

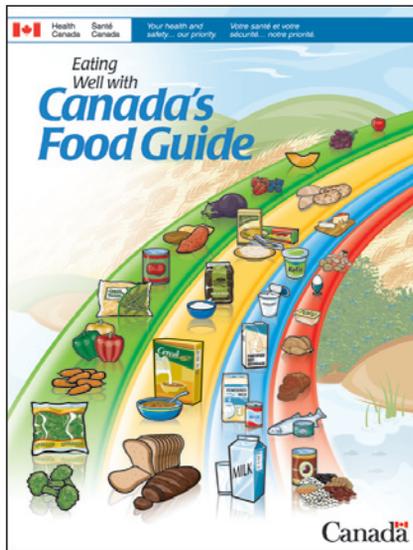
INNOVATION IN  
NUTRITION  
EDUCATION

# FOOD FINGERS & FUN

Healthy Eating for  
Preschool & Young  
School Age Children



## HEALTHY EATING FOR CHILDREN



**Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide** recommends the balance and variety of foods your child needs in the early years of growth and development. Healthy food habits learned early on provide the foundation for lifelong healthy eating. You can help by planning meals and snacks using the Food Guide.

**Did you know?**

Canada's Food Guide recommends children aged 2–8 (and adults!) consume 2 cups of milk\* each day for adequate vitamin D. Milk also provides a wealth of calcium and other bone building nutrients. Older children and teens ages 9–18 need 3–4 Food Guide Servings from the Milk & Alternatives group each day.

\* Fortified soy beverage is recommended for those who don't drink milk.

**Advice from the heart**

Keep your child's heart healthy—daily physical activity and smoke free space are just as important as healthy eating!

## TIPS FOR HEALTH AND VARIETY



- ❑ Offer a variety of foods with different colours, textures, and flavours.
- ❑ Explore foods from different cultures. Help children learn about the great tastes of the world.
- ❑ Try a new dish with your family once or twice a month. Select the recipe with your child.
- ❑ Choose a variety of foods from the four food groups.

**VEGETABLES & FRUIT**

Introduce your family to a new vegetable or fruit once in a while. Include dark green and orange vegetables each day.

**GRAIN PRODUCTS**

Experience the wider variety of “breads” available like flat breads, tortillas, bagels, buns, pitas. Make at least half of your choices whole grain each day.

**MILK & ALTERNATIVES**

Drink milk every day. Try chocolate or other flavoured milks for a taste change.

**MEAT & ALTERNATIVES**

Try a new recipe using beans, peas, tofu or lentils. Offer fish twice a week.

Check out [www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide) and click on “Create My Food Guide” to build your own Food Guide.



## RISE AND SHINE WITH BREAKFAST



**Breakfast is an important meal, especially for growing children.**



**Children need healthy food in the morning to fuel their brain and body!**



When there's a little more time, here's a great recipe your child can prepare!

### Quick & Healthy Breakfasts

- Orange wedges, English muffin with peanut butter and a glass of milk.
- Cereal and milk topped with banana, berries or raisins.
- Whole grain toast with cheese and jam and a glass of fruit juice.
- Last night's leftovers.

### RECIPE FILE

#### Alphabet Pancakes

¾ cup (175 mL)	plain yogurt
¾ cup (175 mL)	milk
2	eggs, beaten
¼ cup (50 mL)	butter, melted
1½ cups (375 mL)	whole wheat flour
¾ tsp (3 mL)	baking powder
¾ tsp (3 mL)	baking soda
¾ tsp (3 mL)	salt



#### Did You Know?

Kids need fibre too! Try these ideas to help your family choose more fibre at breakfast and throughout the day:

- Choose whole grain breads and higher fibre cereals more often (look for more than 2 grams of fibre per serving on "Nutrition Facts" on food label).
- Choose whole fruits and vegetables instead of juice.
- Add raisins or nuts to cereals, salads and desserts.
- Serve baked beans, and soups made with beans or lentils.

