

Optimal Medical Foundation

Childhood Disease Research Foundation



Nutritious Food Menus...

School Lunch Bags

Vacation Days

After School Snacks!

Nutritional Menus for Children

Introductory Considerations

Many parents strive to provide a well balanced food plan for their family throughout the week and it is not always an easy task with their active daily schedules and the various work and/or community commitments of everyday life. To assist with the daily challenge of preparing lunches and after school snacks, the Charity commissioned nutritional experts to help design a series of mid-day menus, which will provide a well balanced diet to your family.

In the days of our parents, the access to helpful information about family nutrition required going to the library or a favorite book store or even signing up for a short course. It required dedicated and committed time to explore, learn, experiment and develop a consistent mindset to presenting a balanced food menu for the family.

Today, access to the internet has streamlined the channels and time to gather information but now, the discerning parent must determine what is accurate dietary information and what may be presented as 'healthy' but is actually supporting the sale of a food product.

For the young student, one key characteristic of their level of health is the amount of energy and alertness they have during the day, to complete their daily schooling and sports or family commitments.

After a search on the web, one can see that **the measurement of energy derived from food is very arbitrary. There is no one definitive measuring process.** e.g. calories, refers to the energy derived by the burning or combustion of specific foods or food category, by the body – e.g. fats, lipids or carbohydrates – at low temperatures. Every human being has its own specific processing system which is aligned to their body, so the 'measures' referred to in all methods are intended to represent 'estimates' and should be viewed as a reference guideline only.

One system of measurement is known as the Atwater System which is now more than 100 years old and is still utilized today, as an acceptable measurement reference, for energy consumption by the body. Importantly, it was based upon the food composition and diet habits of the North American, however, one must also recall that it was during a time period when there was very little manufactured food, fast food or genetically altered foods.

- For a broader understanding of food energy measurements, please refer to the website link, the Atwater System (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atwater_system).

Needless to say that now in the 21st century we speak more in “energy terms” than ever, whether it is household consumption or body consumption. With the progress in physics, one can see that everything is really a form of energy. While more research needs to be done about the **vital energy of living organisms**, it is known from different cultures around the world that

'live organisms' possess something extra. For example, *when we crunch on a fresh apple, peach or pear, we and our body's processing system, experience that 'something extra' right away.*

The North American family demographic has changed significantly from 1950. From a practical perspective and in order to have a common measurement system which is relevant to different groups and cultures, the recommendation is to adopt a measurement system that is consistent and viewed as being relatively accurate. This is known to be the **glycemic index**:

http://www.health.harvard.edu/newsweek/Glycemic_index_and_glycemic_load_for_100_foods.htm

'Glycemic index' and 'glycemic load', offer information about how foods affect blood sugar and insulin. **The lower a food's glycemic index or glycemic load, the less it affects blood sugar and insulin levels.** Here you'll find a list of the glycemic index and glycemic load for more than 100 common foods.

The table, depicted in the above link, clearly shows that **raw foods have a low glycemic index**, that is they provide nutrients and energy without affecting the blood sugar levels, to any significant degree.

Excesses and deficiencies of certain nutrients can lead to detrimental health situations. This is why, when it comes to an individual's diet, the concepts of **calorie-intake, adequacy, balance, moderation and variety** are all very important. The goal becomes that for a body to be in a healthy balance, the food in-take must also be in a state of healthy balance.

Important Points to Remember

- Energy only comes from carbohydrates, fats and proteins.
- Vitamins (especially B vitamins) and minerals, allow the body to get energy from carbohydrates, fats and proteins.

What is a calorie? Oxford Press defines it as:

- two units of heat energy
- the energy needed to raise the temperature of 1 gram of water through 1 °C (now usually defined as 4.1868 joules).
- An average person consumes 2,000 to 3,000 kilocalories/calories per day.
 - Children are not the average person when it comes to daily averages.
 - A child's body needs a certain number of calories per day just to maintain essential body functions. If the child consumes over that needed amount of energy each day due to the child's inactivity, then the young person will, over time, gain weight.
 - The amount of calories for a young person age 4-13 will also vary, whether they are male or female, active or inactive, slimly built or heavily built in body structure.

How Many Calories Should a Child Be Eating?

There are many opinions and there is no exact science as every child is different. However there are some practical guidelines to help the family meal planner choose the size of portion to match the physical age, gender, size and activity level of the family member.

E.g. **Livestrong.com** a nutritional website sets out the following:

“Kids need plenty of calories on a daily basis to grow and develop properly -- but children who eat too many calories, especially those who are inactive, are at risk for childhood obesity. Your child’s individualized calorie needs are based on age, gender and activity level. Ask your pediatrician to track your child's growth to make sure he’s growing at an appropriate pace compared to other children the same age.

