour at a time when they are awake.
★ Limit screen time (TV, computer, electronic games) to less than one hour per day for children between two and four years of age and no more than two hours per day for five and six year olds.
★ Screen time is not recommended for children under two years of age.
Some of your child’s favourite meals.
Eating healthy does not need to be boring!

Cooking up some fun!
Alphabet Pancakes

375 ml (1 1/2 cups) flour  
15 ml (1 tbsp) baking powder  
1 ml (1/4 tsp) salt  
45 ml (3 tbsp) melted, non-hydrogenated margarine or vegetable oil  
1 egg  
300 ml (1 1/4 cups) milk  
15 ml (1 tbsp) sugar

1. Combine dry ingredients in a bowl.
2. Add wet ingredients and mix until combined.
3. Pour batter into frying pan in the shape of the letters of the alphabet. You can put the batter in a funnel or a bag cut at the corner, and squeeze out the batter to make the letters.
4. Cook pancakes until bubbles start appearing on surface; turn carefully and cook the other side.

Makes 3 - 4 servings.

*Need to fibre it up? Mix whole wheat flour to the white flour. Add a few teaspoons of natural bran or top up your pancakes with some fruit like kiwi, strawberries or bananas.*

Cheesy Macaroni and Cheese

500 ml (2 cups) uncooked macaroni  
284 ml (10 oz) canned cream of mushroom soup  
250 ml (1 cup) milk  
125 ml (1/2 cup) onion, finely chopped  
375 ml (1 1/2 cups) cheddar or mozzarella cheese, grated

1. Preheat oven to 175 C (350 F).
2. Cook macaroni in boiling water; drain and set aside.
3. Mix cream of mushroom soup, milk, and onion; heat and bring to a boil.
   - Add macaroni and 175 ml (3/4 cup) cheese.
4. Pour into an ovenproof dish and sprinkle with remaining cheese.
5. Bake at 175 C (350 F) for 20 minutes. Turn oven to “broil” for 2 to 3 minutes, until cheese is browned.

Makes 4 - 6 servings.

*Source: Dairy Farmers of Ontario 2003.*

*Need some colour? Add broccoli or red peppers or both! You’ll be adding vitamin C and fibre.*
**Bellybutton Soup**

*This recipe can be adapted to be vegetarian if desired. Save the leftovers for another meal.*

500 ml (2 cups) fresh or frozen meat or cheese tortellini
1000 ml (4 cups) chicken or vegetable stock
500 ml (2 cups) frozen mixed, fresh or leftover vegetables
1 can of beans of your choice (540 ml / 19 oz) of kidney, black beans, fava, etc.
1 large can of diced tomatoes (796 ml / 28 oz)
5 ml (1 tsp) oregano or Italian seasoning
1 minced clove of garlic (optional)
1 bay leaf
Grated Parmesan cheese for sprinkling on top (optional)

1. Mix all ingredients except Parmesan cheese and tortellini together in a large pot.
2. Bring to a boil.
3. Add tortellini and boil for the amount of time indicated on the package.
4. Ready to serve when tortellini and veggies are tender.
5. Remove bay leaf. Serve in individual bowls and sprinkle with Parmesan if desired.
6. Add extra water or stock to leftover soup if it becomes thick.

Makes 6 - 8 servings.

*If you use cheese tortellini, this meal contains all four food groups from Canada’s Food Guide.*

**Veggie Fries**

2 medium potatoes
1 parsnip
30 ml (2 tbsp) vegetable oil
30 ml (2 tbsp) fresh parsley, cilantro, rosemary or dill, chopped (optional)

1 sweet potato
2 carrots
salt and pepper

1. Preheat oven to 220 C (425 F). Lightly oil 2 baking sheets.
2. Cut the clean and peeled vegetables into wedges of the same size. Place in a bowl, add the oil and toss.
3. Spread the vegetables in an even layer on the baking sheets.
4. Bake for 20 minutes until crisp and lightly brown. Turn the fries over half way through the baking.
5. Sprinkle lightly with salt, pepper and fresh herbs (if using). Serve immediately.

