

# 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 reuseable water bottle. Limit sugary drinks including juice, sweetened milks and sweetened plant-based beverages.

## Lunch Ideas

Wraps, pita pockets, and sandwiches	Rice or noodles	Other ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Egg salad</a> with cucumber slices</li> <li>• <a href="#">Tuna salad roll-ups</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Hummus</a>, salad greens and cheese</li> <li>• Chicken, tomato, lettuce</li> <li>• Salmon, cream cheese, cucumber</li> <li>• Falafel with cucumber and tomatoes</li> <li>• <a href="#">Burrito</a> with salsa</li> <li>• Grilled cheese</li> <li>• <a href="#">Salad rolls</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">French toast strips</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sushi bowl (carrot, cucumber, edamame, salmon or marinated tofu, seaweed)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Fried rice</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Spaghetti</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Stir-fried vegetables and tofu/chicken</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Vegetable curry</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Macaroni and cheese</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Homemade pizza</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Chili</a> with <a href="#">corn bread</a></li> <li>• Dumplings or perogies</li> <li>• <a href="#">Quinoa or barley salad</a></li> <li>• Steamed meat or vegetable bun</li> <li>• Baked beans</li> <li>• <a href="#">Stew</a></li> <li>• Soup with bread (<a href="#">chowder</a>, <a href="#">tomato</a>, <a href="#">chicken noodle</a>, <a href="#">split pea</a>)</li> <li>• Scrambled eggs, potato and sausage</li> <li>• <a href="#">Morrocan chickpea stew</a></li> <li>• Mashed potatoes, peas and beef</li> </ul>

## Snack Ideas

Vegetables	Fruits	Other ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Carrot/bell pepper sticks with <a href="#">dip</a></li><li>• Steamed/raw broccoli or cauliflower with <a href="#">hummus</a></li><li>• Sliced cucumber, radish</li><li>• <a href="#">Baked sweet potato wedges</a></li><li>• Snow peas/cherry tomatoes</li><li>• <a href="#">Kale chips</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Roasted squash</a></li><li>• Roasted seaweed</li><li>• Celery sticks with nut/seed butter</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries)</li><li>• Tangerine or orange</li><li>• Pear, or bananas</li><li>• Peach, nectarine, plums</li><li>• Kiwi, melon, grapes</li><li>• Fruit cups/fruit sauce (canned fruit)</li><li>• Apple slices with cinnamon</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Yogurt parfait</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Homemade smoothie</a></li><li>• Cheese with whole-grain crackers</li><li>• Fortified soy drink or milk</li><li>• Roasted <a href="#">chickpeas</a>, <a href="#">edamame</a></li><li>• Sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, nuts if permitted</li><li>• <a href="#">Granola bar</a> or <a href="#">muffin</a></li></ul>

## 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](#).

For more copies, go online at [vch.eduhealth.ca](#) or email [pthem@vch.ca](mailto:pthem@vch.ca) and quote Catalogue No. **BB.203.L86**

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