Kids ages 2 to 3 often need 1,000 to 1,400 calories per day. While many 2-year-olds generally require about 1,000 calories per day, 3-year-old girls need about 1,000 to 1,400 calories and 3-year-old boys often require 1,200 to 1,400 calories daily to grow at a healthy pace, according to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010. If your young child is active, she usually needs more calories than a sedentary child would -- and should aim for the upper end of the Dietary Guidelines’

Because **4- to 8-year-old** boys are often bigger than girls within the same age range, they generally require more calories as well. Active 4- to 8-year-old children need more calories than their inactive counterparts. For example, girls ages 4 to 8 often need 1,200 calories daily if they are sedentary, 1,400 to 1,600 calories if they are moderately active and 1,400 to 1,800 calories a day if they are regularly active. Also, 4- to 8-year-old boys generally need 1,400 calories when they’re sedentary, 1,400 to 1,600 calories if they are moderately active and 1,600 to 2,000 calories daily when they are active, notes the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute.

“A child within the age range of **9 to 13** often needs 1,400 to 2,600 calories per day. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 suggest that 9- to 13-year-old girls require 1,400 to 2,200 calories per day, while boys within the same age range usually need 1,600 to 2,600 calories daily to maintain healthy body weights, depending on how active they are. To help ensure your child is eating an appropriate number of calories, ask your pediatrician to chart his growth pattern on a growth chart.”

Let’s explore this comment:

e.g. 12 year old boy who is 5’6”, 120 lb and is ‘very active’ will require a high level of calories in a day. The same boy who is relatively ‘sedentary’ in his day and spends most of his time on the computer, on a game device or watching TV will only need about 55% of the calories required by the ‘very active’ boy.

e.g. a 12 year old girl who is 5'2", 98 lbs. and is 'very active' will require about the maximum recommended intake of calories, however, if the same girl is quite 'inactive' then her calorie intake will be about 32% less.

Interestingly the variance between a boy and girl's required calorie intake is not always constant. In one situation, a girl may require slightly more calories for her 'very active' day. While the 'sedentary' boy still requires more calories than the girl of the same age, height and weight.

The difference in calorie intake required between a 'very active' child and a 'placid/sedentary' child, ranges between 32 to 35%. This significant variance clearly supports the need for an awareness of the child's level of daily activity for good menu planning and to be very conscious of the size of portions being served on a plate or placed into a lunch bag.

Until a child is the age of 10, it is recommended they should be served their portions, rather than helping themselves. This practice will help to balance the consumption of food to the child's daily needs and work towards a balanced body height and weight.

Menu Planning and the Time of Day

In planning the menus for each day, there is a relationship between the time of the day a particular food group should be eaten and how nature grows the food.

If it grows high above the ground then it will be associated to the early part of the day. Think of eating foods in the morning which grow on trees reaching to the sun; apples, peaches, and pears.

If it grows just above or just below (or along) the ground, and can be pulled by hand from the ground, it is a food grouping for the middle of the day to the early evening. Think of salad vegetables, such as tomatoes, lettuce, radishes, carrots and beets.

If it grows below the ground and needs to be dug up, then it is more suitable to be eaten during the latter part of the day into the evening. Think of turnips that grow their roots after dark. e.g. we do not usually eat parsnips or turnips for breakfast!

A good guiding principle for parents is that meals should be 'separated in time' from treats/ desserts, fruit and beverages.

Treats: If the child is to have a treat, try to have it finished at least one hour before lunch or dinner/supper.

Desserts should be 20 -30 minutes after eating the main course of a meal. This allows sufficient time for the body to start its processing, before sugar is added to the food intake.

Beverages: Avoid soft drinks, as often as possible, which should not be consumed at any mealtime. These products are all high in sugar and usually change the dynamics and the quality of the child's digestion. There are several tasty alternatives, in addition to water (add a dash of lemon or lime to flavor).

Good News!

Fortunately, there are a growing number of nutritional resources for parents to acquire credible information and as more research is completed, the job of good food menu planning for the family will become clearer and the choice of food, more informed.

The menus have also been designed to be practical, and reference foods which are easily accessible and considered to be reasonable in price to the consumer.

Since the FDA utilizes Calorie tables, the following menus will have the approximate calorie content indicated. The calorie count will vary depending on the size of portions used by the parent in preparing the food. The calorie count is intended solely as a point of reference.

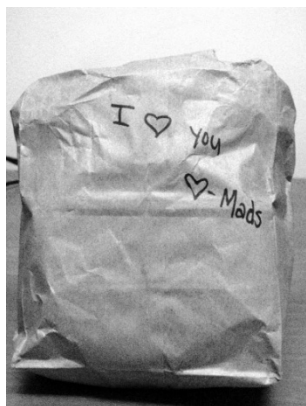
The following describes: Daily Sandwich ideas, 5 school day menus, 7 vacation/non-school day lunches, a variety of after-school treats and a few helpful hints when cooking for the family.