Makes 6 - 8 servings.

*Source: Cooking in the Community, Toronto Public Health, 2004.*

*Try dipping the fries in hummus. Hummus is good for its protein, folic acid and fibre.*
Mamma's Chili

- 900 g (2 lbs) of lean ground beef or chicken
- 1 onion, minced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 x 445 ml (14.5 oz) cans diced tomatoes
- 250 ml (8 oz) can tomato sauce
- 250 ml (1 cup) water
- 540 ml (19 oz) can kidney beans
- 540 ml (19 oz) can garbanzo or pinto beans
- 200 ml (7 oz) can whole kernel corn
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) chili powder
- 5 ml (1 tsp) ground cumin
- pepper to taste
- 5 ml (1 tsp) hot pepper sauce (optional)

1. In a large pot, lightly brown lean ground beef or chicken, and drain fat.
2. Add onion and garlic, and cook until onion is tender.
3. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce, water, kidney beans, garbanzo or pinto beans, corn, chili powder, cumin, pepper and hot sauce.
4. Simmer for 30 minutes and serve with rice, noodles or a bun.

Makes 8 servings.

Add your favourite chopped vegetables such as green pepper, shredded carrots, zucchini, etc...to add vitamins and minerals!

Easy Fajitas

If you prefer, substitute chicken with beef or pork - it's a great way to use leftover meat. Use any vegetable that your family loves.

- 1 pepper or other vegetable sliced
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) vegetable oil
- 1 onion sliced
- 1 diced tomato
- 250 ml (1 cup) grated cheese
- 500 ml (2 cups) cooked warm chicken
- 300 ml (1 1/4 cups) salsa
- 8 small whole wheat flour tortillas

1. Stir fry the onion and vegetable until tender in a pan with vegetable oil.
2. Place all ingredients on a large platter in piles.
3. Put the salsa in a bowl.
4. Each person can make their own fajita, adding the ingredients that they like onto the centre of a tortilla. Add a spoonful of salsa if desired.
5. Roll or fold the tortilla to contain the ingredients.

It's ready to eat!

Makes 4 - 6 servings.

Want to try something a bit different? Try other great varieties of tortillas, such as tomato or spinach.

Food for Thought:
Adding legumes (beans, lentils and chick peas) to any recipe increases the amount of fibre, folic acid and iron.

Food for Thought:
Red peppers are higher in beta carotene (vitamin A) and vitamin C than green peppers.

For parents and caregivers of young children.
Easy Stir Fry

150 ml (2/3 cup) chicken or vegetable stock
30 ml (2 tbsp) soy sauce
5 ml (1 tsp) sugar
10 ml (2 tsp) corn starch
6 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
10 ml (2 tsp) fresh or powdered ginger
350 g (3/4 pound) boneless chicken breast
1 onion, cleaned and cut in thin wedges
1000 ml (4 cups) mixture of fresh vegetables
   Firm: carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, celery and green beans
   Medium: red or green peppers, zucchini, snow peas, mushrooms, green peas
   Soft: bean sprouts, spinach
30 ml (2 tbsp) vegetable oil

1. Place the chicken stock, soy sauce, sugar and cornstarch in a small bowl. Wisk together and set aside.
2. Prepare the garlic and ginger, place in a small bowl and set aside.
3. Cut the chicken in thin strips.
4. Using a clean cutting board, slice the vegetables into bite-sized pieces. Place in separate piles on the counter or on a baking sheet.
5. Heat 15 ml (1 tbsp) of oil in a wok or large frying pan.
6. Add the chicken to the pan and stir fry until the chicken is no longer pink inside. Remove from pan and put on a clean plate.
7. Heat remaining 15 ml (1 tbsp) of oil in pan and cook vegetables. Start with the firm ones, then add the medium and soft 1-2 minutes later.
8. Add the chicken and stir fry for one more minute to heat through. Empty on to a platter or large plate.
9. Cook the sauce in the same pan, stirring constantly until clear. Pour over the stir fry and serve with cooked rice or noodles.

