Lunches To Go
Quick and easy ideas for packed lunches

Tips
- Include a variety of vegetables and fruit, whole grains, and protein foods. See Canada’s Food Guide.
- Encourage children to participate in food preparation. Children enjoy eating what they create and leftovers make great lunches.
- Let children help pack their lunch from options you provide.
- Let your child eat as much or as little as they like from their lunch. Teach them to follow their appetite.
- It’s ok if your child wants to eat the same foods every day. Try new foods at home and add them gradually to lunches.
- Make water your drink of choice. Send a reusable water bottle. Limit sugary drinks including juice, sweetened milks and sweetened plant-based beverages.

Lunch Ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wraps, pita pockets, and sandwiches</th>
<th>Rice or noodles</th>
<th>Other ideas</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Egg salad with cucumber slices</td>
<td>• Sushi bowl (carrot, cucumber, edamame, salmon or marinated tofu, seaweed)</td>
<td>• Homemade pizza</td>
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<td>• Tuna salad roll-ups</td>
<td>• Fried rice</td>
<td>• Chili with corn bread</td>
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<td>• Hummus, salad greens and cheese</td>
<td>• Spaghetti</td>
<td>• Dumplings or perogies</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Chicken, tomato, lettuce</td>
<td>• Stir-fried vegetables and tofu/chicken</td>
<td>• Quinoa or barley salad</td>
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<td>• Salmon, cream cheese, cucumber</td>
<td>• Vegetable curry</td>
<td>• Steamed meat or vegetable bun</td>
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<td>• Falafel with cucumber and tomatoes</td>
<td>• Macaroni and cheese</td>
<td>• Baked beans</td>
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<td>• Burrito with salsa</td>
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<td>• Stew</td>
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<td>• Grilled cheese</td>
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<td>• Soup with bread (chowder, tomato, chicken noodle, split pea)</td>
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<td>• Salad rolls</td>
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<td>• Scrambled eggs, potato and sausage</td>
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<td>• French toast strips</td>
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<td>• Moroccan chickpea stew</td>
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<td>• Mashed potatoes, peas and beef</td>
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Snack Ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Fruits</th>
<th>Other ideas</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Carrot/bell pepper sticks with dip</td>
<td>• Berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries)</td>
<td>• Yogurt parfait</td>
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<td>• Steamed/raw broccoli or cauliflower with hummus</td>
<td>• Tangerine or orange</td>
<td>• Homemade smoothie</td>
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<td>• Sliced cucumber, radish</td>
<td>• Pear, or bananas</td>
<td>• Cheese with whole-grain crackers</td>
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<td>• Baked sweet potato wedges</td>
<td>• Peach, nectarine, plums</td>
<td>• Fortified soy drink or milk</td>
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<td>• Snow peas/cherry tomatoes</td>
<td>• Kiwi, melon, grapes</td>
<td>• Roasted chickpeas, edamame</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Kale chips</td>
<td>• Fruit cups/fruit sauce (canned fruit)</td>
<td>• Sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, nuts if permitted</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Roasted squash</td>
<td>• Apple slices with cinnamon</td>
<td>• Granola bar or muffin</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Roasted seaweed</td>
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<td>• Celery sticks with nut/seed butter</td>
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Food Safety

- Wash vegetables and fruit with water, even if labelled “pre-washed”.
- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot
  - Pack cold foods in an insulated bag with a lunchbox icepack.
  - Pack hot foods in an insulated wide-mouth food container. Preheat the container with hot water before filling with food.
- Use reusable containers instead of plastic bags.

Are cookies and chips “forbidden” foods?

Avoid “good food – bad food” thinking.
Variety and moderation is important.
Healthy eating is an overall pattern of eating and includes a positive relationship with food to meet individual needs.
Offer foods, such as cookies and chips, occasionally and at a meal or snack time so that they do not become “forbidden” foods.

Did you know?

Processed meats can be high in sodium and saturated fat.
Use luncheon meats less often when packing school lunches.

Allergy Aware

Some schools have rules about the types of foods brought to school to help keep students with potentially life-threatening food allergies safe. Check with your school to see if there are foods that should not be brought to school.

For more information

Contact Dietitian Services at HealthLink BC (call 8-1-1 to speak a dietitian) or email a dietitian.

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