LUNCH MENUS FOR CHILDREN

Age 4 to 13

When preparing lunches for your family, the size of the portion will vary due to age, physical size and the level of their physical activity.

Please refer to the introductory guidelines on pages 3 -5 for portion suggestions.



GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

As we live in a world wherein everything is becoming abbreviated, it is helpful to have quick access to the do's and don'ts of food menu planning.

Things to avoid:

- Avoid providing soft drinks for lunch
- While juices* at lunch are better than soft drinks, just water** (room temperature) is best. For home lunches, smoothies and yogurt drinks make a great alternative to juices and pop.

*Fruit juices, whether bottled store-bought brands or freshly made, are very high in sugar. Just think about the number of apples or oranges it takes to make one glass of juice. A 200 mL glass of apple juice may only be 90 calories but it will usually contain about 4 tablespoons of sugar.

Having some fruit juice once in a while is fine, but it should not be consumed in large quantities, as many people do, on a regular basis - especially children.

To cut down on the sugar and still receive the health benefits of fruit juices, try diluting them with water and only drinking smaller amounts at any one time.

Vegetable juices are lower in sugar, but some commercial brands are very high in salt. Read the labels and whenever possible, make your own.

** Room temperature water is more supportive of good digestion – cold water can cause foods to solidify in the body rather than break down and digest easily.

- Try not to provide heavily sweetened desserts or treats with lunch.
 - o They are better if consumed separately, as a snack.
- Preferably, do not provide fruit in any form at lunch time. If fruit is provided choose a non-citrus fruit.
 - o Fruit is better for breakfast and/or for snacks.
 - o Avoid eating fruit after 6pm for children (adults 8pm)
 - o Melons- “eat them alone or leave them alone”.
- Avoid mixing peas and carrots – they are hard to digest together
- Avoid using bleached white flour bread products (Often the word bleached is not used in the labelling but instead the label uses the words, added ‘enrichment’. This could suggest the bread has been made with bleached flour wherein many natural ingredients have been removed and vitamins and minerals need to be added back into the bread.)
- Avoid use of iceberg lettuce.
 - While iceberg has a long storage capability in your refrigerator, it is low in nutrients. Iceberg lettuce is a hybrid created to extend travel time and durability during shipment and while it stays crisp – a side effect of this, is that it slows down the digestive system and tends to make a person feel sleepy.
- Avoid using heavy dressings on vegetables or salads; heavy dressings usually have too many saturated fats and unnecessary ingredients. One can dilute dressings with yogurt, or lemon juice.

Good Food Practices:

- Always provide at least one small serving of a fresh, raw vegetable in the lunch.
 - Surprisingly to many parents, small servings are actually more appealing to children. If the quantity is too big, children may tend to skip the raw vegetables provided
- Try to provide a few small raw vegetables in a salad before the main course, even if the meal contains cooked vegetables. Calories from raw foods are good calories.
- Avoid mixing fruits and vegetables – they should be eaten not less than 1 hour apart.
- A few items can be classified as vegetable **or** fruit such as: tomato, pineapple, papaya, avocado, lemon, lime –they do not need to be eaten at separate times.
- (e.g. A tomato is considered a vegetable yet botanically, it is a fruit.)
- Ideally, cooked starches should not be more than 50% of the meal when served on the plate.
- Safe drinks/foods to eat prior to bedtime: milk (lactose-free preferred when possible), vegetable juice (fruit juice is too sweet), ovaltine, muffin (homemade preferred), bread/toast (with apple sauce and a dash of cinnamon is very tasty), oatmeal type cookies (low in sugar). Placing water by the bedside for the night is helpful, just in case the child gets thirsty.

Use dinner leftovers:

- Dinner leftovers make a good lunch the next day. It's a great idea to make extra at night so you have something to take for lunch or enjoy at home. e.g. turkey sandwiches.
- It's also an economical way to reduce the individual cost of lunches.
- The rule of thumb is that a lunch serving is about one-half in size of a dinner serving.

Other Food Best Practices:

- When vacationing, choose foods from the adults' menu and share with the children. Often children's food on the menu is high in salt and/or sugar content.
- When dining out try to choose a salad or vegetables as a side, rather than fries.
- Eating raw/steamed/stir-fried vegetables/baked/roasted vegetables should become a habit shared by the whole family.
- Serve raw vegetables at any time, up to 2 hours before bedtime.
 - Raw vegetables take more time to digest, keep the stomach fuller longer and make the child less sleepy after meals.
 - Also, raw vegetables create fewer residues that the body has to eliminate and at the same time, provide maximum nutrients/ weight.