1. In small bowl, combine yogurt, milk, eggs and butter.
2. In large bowl, stir together dry ingredients.
3. Add yogurt mixture all at once to flour mixture, stirring until just combined (batter will be thick).
4. Fill empty ketchup or mustard squeeze bottle with batter. Cut off nozzle to enlarge opening. Heat greased non-stick fry pan over medium heat. For each pancake, squeeze batter from bottle into fry pan, making alphabet letters.\*
5. Cook for 2 minutes, or until bubbles appear on the surface, then turn and cook other side. Serve with syrup or pureed strawberries, canned peaches, or other favourite fruits.

\* If batter is too thick, add small amount of milk to squeeze bottle and shake well.



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**THE LUNCH BUNCH: MAKE HEALTHY, QUICK LUNCHES YOUR CHILD WON'T WANT TO TRADE!**


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**Time Saving Tips**

- ❑ Planning is the key! Plan the week's lunches with your child and then go shopping.
- ❑ Prepare lunch with your child the night before—this allows more time to enjoy food preparation.
- ❑ Make extra of your child's favourite dinner and freeze it in child-size portions for a quick lunch to go!

**Safe Lunches**

- ❑ Keep cold foods cold with a freezer pack.
- ❑ For cold fresh milk, use a thermos or check to see if your child's school has a milk program.
- ❑ Freeze a sandwich! It will be thawed by lunch and keep other foods cold (Note: eggs, veggies and mayo don't freeze well).
- ❑ Have children wash their hands before eating or preparing food.

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**BEATING THE LUNCH BAG BLAHS: SANDWICH SAVVY**


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Not only are sandwiches easy to prepare, pack and eat, but they are a great way to build in four food groups for taste and nutrition.

**New twists to old favourites**

- “Rollers”— place meat, cheese, lettuce or other veggies on a tortilla and roll up.
- Pita Pockets— fill pita bread with your favourite sandwich fillers or last night's leftovers.
- Banana Dog— peanut butter and a banana on a hot dog bun.

**Hot Ideas**

- Leftover pizza  
Chili or favourite soup in a thermos



Here are some ideas to build all four food groups into your child's lunch.

**VEGETABLES  
& FRUIT**
**Vegetables:**

- ❑ Raw with dip
- ❑ In salad or soup
- ❑ Tomato juice
- ❑ Vegetable pizza

**Fruits:**

- ❑ Seasonal fresh fruit
- ❑ Canned fruit (in own juice)
- ❑ Applesauce
- ❑ 100% pure juice

**GRAIN  
PRODUCTS**
**Assorted Breads:**

- ❑ Whole wheat, oat, rye
- ❑ Pita, bagel, bun, English muffin
- ❑ Tortillas, bannock, flatbread
- ❑ Rice dishes
- ❑ Pasta and couscous

**MILK &  
ALTERNATIVES**

- ❑ Milk (white, chocolate or flavoured)
- ❑ Fortified soy beverage
- ❑ Yogurt (tubs or tubes)
- ❑ Cheese (cubes, slices on sandwich, cheese strings)
- ❑ Pudding (made with milk)
- ❑ Soup (made with milk)

**MEAT &  
ALTERNATIVES**

- ❑ Turkey, chicken, roast beef, ham, pastrami
- ❑ Salmon, tuna
- ❑ Beans, hummus
- ❑ Tofu (cubed, seasoned)
- ❑ Eggs
- ❑ Peanut butter, nuts and seeds

*Adapted from Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide, 2007*

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**SNACKS: SNACKING IS IMPORTANT FOR KIDS**


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Snacking is important for kids—they have small tummies and growing bodies that require a lot of energy! They need to eat smaller amounts of food more often during the day. Think of snacks as “mini-meals” based on choices from the four food groups.

Chocolate milk, like white milk, is an excellent source of calcium, vitamin D and other essential nutrients. It contains roughly as much sugar as the same amount of unsweetened fruit juice and has an insignificant amount of caffeine.


**Good Sense Snack Foods**

- ❑ Cheese cut into fun shapes and served on crackers.
- ❑ Jiffy Pizza: toasted English muffin and pizza sauce with cheese and veggies.
- ❑ A rainbow of raw or partially cooked veggies and dip.
- ❑ Fruit Shake: blend  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup milk,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of fruit and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of yogurt. (Makes enough for two servings.)
- ❑ Chocolate milk with graham crackers.