Makes 4 - 6 servings.


For extra calcium and protein, add sliced almonds, sesame seeds or both

Food for Thought:
Meat is the best source of iron for you and your kids. Add vitamin C - rich foods like broccoli, red peppers, snow peas to meat and your body will absorb even more iron!
**Salmon Nuggets**

- 213 g (7 1/2 oz) canned salmon
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) chopped green onions
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) mayonnaise
- 5 ml (1 tsp) lemon juice
- 375 ml (1 1/2 cups) dried bread crumbs
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) butter or non-hydrogenated margarine

1. Mash entire contents of the salmon can in a mixing bowl.
2. Add onions, mayonnaise, lemon juice, 250 ml (1 cup) bread crumbs, mustard, egg, thyme, and pepper to taste. Mix with fork until well blended.
3. Shape mixture into 2.5 cm (1 inch) balls, and then flatten slightly.
4. Put the remaining bread crumbs in a bowl. Roll nuggets in bread crumbs.
5. Heat butter or margarine in non-stick skillet. Add nuggets and cook until lightly browned.

Makes about 20 nuggets.


If your kids don’t like Dijon mustard, try a little curry powder. You can also add a little natural bran or grated cheese to the bread crumbs.

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**Omelette Roll-It-Up**

- 1 egg
- Pinch of salt and pepper
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) milk
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) shredded cheese
- 5 ml (1 tsp) chopped fresh parsley (optional)
- 5 ml (1/4 tsp) vegetable oil
- 1 7-inch flour tortilla

1. Whisk together egg, milk, salt, pepper.
2. Heat 6-inch, non-stick skillet over medium-high heat; brush with oil.
3. Pour in egg mixture, tilting to spread evenly. Cook, piercing any bubbles, for about 1 minute or until set.
4. Slide onto tortilla; sprinkle with cheese. Try any combination of herbs and cheese such as cheddar and chives, or mozzarella and basil.
5. Roll it up.

Makes 1 serving.

Add a few sprinkles of natural bran and a teaspoon of skim milk powder. A little bit of this and a little bit of that will add more fibre, calcium and vitamin D to this recipe!

Add some chopped vegetables for additional vitamins and minerals.

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**Food for Thought:**

Salmon is one of the best choices for DHA (doco-hexaehesonic acid) which is one of the omega-3 fatty acids that are good for you and your children. Kids need DHA for the development of the brain, vision and nerves.

**Baby-Friendly Tip:**

When serving fish to young children, always check for bones that might cause them to choke.

**Food for Thought:**

Parsley is a source of vitamin C.
Pita Pizzas Pizzazz

4 whole wheat pitas
250 ml (1 cup) tomato sauce
1/2 green pepper, chopped
Cooked turkey or chicken breast
1/2 red pepper, chopped
2 tomatoes, sliced
150-200 g (6-8 oz) grated mozzarella cheese
50 ml (1/4 cup) grated Parmesan cheese

1. Preheat oven to 230°C (450°F).
2. Put 50 ml (1/4 cup) of sauce on top of each pita.
3. Let your child choose what toppings to add. Top each pizza with cheese.
4. Put pizzas on baking sheet.
5. Bake for 10 minutes or until cheese is bubbly.

Makes 4 pizzas.

Provide choice...offer different toppings so your kids can mix and choose. Try pineapple, olives, mango pieces, asparagus, feta cheese, broccoli flowerets, etc.

Easy Chickpea Curry

2 onions
15 ml (1 tbsp) pure vegetable oil
15 ml (1 tbsp) ground coriander
15 ml (1 tbsp) ground cumin
5 ml (1 tsp) garam masala (spice)
2 x 540 ml (19 oz) cans chickpeas, drained
4 cloves garlic
5 ml (1 tsp) chilli powder
5 ml (1 tsp) paprika
5 ml (1 tsp) salt
5 ml (1 tsp) turmeric
540 ml (19 oz) canned tomato pieces

1. Slice onions finely; crush the garlic.
2. Heat oil in a medium pan.
3. Add onion and garlic to pan; cook over medium heat, stirring, until soft.
4. Add the chilli powder, salt, turmeric, paprika, cumin and coriander. Stir over heat for 1 minute.
5. Add chickpeas and undrained tomatoes. Stir until combined.
   Simmer, covered, over low heat for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
7. Serve with rice, chappatis or naan breads.