LUNCH MENUS FOR CHILDREN AGE 4 TO 13

The Sandwich – 4 steps to food enjoyment!

The sandwich has always been a center point for lunch time meals. Sometimes, we get stuck in a groove of wondering what to make and often prepare the same few sandwich combinations which are repeated every week.

Here is an easy way to 'change it up' on a weekly basis.

Choose the size of sandwich.

- **Whole Sandwich (2 lunch servings)**
2 slices of bread (bread made with unbleached flour)
- **Half Sandwich (1 lunch serving)**
1 slice bread

Step One: Select the Main Ingredient

- Select 2 ounces of lean meat or fish or cheese.
- It is not recommended to combine meat and cheese (meat & dairy) as the combination is more difficult for the body to digest.

Cheese Choices: Choose one

- Swiss
 - Cheddar
 - Monterey Jack
 - Goat Cheese
- or

Meat Choices: Choose one

- White Turkey slices
 - White Chicken slices
 - Beef slices
- or

Fish Choices: Choose one

- Salmon
- Albacore tuna
- (While an excellent fish, sardines should only be eaten in a home or fresh air environment)

Step Two: Select the Toppings - Use as much as you like:

- Sliced tomato
- Leaf style lettuce
- Arugula (Rocket)
- Mixture of greens
- Spinach
- Sliced cucumber
- Sliced peppers
- Any kind of sprout
- Onions
- Pickles or beets

Step Three: Select the Spread for the Bread**Choose one + butter**

- Hellman's Extra Light Mayonnaise: 1 Tbsp.
- Any Coarse Ground Mustard: 1 Tbsp.
- Dijon Style Mustard: 1 Tbsp.
- Your Favorite Chutney: 1 Tbsp.
- Tapenade: 1 Tbsp. Tapenade is a Provençal dish consisting of puréed or finely chopped olives, capers, anchovies and olive oil.
(It's name comes from the Provençal word for capers.)

Step Four: Put it all together and slice, ready to eat

Planning out a week of school lunch bag menus

Day 1 Lunch: Total Calories: 260-300

1. Choice of raw vegetables (see below): 10-30 Cal.
2. Pita pouch with choice of protein: 2 oz chicken (not deep fried). 70 Cal (or other-the calorie count is about the same). Total calorie count will be about 250-270.

Let's Make It!

- Use small pieces of chicken or shred it.
- Spread a low fat, low sodium mayonnaise on the inside of the pita.
- Add pieces of shredded leaf lettuce.
- Chop in some tomato.
- Chop in some green pepper.
- Add a dash of pepper.

The vegetables should be eaten without dressing or other additions. Their calorie count is between 10 and 30, for the amount indicated below: Choose one or more.

- ½ celery stick cut in 2" pieces (or 3")
- 5 – 10 grape tomatoes or one tomato (technically a fruit)
- 3-4 green leaves as a side
- ¼ - ½ red pepper
- 3-4 broccoli florets and 3-4 cauliflower florets
- 2" slices of cucumber and zucchini
- Any other local vegetable that your family enjoys and a dip

An exception to the fruit rule can be papaya or pineapple; these can be eaten with lunch; they provides helpful enzymes for digestion.

Day 2 Lunch Total Calories: 210

1. Choice of **raw vegetables**: 10-30 Cal.
2. Non-white flour Wrap/ Tortilla Wrap/ Sprouted Wrap/ Corn Wrap: about 160- 180 Cal.
 - Avoid use of wraps that have added sugar, too many preservatives, fructose, benzoate.
 - The ideal wrap has flour, salt, and water.

Let's Make It!

The wrap: 120- 130 Cal.

- One lettuce leaf or spring mix – a handful of young spinach or sprouts: 0-5 Cal.
- 1 oz. tbs. of chick peas + hummus + peas/
- 1 slice chicken: 20-30 Cal (if more is used, it can be up to 60 Cal).
- Some sliced Vidalia onion (optional to child's taste).

- ½ tsp mustard (or more to suit taste...mustard should have just mustard seeds, vinegar, turmeric maybe, but no sugar, salt or preservatives).

Day 3 Lunch Total Calories: 100-150

1. Green Salad with choice of protein.

Let's Make It!

Use leaf lettuce or spring mix.

Slice in tomatoes and green onion (sliced avocado can be added).

Add your choice of the following:

- Seeds
 - Meat protein (not deep fried)
 - Chickpeas
 - Omelette or boiled egg
 - Chicken (not deep fried)
 - Fish (not deep fried)
 - Tofu – scrambled or as a burger (soy may be a controversial choice but tofu is fermented and that makes it a healthy choice)
2. Papaya or pineapple (½ cup) or an apple or slices of kiwi.

