

# Pack and Go Lunches for Young Children



## Getting Started:

These can help with packing a nutritious and safe lunch:

- Insulated lunch bag
- Variety of reusable containers with lids
- Ice packs to keep cold foods cold
- Leak proof drink container
- Food thermos to keep hot food hot
- Reusable spoons and forks



## Lunch Packing Tips:

**Meals:** Pack food from all 3 food groupings in [Canada's Food Guide](https://Canada.ca/FoodGuide).

**Snacks:** Pack food from at least 2 food groupings in Canada's Food Guide.

**Drinks:** Water is the best thirst quencher. Plain milk or fortified soy beverage can be sent in an insulated beverage thermos. Avoid sugary drinks like juice.

**Allergies:** If peanut and nut products are restricted, try using seed butters or spreads made from soy or pea butter instead.

## A Change from Sandwiches

- Pasta with soft veggies and shredded chicken
- Hard cooked egg, toasted 1/2 bagel, fresh fruit
- Bean dip, veggies and pita bread
- Salmon salad, crackers and vegetables
- Chicken wrap or pita pocket
- [Tuna roll-ups](#)

## Breakfast Favourites...Anytime!

- Pancakes or waffles (try a higher protein recipe) with fruit and yogurt
- Breakfast sandwich (hard poached egg and cheese on an English muffin)
- French toast and applesauce
- Toasted nut/seed butter and banana sandwich
- Banana bran muffin, cheese and fruit
- [Egg bites](#), scone, and berries

## Reduce Choking Risks

Until children are at least 4 years old, do not offer foods that are round, hard, sticky and difficult to swallow unless the food can be modified. See [this page](#) for information about how to modify foods to reduce choking risks for young children.

## Cold Re-runs

- Pizza
- Quesadillas
- Burrito or soft tacos
- Tuna or salmon melt
- Baked samosas
- Salad rolls
- Bite size chicken chunks
- Baked tofu cubes
- California rolls
- [Quinoa, protein and veggie bowl](#)

## Hot Re-runs

- Chili
- Casserole
- Hearty soup or stew
- Quiche
- Dahl and rice
- Spaghetti and meat sauce
- Macaroni and cheese
- Stir-fried vegetables with meat or tofu
- Perogies or pot stickers



### **Pack a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack if your child will be away all day.**

Snacks provide energy to grow, learn and play. They also prevent hunger-related mood swings. Think of snacks as mini-meals to fuel busy brains and bodies.

#### **Smart snacks have...**

- ♦ **at least two food groups**
- ♦ **a fruit or vegetable most of the time and,**
- ♦ **a little protein or healthy fat for longer lasting energy (try cheese, plain yogurt, avocado, beans, egg, tofu, seed/nut butter)**



## Nutritious Snack Combos

- Fruit and yogurt parfait with [granola](#)
- Apple slices with cheese
- Hummus with pepper and cucumber slices
- Banana bread and yogurt
- Black bean and corn salsa with tortilla chips
- Strawberries and cottage cheese
- Whole grain crackers and guacamole
- Smoothie in a thermos and pumpkin muffin

## Ready to Pack Snacks

- Unsweetened fruit sauce cups
- Fruit cups (packed in fruit juice)
- Cheese strings
- Individual yogurts / yogurt tubes
- Individual hummus cups
- Granola bars (choose lower sugar options without yogurt or chocolate coatings)

### **For more information:**

Call Dietitian Services at HealthLink BC by dialing 8-1-1 or visit their [website](#)