

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

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Proposed publication date: Aug. 29, 2022

Content provided by: Alberta Health Services

No microwave? No problem! Tips on making healthy school lunches

If your child's school doesn't have microwave ovens, you can still send your child to school with a tasty and healthy lunch. Try these "no microwave needed" lunch ideas:

- **Yummy dippers:** Pack hummus with a whole-grain pita, carrot sticks, celery sticks or apple slices for dipping. Add a piece of low-fat cheese or a small container of milk.
- **Build your own wrap:** Let your child choose sliced ham, tofu or chicken, a low-fat cheese, lettuce or spinach, and tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers to wrap in a whole-grain tortilla. Add a side of canned or fresh mixed fruit.
- **Homemade soup:** Combine diced cooked chicken, reduced-salt chicken stock, cut-up fresh vegetables, whole wheat pasta and spices into a pot. Boil until vegetables and pasta are cooked, and transfer to an insulated container. Add a whole-grain bun, an orange and a small container of milk.
- **Stuffed pita:** Chop up leftover cooked chicken, turkey or beans, and put inside a whole-grain pita or a few mini pitas. Add bell peppers and shredded lettuce. Complete the meal with yogurt and a pear.
- **Leftovers:** Some foods can be eaten cold rather than hot, such as homemade pizza and hamburgers.

Keep food safe. Food safety tips for packing lunches:

- Use an insulated lunch bag rather than a plastic bag or box. This will help keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Clean the lunch bag every day.
- Use a heat-preserving or insulated container for hot foods such as soup or chili. To keep food hot longer, fill your insulated container with hot water for a few minutes, then pour it out and fill with hot food.

- To keep foods cool and fresh, partially freeze items such as yogurt and milk, or put a frozen ice pack in the lunch bag.
- Remind your child to wash their hands before eating, or pack hand sanitizer in their lunch bag.