Day 4 Lunch Total Calories: 200

1. Choice of **raw vegetables**: 10-30 Calories or a small salad.
2. Quinoa Delight (Calories – Quinoa 110, Feta Cheese (1/2 oz.) 40-60).

Let's Make It!

- ½ cup quinoa.* (at most)
- Add chunks of feta cheese (goat cheese is very tasty).
- Add cherry tomatoes (halved).

* Quinoa can be eaten either hot or cold and enjoyed thoroughly either way.
The quinoa seed is packed with protein.

Day 5 Lunch Total Calories: 315- 335 Cal

1. Choice of **raw vegetables**: 10-30 Calories or a small green salad.
2. Cold egg omelette sandwich – not just your ordinary egg salad sandwich (96 Cal for a one egg omelette, 40 Cal for cheese, two slices of non enriched bread with no sugar 85 Cal per slice.)

Let's Make It!

- Scramble one egg in a frying pan, using coconut oil.
- Add in small pieces of spring onion & red pepper.
- Optional: add steamed cauliflower/zucchini.
- Top omelette with pasta sauce near the end of the cooking.
- Spread butter on one side of 2 pieces of bread.
- Add leaf lettuce to one side.
- Add the cooked omelette.
- Add shredded cheese on top.
- Add a dash of pepper.
- Add the second piece of bread and cut in half...ready to wrap & go.

Other School Day Lunch Bag Menu Ideas:

Frozen Fruit Salad

Make a frozen fruit salad which will naturally thaw by lunchtime.

Let's Make It!

- Mix fruits such as frozen organic blackberries, dark sweet cherries, raspberries, strawberries, peaches, pineapple, papaya and mango.
- Drizzle fruit with a tablespoon of 100% pure maple syrup (a natural healthy sweetener which is an excellent alternative to processed corn syrup).
- Include a small container of yogurt or complement the fruit theme with an organic banana muffin.

Dipping Snack Potpourri

As a periodic alternative, include a lunch which consists of a series of healthy dipping snacks such as hummus and an optional salsa sauce...peach or chipotle are some salsa selections.

Let the children pick their favorite hummus flavours and salsas.

Include a variety of organic dipping chips, including ones like blue corn tortilla chips, tortilla rounds, kale chips, Melba toast, bread sticks.

Let's Make It!

- To make a homemade hummus, use a can of organic garbanzo beans and whip them up in a food processor---add natural flavour items such as roasted red peppers.
- For an extra special dessert in the lunch bag, pack a couple of cookie varieties such as ginger snaps or raisin/oatmeal.

Lunchtime Beverages on the Go!

- While water is always the preferred choice for a beverage, there are alternatives which have been mentioned.
- Many juice boxes are sugar-laden and often have very little natural juice in them. Consider filling up a thermos with lactose-free milk or coconut milk or coconut water.
- Other healthy juice drinks are blueberry, pomegranate, apple, cranberry, strawberry, wild cherry, pineapple and kiwi.
- Convenient juice pouches may also be available in your local store and they are easily packed into the student's backpack.

School Vacation Day Menus

These menus are ideal for the days when the children are off school for the day and they are able to enjoy a lunch prepared and eaten at home.

If some of those days are travelling vacation days to enjoy new adventures and it seems to be harder to eat well when away from the home, there is a simple solution to it: just buy more fruit, local fruit if possible, or as a last resort unsweetened vegetable and fruit juices, and drink small amounts of water/fluids throughout the day.

Calorie count for the following depends on the provider, but each lunch should not exceed more than 400 Calories. Remember to halve the portions of a supper time meal.

Vacation Day Lunch 1

1. Chicken Wrap or salad bowl with grilled chicken/fish.
2. Carrot or celery sticks or sweet pepper with 1 tbsp. of hummus or almond butter/hazelnut butter or other nut butters.
3. Aged Cheddar, Lettuce & Chutney, Sandwich.

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp (30 mL) grainy mustard
- 4 tbsp (60 mL) mango chutney
- A few slices of aged cheddar
- Leaf lettuce
- 2 thin slices of onion
- Small handful fresh mint leaves, minced, stems removed or, parsley

Let's Make It!

- Cut 1 inch off the top of each pita and place the cut-off piece inside.
- Mix mustard and chutney together and spread inside pitas on both sides.
- Follow this with aged cheddar, onion, mint or parsley.
- Wrap in waxed paper and pack in a cooler.

Vacation Day Lunch 2

1. Soup of the day: Squash, minestrone, gazpacho (vegetable based, has much less saturated fat and it is more nutritious).
 2. Roasted vegetable sandwich with goat cheese
 3. Fruity Pasta Salad – Serves 4 (480 calories per serving)
- Pineapple and pear gives this fruity pasta salad a sweet accent, while balsamic vinegar adds a bit of zest.

