

PREPARED LUNCH IDEAS

Preparing lunch from scratch can be a great way to incorporate many nutritious foods into tasty meals. They can also be very inexpensive to serve!

CONSIDERATIONS

- When planning meals, aim for a variety of healthy foods from Canada's Food Guide, including at least one vegetable or fruit, one whole grain food and one protein food. When you aim to include a wide variety of colours, textures, and flavours you increase the variety of nutrients students receive.



- Different cultures have different food preferences, for example, some students may prefer cooked vegetables and some may prefer them raw. Increasing the overall vegetable and fruit consumption matters more than the specific cooking method.

- Eating highly processed foods can increase the intake of sodium, sugars or saturated fat. Eating too much sodium, sugars or saturated fat can increase your risk of chronic disease. Aim to limit foods such as processed meats (E.g. sausages, hotdogs, ham, canned meat, deli meat), fruit gummies, sugar sweetened beverages, potato chips, frozen pizza products, instant noodle packs.

- Cook in bulk and freeze portions that can be heated up. Look into partnering with programs that could help with bulk cooking such as Home Economics, Culinary Arts, Student Leadership or a neighbouring school.



- Include students in menu planning. Make a poll where students can vote on their favourite items, invite students to make suggestions. Including the students will help ensure you are meeting the varying preferences of your population.

1 CHOOSE VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

2 ADD WHOLE GRAINS

3 ADD PROTEIN OPTIONS

LUNCH MENU IDEAS



CHILI

- onion, tomato, bell pepper, sweet potato, celery, corn, mushrooms
- serve with whole grain bread, bannock or buns
- ground beef or turkey
- lentils, beans (kidney, black, pinto)

PASTA & MEAT SAUCE

- shredded carrot, zucchini, canned tomato, bell pepper
- whole grain pasta
- ground turkey, pork, or beef
- shredded cheese

QUINOA SALAD

[link to recipe](#)

- corn, chopped onion and bell pepper
- quinoa
- brown basmati rice
- canned beans (chickpeas, fava, romano, pinto, navy)

BANNOCK SANDWICH

[link to recipe](#)

- lettuce, tomato, cucumber, bell pepper
- bannock or multigrain bread
- roast beef, turkey or chicken
- hummus

PASTA SALAD BOWL

- celery, broccoli, onion, bell pepper, peas, corn, shredded carrot
- whole grain pasta
- chicken or canned beans
- shredded cheese or crumbled feta

BEAN BURRITO

- onion, bell pepper, sweet potato, lettuce, corn, tomato
- whole grain tortilla
- brown rice or quinoa
- black bean, chickpea or refried beans
- shredded cheese

WRAP

- lettuce, shredded cabbage, green onion, tomato, cucumber,
- whole grain tortilla
- tuna, salmon, chicken or hummus
- shredded cheese

MINESTRONE SOUP

- tomato, celery, carrot, zucchini, cabbage
- whole grain pasta
- beans (black, kidney)
- vegetable broth
- shredded cheese

LENTIL PIZZA BUN

[link to recipe](#)

- canned tomato sauce
- whole wheat english muffin
- canned or cooked lentils
- shredded cheese

TUNA MELT

- onion, shredded carrot, celery lettuce leaf
- whole grain bun or bread
- canned tuna
- shredded cheese

CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS

- roasted squash, broccoli, green beans
- whole grain rice
- chicken drumsticks