



Lunches to Go

Bringing variety & fun to packed lunches!

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 their lunch from a list of healthy choices.
- ✓ Cut up extra veggies when making dinner to use in lunches the next day 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.



Versatile Veggies & Fast Fresh Fruits

Choose food grown or produced in BC whenever you can. Offer a variety of fresh or frozen choices.

- 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, cucumber
- Melon balls, cherries, berries
- Kiwi, pears, peaches
- Apples, plums, apricots
- Papaya, mango



Wrap or Pita Pocket Combos

Mix with mayonnaise, salsa, or other sauces/spreads:

- Hard cooked egg, chopped cucumber and green onion
- Chicken chunks and sliced seedless grapes
- Turkey or marinated tofu chunks, grated carrot and shredded lettuce
- Canned or cooked fish and red and green pepper slices
- Ricotta cheese and fruit
- Chopped ham and pineapple
- Black beans, corn, red peppers and tomato
- Shredded cheese and sliced cucumber

Instead of a tortilla, try a "lettuce leaf" wrap with any of the above combos

Try soy, pumpkin, sunflower and pea butters or hummus instead of peanut butter on sandwiches or crackers

Instead of Sandwiches

- Whole grain pancakes or waffles with fruit and yogurt
- Build your own pizza with English muffin or pita, tomato sauce, vegetables and grated cheese
- Falafel in a whole wheat pita, carrot sticks
- Hard cooked egg, whole grain crackers and red pepper strips
- Burrito with salsa
- Homemade muffin (e.g., blueberry bran), with yogurt and veggie sticks
- Grain based salad (e.g., tabbouleh) using bulgar, quinoa or barley
- As a change from bread, try whole wheat or whole grain: tortillas, flat bread, rice cakes, crackers, melba toast, bread sticks, chapatti, roti, or bannock



Dunk a Lunch

Fun ideas for dunking finger foods:

- Bean dip with pre-cut (can be store-bought pre-cut) veggies and bread
- Fresh cut or canned fruit mixed with plain yogurt
- French toast with yogurt and fruit puree
- Whole grain bread sticks with fresh tomato salsa and guacamole



Follow the Milky Way...

- Veggie sticks and cheese
- Apple and cheese chunks
- Chilled milk or fortified soy beverage
- Milk-based pudding
- A fruit smoothie in a thermos
- Whole grain cereal with milk and sliced fruit.
- Yogurt parfait: Layer plain yogurt, fruit and granola or other cereal



Pack a Safe Lunch

- 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 thermos with hot water before filling.
- Wash all vegetables well, even if the package says “pre-washed”
- Wash lunch containers after every use
- Do not reuse plastic bags – they can hold bacteria



Allergy Aware: Some schools have rules about the types of foods brought to the school to help keep students with potentially life-threatening food allergies safe. Read the ingredient list on the food label every time you buy something. If the food includes any of the top 10 common food allergens, they will be shown in the ingredient list or in a separate “contains” statement. Some common food allergens are peanut, tree nuts, soy, milk and seafood.

Last Night's Leftovers make a Tasty Lunch!

Leftovers can be sent cold, or hot, in a thermos

- Leftover pizza
- Curry
- Kebabs (e.g. meat or chicken, cheese, fruit, veggies)
- Chili
- Whole wheat steamed Asian bun
- Casserole
- Stir fried vegetables with tofu
- Perogies/pot stickers
- Homemade baked samosas
- Spaghetti and meatballs
- Vietnamese salad rolls
- Macaroni and cheese
- Chicken drumstick
- Baked beans
- Stew
- Soup or chowder

Healthy Eating Tips:

- It is normal for a child's taste to change often. It can take many exposures to new foods before children learn to eat them.
- Try to choose cereals with no added sugars when possible or compare Nutrition Facts information and choose those with less sugar.
- For help choosing healthy packaged foods, check out the Brand Name Food List from HealthLinkBC bnfl.healthlinkbc.ca
- Water is the best choice to satisfy thirst. Kids do not need sugary drinks or juice.

For More Information:

Dietitian services at HealthLink BC:

Call 8-1-1 to speak to a dietitian or go to www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating/emaildietitian.html to email your question.

www.healthyeatingatschool.ca

Search for Health Canada food allergies www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/healthy-living/your-health/food-nutrition/food-allergies.html

Free, online food allergy training for people with life-threatening allergies, their families, caregivers and others: www.allergyaware.ca

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