Ingredients:

- 1 pear
- 350 g mixed coloured pasta shapes
- 75 g 25% reduced-fat mature Cheddar cheese, grated
- 100 g peeled fresh pineapple, diced
- 1/2 small onion, finely chopped
- 4 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 4 tablespoons plain yogurt
- 1/2 teaspoon chopped pickled gherkin or pickles to taste
- 1 teaspoon caster sugar, or to taste
- juice of 1/4 lemon, or to taste
- pepper to taste
- cayenne pepper (optional)
- 120 g mixed salad greens, such as arugula, watercress or baby spinach
- 1 tablespoon sunflower or coconut oil (optional)
- 1/2 teaspoon balsamic vinegar, or to taste
- 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons dried cranberries (optional)

Let's Make It!

- Peel, core and dice the pear.
- Cook the mixed pasta shapes in boiling water for approximately 10–12 minutes, or according to the package instructions, until “al dente”. Drain and rinse the pasta in cold water, then drain again.
- Combine the cooked pasta with the Cheddar cheese, pear, pineapple, onion, mayonnaise, yogurt and gherkin/pickle. Add a little sugar, if desired.
- Mix together well, then adjust the flavour of the dressing with lemon juice, pepper and cayenne pepper.
- Dress the mixed salad greens with the sunflower oil (if using), the balsamic vinegar and a squeeze of lemon juice. Divide the dressed leaves among 4 plates and top with the fruity pasta salad.
- Arrange the walnuts and dried cranberries (if using) around the salad and serve immediately.

Fruity pasta salad variations: Omit the gherkin and instead season the pasta with a sprinkling of curry powder, stirring it in well.

- Sprinkle with cashews instead of walnuts.
- Low-fat mayonnaise can be used instead of the traditional type, for extra heart health.
- Use 1 can (540 ml) chickpeas, well drained, instead of meat/chicken.
- Use 3 slices of pineapple in natural juice, drained and diced.

Vacation Day Lunch 3

1. Fish or chicken (roast) with green beans or mixed vegetables, in the desired quantity.

Ingredients:

- Choose a white fish (with scales) or salmon to prepare as you wish.
 - Or
 - Roast a chicken (Use the left-over chicken for tomorrow's lunch ideas).
 - Steam green beans or mixed vegetables.
 - Add a spoonful of quinoa mixed with seeds.
2. Soup or cabbage salad/Greek salad/ mixed greens.

Vacation Day Lunch 4

1. Baked Yukon Gold/Yellow (or favorite) potato, topped with sour cream and chives, with green salad or cabbage salad/ coleslaw in the desired quantity.
2. Light Rye Club Sandwich (800 calories).

Ingredients

- 2 slices of light rye toast
- 3 tbsp ready-made hummus
- 1 small avocado (100g), stoned and sliced
- 8-12 cherry tomatoes, sliced
- Pieces of leaf lettuce
- 1 slice of white turkey breast or 3 strips of turkey bacon

Let's Make It!

- Toast the bread and spread hummus evenly over one side of each slice.
- On one slice of bread, lay on the avocado and tomato.
- Then lay on top of them either the slice of cooked white turkey breast or the 3 strips of cooked turkey bacon.
- Sprinkle with pepper.
- Lay the leaf lettuce on top.
- Add the top layer of light rye bread and using the palm of your hand, press down lightly to firm the mixture together.
- Slice in half, diagonally, for easier eating.

Vacation Day Lunch 5

1. Risotto or rice and chicken with gravy/favourite sauce.
2. Raw salad: sweet peppers, avocado, celery, greens (spinach) with lemon juice and olive oil.
3. Kale & Quinoa Patties –makes 10 patties
 Quinoa—which tastes like a cross between brown rice and oatmeal—combined with fresh kale, yellow onion, chives and Parmesan cheese – Quinoa has the highest protein content of all the grains and is gluten-free.

Ingredients:

- 2 ½ cups cooked quinoa, cooled
- 4 cups kale, cleaned, deveined, chopped small
- 3 large eggs, beaten
- 1 tsp sea salt
- ½ yellow onion, diced small
- ½ cup chives, chopped
- ½ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- ¾ cup finely ground breadcrumbs (use gluten free breadcrumbs to make this dish gluten free)
- 2 tbsp olive oil plus more for frying

Let's Make It!

- Combine quinoa, eggs, Parmesan cheese, chives and salt in medium mixing bowl.
- Heat 2 Tbsp olive oil in skillet on medium heat and cook to draw out most of the water in the onions and garlic until they are soft (approximately 3 minutes).
- Add kale to skillet and cook until kale is bright green and soft.
- Add kale mixture to quinoa mixture, then add breadcrumbs and stir to combine.
- Place clean skillet on medium heat and add enough oil to coat bottom of pan.
- Form patties using ½ cup of quinoa mixture and place patties in skillet. Be careful not to splash hot oil or overcrowd the pan.
- Fry until golden brown on each side, approximately 5 minutes per side.
- Remove patties, drain on paper towel and serve.

