Cook's Corner: Recipes for Healthy Snacks

Compiled from Brush Up on Oral Health

Third Edition

Brush Up on Oral Health

Introduction

These recipes support children's healthy growth and development with ingredients that are fresh, low in fat, and high in fiber. None of the recipes include added sugar. The recipes can help early care and education programs meet nutrition standards from the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program, which call for meals and snacks served in group settings to include a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and limited sugar or saturated fat.

The cookbook is divided into recipes for dairy, fruit, and vegetables. A section for seasonal recipes is also included. Each recipe includes a list of ingredients, directions, a picture of the prepared recipe, and, where needed, safety tips.

Enjoy!

Cook's Corner: Recipes for Healthy Snacks—Compiled from Brush Up on Oral Health (3rd ed.) offers simple recipes for young children that can be made in Head Start programs or at home. The recipes originally appeared in *Brush Up on Oral Health* issues published between 2012 and 2020.

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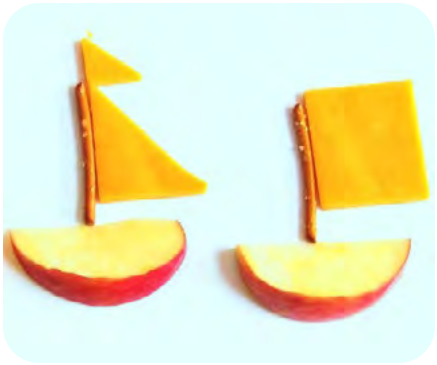
Dairy
Recipes

Cheese and Apple Pirate Ships



Ingredients

1 apple
8 to 10 pretzel sticks
8 to 10 ounces low-fat cheddar cheese, such as Colby-Jack or mozzarella

Directions

1. Cut apple into 8 to 10 slices.
2. Cut cheese into squares or triangles.
3. Put an apple slice on a plate or napkin.
4. Put 1 pretzel stick above the apple slice to make the mast of the ship.
5. Put 1 or 2 cheese slices on top of or next to the pretzel to make the sail(s).

Makes 4 to 5 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Cheese in a Blanket

Ingredients

1 slice turkey
1 low-fat cheese stick
1 lettuce leaf, washed
1 teaspoon mustard

Directions

1. Wrap the turkey slice around the cheese stick.
2. Wrap the lettuce leaf around the cheese and turkey.
3. Dip the wrap into the mustard.

Makes 1 serving

Cheese Quesadillas

Ingredients

2 tortillas, made with either corn flour or wheat flour
½ cup fat-free refried beans (optional)
1 cup low-fat shredded cheese

Directions

1. Put one tortilla on a large microwave-safe plate. Spread a layer of refried beans on the tortilla, and sprinkle shredded cheese over the beans. (Note: If the beans are not included, then sprinkle the cheese on the tortilla.)
2. Put the second tortilla on top of the cheese layer.
3. Cook in the microwave until the cheese is melted, about 30 seconds to 1 minute. Before serving, check to make sure that the cheese is not too hot.
4. Cut quesadilla crosswise into pizza-shaped slices.

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the microwave.

Cheesy Fruit Crackers

Ingredients

½ cup low-fat cream cheese
5 whole wheat cracker rounds
1 kiwi, peeled and cut into half circles
5 strawberries, cut into bite-size pieces

Directions

1. Spread cream cheese on the cracker.
2. Place a half circle of kiwi on top of the cream cheese.
3. Place a piece of strawberry on top of the kiwi.

Makes 5 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Cottage Cheese and Apples

Ingredients

½ apple
½ cup low-fat or fat-free cottage cheese

Directions

1. Cut the apple into bite-size pieces and place in a small bowl.
2. Mix the cottage cheese with the apple pieces.

Makes 1 serving

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Deviled Eggs

Ingredients

6 hardboiled eggs, peeled
¼ cup low-fat mayonnaise
1 teaspoon white vinegar
1 teaspoon yellow mustard
⅛ teaspoon salt
⅛ teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon paprika, for garnish (optional)

Directions

1. Slice the eggs in half lengthwise.
2. Scoop out the yolks and place in a bowl.
3. Place the egg white halves on a plate or platter.
4. Use a fork to mash the yolks into a fine crumble.
5. Add the mayonnaise, vinegar, mustard, salt, and pepper, and mix well.
6. Fill the egg white halves with a teaspoon of the yolk mixture.
7. Sprinkle each filled egg white half with the paprika (optional), and serve.