Makes 6 - 8 servings.

Just by adding rice or a bun to this meal, you have included food from each of the four food groups!
**Awesome Apple Crisp**

900 g (5 cups) apples, washed, peeled and sliced  
25 ml (2 tbsp) brown sugar  
125 ml (1/2 cup) rolled oats  
50 ml (1/4 cup) all-purpose flour  
125 ml (1/2 cup) brown sugar  
2 ml (1/2 tsp) cinnamon  
75 ml (1/3 cup) non-hydrogenated margarine or butter, softened

1. Preheat oven to 180 C (350 F).
2. Prepare the apples and place them in the baking dish. Add 25 ml (2 tbsp) brown sugar.
3. To make the topping, measure the brown sugar, rolled oats, all-purpose flour, cinnamon and butter into a bowl. Mix together until crumbly.
4. Sprinkle the topping over the apples.
5. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes or until the fruit is tender when tested with a fork.

Makes 6 servings.

**Source:** *Cooking in the Community, Toronto Public Health, 2004.*

*Instead of using just all-purpose flour, mix half whole wheat flour and half all-purpose flour to add extra fibre.*

**Frozen Yogurt-Sicles**

500 ml (2 cups) of vanilla or fruit yogurt  
250 ml (1 cup) chopped fruit (berries, bananas, kiwi, grapes)

1. Mix all ingredients.
2. Pour equal portions into popsicle moulds. Paper cups work well with a popsicle stick or plastic spoon for a handle.
3. Freeze.

*If your child doesn't drink enough milk, add a few teaspoons of skim milk powder to this recipe. She'll be getting extra calcium and vitamin D without even knowing it!*

**Food for Thought:**

Rolled oats and apples are good sources of fibre.

Berries are good sources of antioxidants and fibre.
Icy Dicey Smoothie

250 ml (1 cup) milk  
1 scoop of frozen yogurt  
125 ml (1/2 cup) diced fruit of your choice

1. Combine all ingredients and blend in a blender until smooth.  
2. Pour into cups and enjoy.  
Makes 1 – 2 servings.

If you have no fresh or frozen fruit, canned fruit is great too!  
Buy the canned fruit in its own juice or drain the liquid if it is in syrup.

Yummy in the Tummy Banana Muffins

125 ml (1/2 cup) all-purpose flour  
125 ml (1/2 cup) whole wheat flour  
12 ml (2 1/2 tsp) baking powder  
1 ml (1/4 tsp) baking soda  
175 ml (3/4 cup) rolled oats  
50 ml (1/4 cup) lightly packed brown sugar  
125 ml (1/2 cup) white sugar  
2 medium, ripe bananas  
1 egg  
125 ml (1/2 cup) milk  
45 ml (3 tbsp) non-hydrogenated margarine, melted

1. Preheat oven to 190 C (375 F).  
2. Put the all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, baking powder and baking soda in a large bowl. Stir in oats, sugar, and brown sugar. Set aside.  
4. Stir banana mixture into the dry ingredients. Stir just until blended. Do not over mix.  
5. Lightly grease 12 large muffin cups. Put the muffin batter into the muffin cups.  
6. Bake in oven until tops are firm when lightly touched with your finger, about 18-20 minutes.  
7. Remove muffins from the tin and cool.

Makes 12 muffins. For little tummies, use mini muffin cups...they are more appealing to kids!  
Source: The Basic Shelf Cookbook, City of York Health Unit, 1995.

