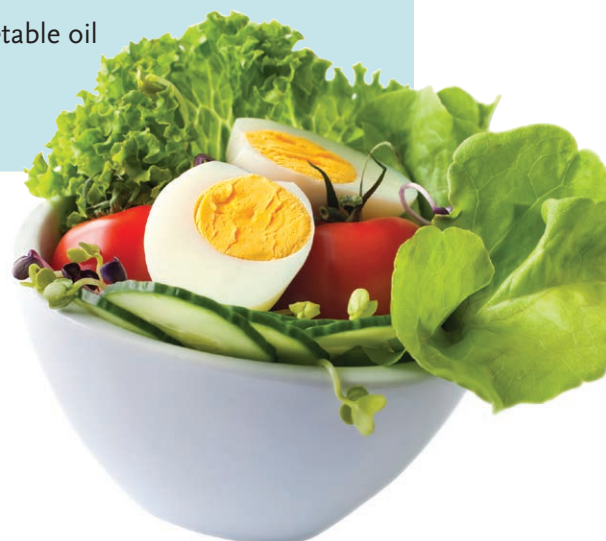


# Tasty Tips To Transform Your Recipes

Here are some common menu items served in early learning and child care. Try some of these tips to make your meals and snacks nutritious and exciting. Find a new idea and make it your own.

DISH	TRY THIS...
<b>Pizza</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try making your own pizza dough. Replace half of the white flour with whole wheat flour. Kneading dough is a fun activity for children.</li> <li>• Try some easy alternatives for pizza crust, like whole wheat pita bread, English muffins, buns, bagels, flat breads or baked bannock.</li> <li>• Try making your own sauce with a can of crushed tomatoes, two garlic cloves, 15 ml (1 tbsp) dried oregano and one bay leaf. Cover and simmer for half an hour. Use reduced sodium tomatoes when possible. Remove bay leaf before using. You could also try adding extra vegetables such as carrots, onion, celery, peppers, mushrooms or zucchini. Leftover sauce can be frozen for later use.</li> <li>• Use fewer meat toppings and more vegetable toppings.</li> <li>• Experiment with different types of cheese like cheddar, gouda, parmesan or feta.</li> <li>• Have a “Make-Your-Own-Pizza Party” – allow children to put together their own mini pizzas.</li> <li>• If you serve a pre-made frozen pizza – try adding extra vegetable toppings; serve it with a salad or vegetables and dip; choose the pizza with the lowest sodium and no trans fat – or serve it less often and in small portions.</li> </ul>
<b>Sandwiches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose whole grain/whole wheat varieties of bread and buns.</li> <li>• If you usually serve sandwiches on white bread, try using one white and one whole wheat slice.</li> <li>• Offer lots of vegetable toppings (ex: lettuce, tomatoes, onions, cucumbers, peppers, shredded carrots).</li> <li>• Make your own hamburger or chicken burger patties and boost the nutritional value by adding shredded or pureed vegetables, such as onion, garlic, carrots, celery, peppers, zucchini or broccoli.</li> <li>• If buying pre-made hamburger or chicken patties choose the product with the lowest sodium and made with only ground meat, vegetables and spices.</li> <li>• Condiments can add a lot of unnecessary sodium and sugar. Compare labels to choose a better product and serve in small amounts.</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: Hot dogs and frozen breaded chicken patties offer little nutrition for growing minds and bodies. Limit these foods on your menu.</p>

<p><b>Pasta</b></p>	<p>Find a simple recipe for homemade macaroni and cheese, using milk and cheddar cheese.</p> <p>Be sure to add lots of fresh, frozen or canned vegetables, such as tomatoes, bell peppers, onions, mushrooms, peas, carrots, parsnips, zucchini, eggplant, celery, broccoli, cauliflower or squash.</p> <p>Try adding different types of meat, poultry, fish and pulses (ex: ground chicken, turkey, canned tuna, black beans, chickpeas, tofu).</p> <p>If making a cream sauce, try using evaporated milk (not sweetened and condensed) or whole milk instead of cream to add nutritional value.</p> <p>Choose whole wheat pasta noodles (when possible).</p> <p>Make meat sauce by sautéing ground meat with vegetables then adding canned tomatoes and tomato paste. For lots of flavour, add herbs such as basil, oregano, parsley and bay leaf. Simmer until thickness is desired. Make a large batch and use the remainder for lasagna or freeze for another day.</p> <p>Add a layer of spinach, cottage cheese or ricotta cheese to lasagna.</p>
<p><b>Chicken Pieces</b></p>	<p>Try making your own chicken fingers by breading fresh boneless chicken and baking them in the oven.</p> <p>If serving pre-made chicken pieces – choose lower sodium options; be sure they are free of trans fat; bake in oven rather than deep fry; serve with lots of vegetables like salad, cooked vegetables, or homemade sweet potato fries; and serve them less often.</p>
<p><b>Fresh Vegetables and Salad</b></p>	<p>Many vegetables and fruit are available washed and pre-cut (ex: mini carrots, snap peas, lettuce mixes, fruit salads). These are good choices to save time.</p> <p>Try to limit the amount of high-sodium toppings such as bacon, croutons and deep fried chicken.</p> <p>Get creative with salads. Try different leafy greens, vegetables, fruit, nuts and seeds, beans, lentils, eggs, lean meat or fish.</p> <p>Make your own “house” dip using plain yogurt as your base.</p> <p>To make your own salad dressing, mix 2 parts vegetable oil (canola or olive oil) with 1 part vinegar (any type). Get creative and add herbs and spices, mustard or honey.</p>



<p><b>Soup</b></p>	<p>Add lots of vegetables to homemade soup and extra to pre-made soup...the more the better. Frozen vegetables are great for soup and are equally nutritious since they are packed at the peak of their freshness.</p> <p>Canned vegetables and pulses can also work well in soup. A can of diced tomatoes or a well-rinsed can of beans or lentils will taste great in many types of soup.</p> <p>If a recipe calls for a grain, choose a whole grain like brown or wild rice, whole wheat pasta or barley.</p> <p>Use herbs, spices or a splash of citrus or vinegar to boost flavor rather than using high-sodium soup broth or adding salt.</p> <p>If you are serving canned soup, read labels to choose a product with lower sodium.</p>
<p><b>Cultural Dishes</b></p>	<p>Be sure to add lots of vegetables, such as tomatoes (fresh or canned), avocado, peppers, green onions, garlic, mushrooms, beets, cabbage, carrots, zucchini, celery, peas or corn.</p> <p>Choose to serve ethnic dishes with brown or wild rice, quinoa or whole wheat couscous.</p> <p>Bake bannock with whole wheat flour and/or oatmeal.</p> <p>Include beans (ex: kidney beans, black beans), chickpeas or lentils or substitute them for meat to make a vegetarian dish (ex: vegetarian chili, bean burritos, chickpea curry, Spanish beans and rice, lentil dal).</p> <p>Choose salsa, fresh herbs, lemon or lime juice, guacamole, tzatziki, plain yogurt or sour cream for condiments.</p> <p>Make homemade tortilla chips, by cutting whole wheat pita bread or tortillas into triangles; brushing them with vegetable oil; sprinkling with chili powder; then toasting in the oven.</p> <p>Try serving soft tacos (using whole wheat tortillas) rather than hard-shell tacos.</p> <p>Try this recipe for taco or fajita seasoning: 30 ml (2 tbsp) chili powder, 15 ml (1 tbsp) ground cumin, 15 ml (1 tbsp) ground coriander (optional). Adjust recipe based on quantity required.</p>