**RECIPE FILE**
**Dilly Dip**

1 cup (250 mL) creamed cottage cheese  
 ½ cup (125 mL) plain yogurt or sour cream  
 2 tsp (10 mL) dried dill weed or 2 Tbsp (25 mL) fresh dill  
 1 tsp (5 mL) lemon juice  
 salt and pepper

**Optional:** 2 Tbsp (25 mL) green onion or chives, chopped

In a blender, combine cottage cheese with yogurt; process until smooth. Transfer to bowl; stir in dill, lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste, and onion or chives. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or until chilled. Serve with vegetables.

**Children love to dip!** Serve this yummy and healthy dip recipe with an assortment of raw or partially cooked veggies.


**Shake-a-Pudding**

½ cup (125 mL) milk  
 3 Tbsp (45 mL) instant pudding mix (*must be instant*)

Place ingredients in a small jar, leaving the jar half empty for shaking purposes. Secure lid. Shake about 2 minutes until thickened. Ready to eat!

*This is an easy & fun recipe your children can shake up themselves!*



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## THE HOW TO'S OF HEALTHY EATING

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### Tips for Dealing with Picky Eaters

- ❑ Involve your child in food preparation.
- ❑ Read books about food with your child.
- ❑ Introduce a new food by pairing with an old favourite.
- ❑ Be patient! You may have to offer new foods several times before they are accepted.
- ❑ Offer a variety of nutritious foods with different colours, textures and flavours.
- ❑ Be a good role model! Children are more eager to eat foods they see their friends and family enjoying.
- ❑ Sit down together and enjoy family mealtime.
- ❑ See your doctor if you are worried about your child's growth or development.



Enjoy time together by involving children in preparing foods. Discuss the colours, tastes or where the food comes from (tree, vine, underground, cow, chicken). Involving children in planning and preparing meals not only helps develop important skills and confidence, but they are more likely to try the dish if they made it!

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### ASK THE DIETITIAN

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#### Q: Should I choose lower fat food for my child?

**A:** No. Energy for growth, development and activity is a priority for young children. Nutritious foods that contain fat are good sources of energy and should not be restricted. Offer a variety of foods based on food group choices. Limit less healthy choices like cakes and pastries, chocolate and candies, cookies, doughnuts, french fries, potato chips, nachos and other salty snacks, fruit flavoured drinks and soft drinks.

#### Q: When is eating lower fat foods appropriate?

**A:** Lower fat foods can be introduced as children move into adolescence. When growth is complete (i.e. adult height is reached) lower fat food choices are appropriate and support heart health.

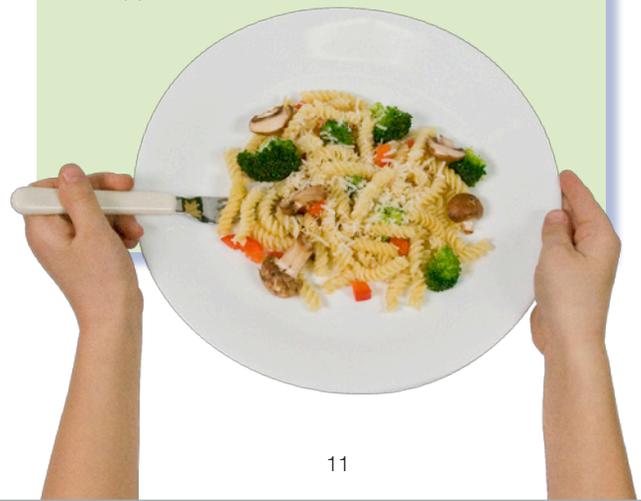
#### Q: How do I know if my child is eating enough food ... or too much?

**A:** You don't, but your child does! Ease your mind by remembering the division of responsibility: parents are responsible for what is offered to eat; children are responsible for how much (or whether) they eat. Trust your child's ability to determine how hungry or full they are.

(Source: *How to Get Your Kid to Eat...But Not Too Much* by Ellyn Satter)

#### Did You Know?

- ❑ Healthy bodies come in all shapes and sizes. Children need to learn to like their bodies and feel good about themselves just like adults do.
- ❑ Children who eat well, enjoy activity, and feel good about themselves develop a healthy approach to life.





For more information,  
call a nutrition educator at:  
604-294-3775 or  
1-800-242-6455

[www.bcdairyfoundation.ca](http://www.bcdairyfoundation.ca)

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