Makes 6 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Frozen Yogurt–Covered Blueberries

Ingredients

8 oz. package of fresh or frozen blueberries (if frozen berries are used, thaw for 1 hour)
6 oz. container of low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt

Directions

1. Line a cookie sheet with waxed paper.
2. Push a toothpick in a blueberry and dip the blueberry into the yogurt until it is covered.
3. Put the yogurt-covered blueberry onto the waxed-paper-covered cookie sheet. Repeat this step until the cookie sheet is full.
4. Put the blueberry-filled cookie sheet in the freezer for 1 hour or until the blueberries are frozen.

Makes 10 to 15 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Frozen Yogurt Hearts

Ingredients

1 cup of fresh or frozen berries, such as blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, or strawberries (if frozen berries are used, thaw for 1 hour)
1 cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt

Directions

1. Place berries in a blender and blend until they are coarsely chopped.
2. Add the yogurt and blend until smooth.
3. Pour the mixture into heart shaped ice-cube trays and freeze for 3 to 4 hours or until frozen.

Makes 5 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should supervise use of the blender.

Fruit Yogurt Ice Pops

Ingredients

2¼ cups low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
½ cup fruit cut into chunks (such as strawberries, blueberries, or raspberries)
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 medium-size ripe bananas, peeled and cut into chunks
12 3-ounce paper cups and 12 ice pop sticks or 12 ice pop molds with holders

Directions

1. In a blender, combine the yogurt, fruit, lemon juice, and bananas; cover and process for 45 seconds or until smooth. Stir if necessary.
2. Fill the molds or cups with ¼ cup yogurt mixture; top with the holders, or insert the sticks into the cups.
3. Freeze.

Makes 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Yogurt Parfaits

Ingredients

1 cup fresh fruit (such as strawberries, bananas, blueberries, or raspberries)
1 cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
½ cup low-fat granola (optional)

Directions

1. Wash and dry the fruit. If needed, slice the fruit into bite-size pieces.
2. Put ¼ cup of the yogurt in the bottom of two small glasses.
3. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of the granola over the yogurt in each glass.
4. Put ¼ cup of the sliced fruit over the granola in each glass.
5. Repeat the layers.

Makes 2 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Fruit
Recipes

Apple Cider Smoothies

Ingredients

½ cup water
2 red apples
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Directions

1. Pour the water into the blender.
2. Core the apples, but do not peel.
3. Add the apples to the blender.
4. Blend on high for 30 seconds or until the smoothie is creamy.
5. Add the ground cinnamon and stir.

Makes 2 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Apple Race Cars

Ingredients

2 apples
12 green or red grapes
12 toothpicks

Directions

1. Slice each apple into 6 thick wedges.
2. Cut grapes in half.
3. Push a toothpick through both ends of the apple to become car axles.
4. Place the grape halves on each side of the toothpick for wheels.

Makes 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Apple Ring Sandwiches

Ingredients

1 apple
1 tablespoon peanut butter, low-fat cream cheese, or hummus
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)

Directions

1. Core the apple and cut into rounds.
2. Spread half of the apple rounds with peanut butter, cream cheese, or hummus.
3. Cover (the sandwich) with remaining apple rounds.
4. Sprinkle with ground cinnamon (optional).

Makes 3 to 4 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should core and slice ingredients.

Apple Roll Ups

Ingredients

½ pound low-fat cheddar cheese, sliced thin
1 apple, cored and sliced into thin wedges
½ pound deli meat (such as beef, ham, or turkey), sliced thin

Directions

1. Put a slice of cheese on an apple wedge.
2. Wrap a slice of meat around the cheese and apple.

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should core and slice ingredients.

Apple Sauce

Ingredients

6 apples, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
¼ cup water
½ teaspoon cinnamon

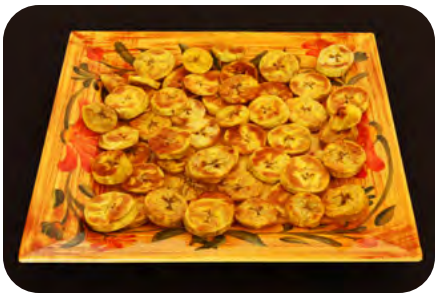
Directions

1. Put the apples in a microwave-safe bowl.
2. Add the water.
3. Cover and microwave on high for 15 minutes.
4. Stir the apples.
5. Uncover and microwave until the apples are very tender, about 5 minutes.
6. Crush the apples with a fork or potato masher.
7. Add the cinnamon and stir into the apple mixture.