Vacation Day Lunch 6

Create a theme for lunch. Choose a Country together at breakfast time and then create a lunch to go with the Country.

Japan

1. Miso Soup
2. Sushi Day – purchase 2 different types of ready-made sushi packs from your local supermarket and serve as finger food on a side plate, with the soup.

Italy

Noodleless Zucchini Lasagna

Thinly sliced zucchini will replace the pasta and cut down on carbs at the same time! That means the zucchini ‘noodles’ need to be salted and blotted dry before layering to remove excess liquid.

It’s important to allow the sauce to cook long enough to thicken, so that it does not make the dish watery.

Ingredients:

- 3 medium zucchini
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 red onion, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 2 carrots, grated or finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- A handful of mushrooms (shitake preferred), chopped
- 1 yellow squash, chopped into ¼" pieces
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1½ tsp dried basil
- A dash of black pepper (to taste)
- 16 oz/475mL container ricotta cheese or cottage cheese
- 1 large egg, beaten
- A 16oz/475mL jar tomato sauce - (choose your favorite)
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

Let’s Make It!

- Place a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 350 degrees.
- Using a casserole dish (approx. 9"x13")- spray if required
- Trim off the ends from the zucchini and slice the squash lengthwise into ⅛" thick slices.
- These will be your lasagna ‘noodles’.

- Lightly season both sides of the zucchini slices with salt and put them side-by-side on paper towels to drain, while you prepare the filling.
- Place a large skillet or frying pan over medium-high heat and add the olive oil. When the oil is hot, add diced red onion, bell pepper and carrots then cook 4-5 minutes until the onions are translucent.
- Add garlic and cook for 1 additional minute.
- Add mushrooms and squash and continue cooking on medium-high heat 15-20 minutes until all of the liquid given off by the vegetables has completely evaporated. Stir in the tomato sauce, oregano, basil and black pepper, then bring the mixture to a bubble. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer approximately twenty minutes until the sauce becomes very thick and no liquid runs as you scrape the spoon across the bottom of the skillet.
- While the sauce is simmering, stir the ricotta or cottage cheese together with the beaten egg and Parmesan cheese then set aside. Blot all moisture from the zucchini slices with additional paper towels.
- When the sauce has thickened, remove from heat and spread about ½ cup in the bottom of the prepared baking dish. Cover the bottom of the dish with zucchini slices, overlapping slightly and trimming if necessary. Spread half of the ricotta/cottage cheese mixture over the zucchini in an even layer then spread half of the vegetable sauce on top. Sprinkle with 1 cup of mozzarella cheese, then repeat the layers of zucchini, ricotta, vegetable sauce and mozzarella cheese. Add one final layer of zucchini slices to the top and cover with aluminum foil.
- Bake 30 minutes then remove the foil and sprinkle the remaining cup of mozzarella cheese and an additional sprinkling of Parmesan over the top of the zucchini. Return to the oven to bake uncovered an additional 15 minutes then remove and allow it to cool 15 minutes before slicing.
- Parmesan cheese for sprinkling

Vacation Day Lunch 7 – School Tomorrow

Create a family favourite meal along with a huge raw salad while enjoying a barbeque, with a choice of meat and grilled vegetables or corn on the cob.

Remember—smaller portions at lunch time, usually ½ of a dinner time portion.

Afternoon Snacks

After a day at school, young students are often hungry for an after-school treat.

Students returning from school are usually ready to eat as soon as they walk in the door. By having snacks prepared ahead of time, it is the best way to ensure they eat healthy alternatives rather than processed snack foods or sweets.

Busy parents may need to do this preparation the night before or in the morning.

When possible, also separate single portions into plastic sandwich bags, so that they don't eat several servings at one time.

Get creative when preparing after-school snacks...they will eliminate those stomach hunger pangs, with the essential nutrients needed for growing bodies and minds.

- Place a **bowl of fruit** in a highly visible and accessible place such as in the middle of the kitchen table or on the kitchen counter. Apples, bananas, pears, peaches and plums or grapes are typical favorites.
- For a change have a **bowl of refrigerated vegetables or fruits**, sliced into manageable pieces.
 - Provide a small amount of vegetable dip if needed.
 - Other options that a child can take out of the refrigerator include grapes, cherries, berries and celery sticks.
 - Good calcium-rich options include yogurt, cheese sticks and yogurt smoothies, with berries added for additional nutrition.
 - Unsweetened applesauce.
- Healthy after-school snacks can also include **homemade trail mix**:
 - Mix almonds, cashews, pumpkin seeds, raisins, dried cranberries, dried apricots, dried apples and granola together.
- Once in a while offer **hummus** with pita chips or, rice cakes topped with almond butter.
- For those who want something salty, they can still eat chips; just buy baked chips instead of fried. **Pretzels** are another salty food choice.
- **Homemade fruit muffins** can be a delicious choice. Bake mini-muffins which are small enough just to pop into a child's mouth.
- **Homemade cookies**
- **Homemade wraps** such as red pepper hummus and celery---anything vegetable
- If you have the time and are home to help with the snack, consider preparing **½ a bagel**.
 - Spread with jam, almond butter, or plain or flavored natural cream cheese.

