

Some helpful tips for planning ahead

- When you have time to cook, make twice as much as you need and freeze the extra portions for another meal.
- Stock the pantry with a few useful ingredients, such as tomato-based pasta sauces, stock powder, pasta, rice, couscous, baked beans and canned foods like tuna, salmon, tomatoes, corn, beans and chickpeas.
- Stock the fridge and freezer with things like cheese, eggs and frozen vegetables and stir fry mixes.

Snacks

Snacks are just as important as meals for children's nutrition. Three meals and two snacks a day is ideal for young children. Most foods offered at meals can also be offered as snacks. The most common suitable snacks include breads and cereals, fruit, and milk-based drinks. Snacks do not have to be large, just nutritious.

Try some of these snack ideas:

- One or two biscuits with cheese
- A piece of fresh fruit
- Small bowl of tinned or stewed fruit
- Small glass of fruit smoothie
- Small tub of yoghurt
- A few vegetable sticks (for young children, steam vegetables until soft)



GET UP & GROW

HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD



Food ideas for busy parents

For more meal and snack ideas

Dietitians Association of Australia
www.daa.asn.au



Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing

Toddlers and preschool-aged children can eat the same foods as the rest of the family. Even if you only have a limited amount of time, a healthy meal or snack can be quick and easy to prepare. Be sure to offer a variety of foods at mealtimes, and offer water with each meal and snack.



Family breakfasts

Breakfast is an important meal and should be part of every morning routine. Healthy breakfast options include:

- Wholegrain cereal with milk and fruit
- Porridge and fruit with a glass of milk
- Yoghurt and fruit, or a fruit smoothie
- Toast or a crumpet with cheese, with slices of fruit
- Baked beans and cheese on toast
- Toasted fruit bread with a glass of milk

Family lunches

Sandwiches, wraps and rolls can be quick and easy to prepare. Choose different breads and fillings to keep it interesting.

- For sandwiches, try using high-fibre white, wholemeal or multigrain bread – or use two different types of bread for the one sandwich.
- Try using bread rolls or a small focaccia roll, or make a wrap using pita bread or a piece of flat bread.
- A variety of sandwich or wrap fillings will keep your child interested – try egg, tuna, canned salmon, cold meat, chicken or cheese. Add some salad, for example lettuce, tomato, cucumber, alfalfa sprouts, grated carrot, beetroot or sliced mushrooms.
- Try toasting sandwiches or wraps with fillings like baked beans and cheese.
- In winter, add some warm soup to the lunchtime meal – try a chunky soup such as minestrone, with a crunchy bread roll.



Family dinners

Keep a list of dinner meals that can be prepared quickly and easily. It is also handy to keep some food in the pantry and freezer for meals that can be made and served in just a few minutes. Try:

- Stir fry with mixed vegetables and Hokkien noodles
- Fried rice with mixed vegetables and cooked egg
- Pasta with tomato-based sauce, tuna and mixed vegetables
- Take-away roast chicken with homemade salad and bread rolls
- Homemade pizza – pita bread, tomato paste, ham, mushrooms, pineapple and cheese
- Burritos with beans, lettuce, tomato, cheese, avocado and beef or chicken
- Meat and vegetable soup or bean and vegetable soup (tinned or homemade), with crunchy bread rolls
- Toasted baked bean and cheese sandwich
- Egg on toast with grilled tomatoes and mushrooms

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