Makes 10 to 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should peel and slice ingredients and supervise use of the microwave.

Baked Plantains



Ingredients

Cooking spray
4 plantains with yellow skin and black spots

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Coat a cookie sheet with cooking spray.
3. Cut the ends off each plantain and peel.
4. Cut each plantain on the diagonal into ½-inch slices.
5. Place the plantain slices in a single layer on the cookie sheet, and top with cooking spray.
6. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes, turning at least once, until the plantains are golden brown and tender.

Makes 8 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the oven.

Berry Egg Muffins

Ingredients

2 very ripe bananas
4 eggs
½ to 1 cup berries, such as blueberries, raspberries, or strawberries
Cooking spray

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375˚F.
2. Mash bananas until smooth.
3. Whisk in the eggs until combined.
4. Spray the mini muffin tin with cooking spray.
5. Place 2 to 3 berries in each cup in the tin.
6. Pour the banana mixture over berries until each cup in the tin is full.
7. Bake for 12 minutes or until cooked through.

Makes 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns, an adult should supervise use of the oven.

Chocolate-Banana Smoothie

Ingredients

1 medium-size ripe banana (one with a few brown spots is perfect)
1 tablespoon cocoa powder
¼ cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
¼ cup low-fat or fat-free milk

Directions

1. Put the banana, cocoa powder, yogurt, and milk into a blender.
2. Cover the top of the blender and blend the mixture until it's smooth.
3. Pour the smoothie into glasses.

Makes 1 serving

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should supervise use of the blender.

Dried Apple Rings

Ingredients

5 apples
¼ cup lemon juice
1 quart water
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Directions

1. Core apple
2. Mix lemon juice and water.
3. Slice apples thinly (¼ inch thick).
4. Dip apple slices into lemon juice and water mixture to prevent slices from turning brown.
5. Remove slices from water and pat dry.
6. Sprinkle slices with ground cinnamon.
7. Arrange slices on wire baking sheet or cooling rack and put in oven. Or put slices directly on clean oven racks.
8. Set oven at lowest temperature, about 150˚F, and prop door open to allow air to circulate and moisture to escape oven.
9. Bake 5 to 8 hours until slices feel dry and leathery.

Makes 28 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the oven.

Frozen Bananas

Ingredients

4 medium-size ripe bananas
8–12 ice pop sticks
4 tablespoons peanut butter or low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
½ to 1 cup crushed unsweetened whole grain cereal

Directions

1. Cut the bananas in half or thirds. Insert one ice pop stick lengthwise through the center of each banana section.
2. Wrap the bananas on sticks in plastic wrap, and put them in the freezer for 2 hours or until frozen.
3. Spread a thin layer of peanut butter or yogurt over the bananas, and roll them in crushed cereal.

Makes 10 to 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Grape Trees

Ingredients

2 cups red grapes
2 cups green grapes
Pretzel sticks

Directions

1. Cut the grape in half lengthwise.
2. Place the pretzel sticks on a plate to form the tree trunk and branches.
3. Place the green and red grape halves around the branches to form leaves.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Kiwi and Raspberry Flowers

Ingredients

1 kiwi, peeled
4 raspberries or other small round fruit (such as blueberries)

Directions

1. Cut the kiwi into ½-inch slices.
2. Use a small flower-shaped cookie cutter to cut each kiwi slice.
3. Top each kiwi slice with a raspberry.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of cookie cutters.

Orange Slushes

Ingredients

20 ice cubes
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
½ cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
2 cups orange juice

Directions

1. Put the ice cubes in the blender.
2. Add the vanilla extract, yogurt, and orange juice.
3. Blend on high for about 1 minute or until the drink is well mixed.

Makes 3 to 4 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should supervise use of the blender.

Strawberry and Banana Smoothies

Ingredients

½ cup low-fat or fat-free milk
⅓ cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
⅓ cup strawberries
½ medium-size banana
4 ice cubes

Directions

1. Put all the ingredients in a blender.
2. Cover the blender and blend until the mixture is smooth.

Makes 2 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should supervise use of the blender.

Sunny Orange

Ingredients

1 orange, cut into thin slices
1 large carrot, cut into thin strips 1½ inches long
1 blueberry, cut in half

Directions

1. Place an orange slice on a plate.
2. Arrange the carrot sticks around the orange slice in triangle-shaped rays.
3. Place the blueberry halves on the orange for eyes.