Add 15 ml (1 tbsp) of flaxseed powder to increase the fibre and omega-3 fatty acid content of your recipes.
Grandma’s Rolled Oat Cookies with Filling

Cookie Ingredients:
375 ml (1 1/2 cups) all-purpose flour
375 ml (1 1/2 cups) rolled oats
5 ml (1 tsp) baking soda
125 ml (1/2 cup) non-hydrogenated margarine
125 ml (1/2 cup) hot water

Filling Ingredients:
500 ml (2 cups) chopped dates
125 ml (1/2 cup) water
50 ml (1/4 cup) granulated sugar
5 ml (1 tsp) vanilla

Cookie Instructions:
1. Preheat the oven to 160 C (325 F).
2. Combine flour, oats and baking soda.
3. Cut in margarine until mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
4. Add enough water to shape the dough into a roll.
5. Wrap in waxed paper; refrigerate overnight.
6. Remove the cookies from the fridge.
7. Cut cookie dough into thin 3mm wafers (1/8 inch).
8. Place on lightly greased or non-stick cookie sheet.
9. Bake in preheated oven for about 10 minutes.

Filling Instructions:
1. Mix the dates, water and sugar together then cook on low heat for about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Stir in vanilla.
3. When cookies and filling are cool spread about 15 ml (1 tbsp) date filling between 2 cookies.

Makes 3 dozen filled cookies.

Source: Great Food, Copyright 2002. Published by Robert Rose. Reprinted by permission of Dietitians of Canada.

Add a few teaspoons of natural bran to boost up the fibre!
Make-Your-Own Fruit Kabobs

Children often like to eat their own creations.

Here are some ideas for children to make their own kabobs. If you have several ingredients on hand, children can mix and match to make their very own kabobs.

Ingredients and Supplies
Kabob sticks or bamboo skewers (these can be sharp, provide close supervision of young children. As an alternative, try thin straws).

Here are some ideas of foods that you may want to have the children choose from:
- Grapes
- Melon balls
- Canned mandarin oranges
- Pears
- Bananas
- Orange wedges
- Kiwi
- Peaches
- Apples
- Cherry tomatoes
- Cucumber slices
- Green, red, yellow or orange peppers
- Cheese cut into cubes

You do not have to stick to these foods. Be creative!

Method:
1. Cut foods into bite size pieces
2. Help children thread their favourites onto a kabob stick
3. Eat them up!

To make this dish more complete, add a fruit dip made with your favourite yogurt.
Call Region of Peel – Public Health at 905-799-7700 (905-584-2216 in Caledon) to speak to a Public Health Nurse. They can answer any questions you have about feeding your family or being active with them.

Call EatRight Ontario at 1-877-510-5102 to speak to a Registered Dietitian.

Interact with public health professionals and other parents on the Parenting In Peel Facebook page at Facebook.com/ParentingInPeel

**Check out these books, websites and pamphlets.**

**Books**
- *Raising Happy, Healthy, Weight-Wise Kids* (2001) by Judy Toews and Nicole Parton

**Websites**
- Region of Peel, Parenting In Peel parentinginpeel.ca
- Peel Public Health, Healthy Eating healthyeatingpeel.ca
- Eating Well With Canada’s Food Guide healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide
- Dietitians of Canada dietitians.ca
- Canadian Pediatric Society cps.ca
- Healthy Ontario healthyontario.com
- Anaphylaxis Canada anaphylaxis.ca
- EatRight Ontario ontario.ca/eatright
- Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (CSEP) csep.ca
- ParticipACTION participaction.com
- Active Healthy Kids Canada activehealthykids.ca
Pamphlets

- Call Peel Public Health to order your copy

★ Breastfeeding Your Baby
★ Making Your Own Baby Food
★ Feeding Your Baby: From Six Months to One Year. Your guide to help you to introduce food to your baby
★ Do You Need New Snack Ideas?
★ Is Your Child a Picky Eater?
★ Eat Fish for Health
★ Eat Fish for Health – Pocket Buyer’s Guide
★ Grown in Peel: Buy Local – From our Farm To You
★ Guiding Your Child’s Behaviour
For more ideas on how to help your child eat healthy, be active and feel good, ask a Public Health Nurse by calling or going online at:

ParentingInPeel.ca
Facebook.com/ParentingInPeel
905-799-7700
905-584-2216 in Caledon