



Lunches to Go

Bringing variety & fun to packed lunches!

Allergy Aware: Some schools have rules about the types of foods brought to the centre. For more information on “allergy aware” choices, see the handout, “Allergy Aware School and Childcare Settings”. Also check with the school’s staff or call HealthLink BC, 8-1-1.



Instead of Sandwiches

- Whole grain pancakes or waffles with fruit & yogurt
- Build your own pizza with English muffin or pita, tomato sauce, vegetables and grated cheese
- Falafel, whole wheat pita, carrot sticks
- Pasta salad, milk, small apple
- Hard cooked egg, whole grain crackers, red pepper strips
- Soft taco with bean dip and salsa
- Unsweetened dry cereal with milk or yogurt and sliced banana
- Homemade, whole grain muffins, e.g., Oatmeal carrot muffin and cottage cheese, Cornmeal muffin with BBQ chicken or chili, Banana bran muffin with yogurt and veggie sticks

Lunchbox Tips:



- ✓ Keep it simple and easy to eat but healthy and tasty.
- ✓ Try to include foods from each of the four food groups in Canada’s Food Guide (Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives and Meat and Alternatives).
- ✓ Kids love to eat what they create. Let your child choose his or her lunch from a healthy list of choices.
- ✓ Speed-up the process by cutting extra veggies when you’re preparing dinner or by making extra at meals to use as ‘Re-Runs’ for lunches the following day.
- ✓ On a cold day, pack a small thermos of soup, pasta, or other hot item.
- ✓ A child’s taste seems to change often. Try new things and do not be afraid to try them again and again. It can take many exposures to new foods before children learn to like them.

Dunk a Lunch

Finger food and dunking are always fun! Here are some healthy choices:



- Bean, hummus or cottage cheese dip served with veggies and pita bread cut into triangles
- Fresh cut fruit and yogurt
- French toast with yogurt or applesauce
- Whole grain bread sticks with fresh tomato salsa and guacamole

Wrap or Pita Pocket Combos

(Mix with plain yogurt, salsa, or other sauces/spreads)

- Hard cooked egg, chopped cucumber, green onion
- Chicken chunks, sliced seedless grapes
- Turkey or marinated cooked tofu chunks, grated carrot, shredded lettuce
- Salmon or tuna or cooked fish, red and green pepper slices
- Ricotta cheese, fruit
- Chopped ham, pineapple
- Hummus (bean dip), vegetables
- Shredded cheese, sliced cucumber
- Cheese, lettuce, tomato (wrapped separately)
- Instead of a tortilla, try a “lettuce leaf” wrap with any of the above combos

A Change from Bread...



Choose whole wheat or whole grain:

- Tortillas, flat bread
- English muffins
- Bran or oatmeal muffins
- Rice cakes, crackers
- Melba toast, bread sticks
- Chapatti or roti

Follow the Milky Way...

- Carrot, celery or bread stick wrapped in cheese
- Apple and cheese chunks
- Finely grated cheese rolled into small balls
- Chilled milk or fortified soy beverage
- Milk-based pudding
- Yogurt parfait: Layer plain yogurt, fruit and granola or a high fibre cereal



Versatile Veggies & Fast Fresh Fruits

- Choose in-season produce when possible
- Freeze summer fruits to enjoy all year round
- Pack a fruit smoothie in a thermos

Offer a variety of different choices over the week such as:

- Cauliflower, broccoli
- Baby corn, fresh sweet radishes
- Pepper strips (yellow, green, red, orange)
- Turnip or zucchini sticks
- Peas in a pod or snow pea pods
- Cherry tomatoes
- Melon balls, cherries, berries
- Kiwi, pears, peaches
- Papaya, mango



Pack a Safe Lunch

- Use clean kitchen tools to make lunches
- Refrigerate lunches that are made ahead of time
- Use an insulated bag with a freezer pack or chilled thermos to keep food cool. Chill milk or freeze drinking water or juice in plastic containers to keep food cool.
- Use a wide mouth thermos to keep hot food hot. Pre-heat the thermos with hot water before filling.
- Wash all vegetables well, even if the package says “pre-washed”.
- Wash lunch containers every night and clean them with baking soda once a week to get rid of odours.
- Don't reuse plastic bags – they can hold bacteria.

Cold Leftovers

- Leftover pizza
- Kabobs (e.g. meat or chicken, cheese, fruit, veggies)
- Burrito with refried beans, cheese, tomato
- Whole wheat steamed Asian bun
- Homemade baked samosas
- Vietnamese salad rolls
- Chicken drumstick

Hot Leftovers

- Stew
- Curry
- Chili
- Casserole
- Stir fried vegetables with tofu
- Perogies/pot stickers
- Spaghetti and meatballs
- Macaroni and cheese
- Baked beans
- Soup or chowder

Little Extras: Non-food treats are special and long lasting...

- Special napkin or straw
- Sticker, picture
- Funny joke, poem or other note
- Fun lunch containers or lunch bag
- Fun re-usable water bottle or thormos for milk



For more information:

Dietitian services at HealthLink BC:
Call 8-1-1 to speak to a dietitian or go to www.healthlinkbc.ca/dietitian to email your question.

www.healthyeatingatschool.ca

“Allergy Aware School and Childcare Settings” available from <http://vch.eduhealth.ca>.