- To add texture, toast the bagel.
 - Or make miniature pizzas: Toast bagels first to prevent sogginess, then add pizza sauce, cheese and toppings and bake briefly...it is fun to make and you end up with a pizza bagel.
- **Create a fruit & yogurt smoothie day**
 - You have many options, so be creative and get your kids involved!
 - Use low-fat vanilla or fruit-flavored yogurt or frozen yogurt as the base.
 - Blend in fresh or unsweetened frozen fruit.
 - Throw in ice cubes, if needed, to reach the desired consistency.
 - You can add a splash of low-fat milk or 100% fruit juice, depending upon the desired flavor and consistency.
 - To add variety to the type of smoothie try a Kale Smoothie:
 - 1 cup (250 mL) loosely packed chopped stemmed kale
 - 1 cup (250 mL) ice cubes
 - ½ apple, peeled and chopped
 - 1 banana
 - ½ cup (125 mL) almond milk
 - Place in a blender, puree together kale, ice, apple, banana and almond milk, until smooth and frosty.
 - Makes 2 servings – 100 calories per serving.
- Put dehydrated fruits such as apricots, bananas, apples, mangoes and raisins on a plate. Soaking dehydrated foods in water for a short time will soften them. Be sure the children eat them in moderation, as they will expand in the stomach and may reduce their appetite for dinner.
- Alternate days with a serving plate of dehydrated vegetables (peas, corn, vegetable blends).
- Create a sampler day “dried figs stuffed with light strawberry cream cheese or apple wedges dipped in low-fat vanilla yogurt or graham cracker sandwiches made with hazelnut spread.
- Make your own **Kale chips** – 6 servings, 48-60 calories.
 - 1 bunch of kale, 1 teaspoon of olive oil, 1 teaspoon of salt.

Let's Make It!

- Preheat an oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Line a non- insulated cookie sheet with parchment paper.
- Using a knife or kitchen shears carefully remove the leaves from the thick stems and tear them into bite-size pieces.
- Next, wash and dry the kale (using a salad spinner). Drizzle olive oil over the kale. Use only just enough oil to barely coat the leaves otherwise they might become soft and soggy.
- Sprinkle with a pinch of sea salt and if you wish a few drops of lemon or for a spicier taste, add a pinch of cayenne pepper along with a pinch of your favorite spice.
- Arrange in a single layer on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet.
- Bake 10-12 minutes until the edges are brown –be careful not to burn the kale.

Kale Chips Note:

Baking too little results in limp kale pieces and baking too long causes a "burned" taste. Be sure to use the "curly" kale variety as it tends to be less bitter.

They have their own unique flavor and are filled with calcium and other vitamins.

Other Nutritional Food Suggestions:

- Offer, generally, plain yogurt instead of fruit yogurt (it has added sugar that produces fermentation).
- When frying (omelettes, eggs or making French toast), use good oil: coconut oil, cold pressed olive oil).
- Offer fresh fruit every day, if you can.
- In poultry, choose white meat in preference to dark meat, if possible.
- Offer good quality water and flavour it with lemon zest, lemon juice or a couple of mint/grapefruit essential oil drops per pint of water (use directions for essential oils, they are powerful and have to be very much diluted).
- Enjoy ice cream on occasion, preferably without mono or di-glycerides (disguised bad oils which are used in place of real cream).
- Make freshly squeezed juice at home, in the morning as often as possible.
 - Blend carrots, celery and cucumber (vegetable juice provides your body with nutrients.)
 - Blend pineapple and papaya - tasty and they have an abundance of enzymes to help digest fats and proteins in the gastrointestinal tract.
 - When juicing oranges, tangerines or grapefruit, always remove the peel, as peel is not easily digested. Additionally, due to the high acidic nature of these citrus fruits, they should always be consumed 45-60 minutes after eating.

Create a week-end morning family tradition – juice together.

Remember: Juices should always be enjoyed prior to the sun setting for the best use within the child's body and to avoid mixing vegetables and fruits together).

A memorable note:

Enjoy food and make any changes to your family's meal planning over time; engage your children, they are eager to experiment.