Makes 1 serving

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Teddy Bear Toast

Ingredients

½ banana
2 slices whole wheat bread
2 tablespoons peanut butter
6 blueberries

Directions

1. Slice banana into 6 pieces.
2. Toast the bread, and spread the peanut butter on the bread.
3. Place 2 banana pieces on the top corners of each toast slice to make the ears.
4. Place 1 banana piece in the center of the bottom half of each toast slice to make the nose.
5. Place the blueberries on the toast slices to finish the nose and make the eyes above the nose.

Makes 2 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Watermelon Pizza

Ingredients

⅛-inch round from a medium-size watermelon
Fresh fruit toppings (such as sliced bananas, kiwi, strawberries, grapes, or blueberries)
Fresh mint, torn into small pieces (optional)
Feta cheese, crumbled into small pieces (optional)

Directions

1. Lay the watermelon round on a cutting board.
2. Add the toppings.
3. Slice the watermelon round into pizza-shaped triangles.

Makes 8 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Watermelon Pops

Ingredients

1 small watermelon
12 ice pop sticks

Directions

1. Slice watermelon and cut into quarters.
2. Push an ice pop stick into the watermelon rind to form a pop.

Makes 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Vegetable
Recipes

Baked Kale Chips

Ingredients

1 bunch kale
1 tablespoon oil
1 teaspoon salt

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper.
3. Wash and dry kale.
4. With a knife or kitchen scissors, cut the kale leaves from the thick stems and tear the leaves into bite-size pieces.
5. Drizzle the kale with oil and sprinkle with salt. Toss to combine.
6. Spread the kale on the cookie sheet.
7. Bake 10 to 15 minutes or until the edges of the leaves are brown, but not burnt.

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the oven.

Baked Sweet Potato Sticks

Ingredients

4 small sweet potatoes
2 tablespoons oil
1½ teaspoon chili powder (optional)
1½ teaspoon salt

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 425˚F.
2. Cut each sweet potato into sticks that are 1 inch wide.
3. Mix the oil, chili powder, and 1 teaspoon of the salt in a small bowl.
4. Place the sweet potato sticks on a cookie sheet and brush with the oil mixture.
5. Bake the sweet potato sticks for 20 to 25 minutes, turning occasionally, until they are golden brown and tender.

Makes 6 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the oven.

Broccoli Cheese Bites

Ingredients

2 cups fresh broccoli, cooked and finely chopped
2 eggs
2 tablespoons cooking oil
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup dried bread crumbs
½ cup shredded cheddar, Colby-Jack, or Parmesan cheese

Directions

1. Mix all the ingredients.
2. Shape the mixture into patties 1 inch in diameter.
3. Heat the oil in a skillet, then add the patties and cook until both sides are crispy.

Makes 12 to 15 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the stove.

Carrot Veggie Bars

Ingredients

1 package whole-wheat crescent rolls
6 ounces low-fat cream cheese, softened
¼ cup low-fat mayonnaise
¼ cup low-fat sour cream
½ package dry Ranch dressing
1½ cup carrots, shredded
1½ cup broccoli, chopped

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375º F.
2. Unroll the crescent roll dough triangles onto a greased cookie sheet.
3. Bake the rolls for 10 to 12 minutes; then cool.
4. Mix the cream cheese, mayonnaise, sour cream, and Ranch dressing.
5. Spread the cream cheese mixture onto the cooled triangles.
6. Top the cream cheese mixture with the carrots and broccoli to form a carrot.

Makes 8 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the oven.

Celery Stop Lights

Ingredients

3 bell peppers (1 red, 1 yellow, and 1 green)
1 stalk of celery
3 ounces low-fat cream cheese

Directions

1. Cut the peppers into circles.
2. Cut the celery stack into thirds.
3. Spread the cream cheese into each of the celery pieces.
4. Place 1 red, yellow, and green bell pepper circle into the cream cheese to form a stoplight.

Makes 3 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Confetti Dip

Ingredients

½ cup shredded carrots
½ cup shredded cucumber
½ cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
¼ teaspoon garlic, chopped fine
⅛ teaspoon salt
1 carrot, celery stalk, bell pepper, or other vegetable sliced into thin pieces

Directions

1. Put the carrots and cucumber, yogurt, garlic, and salt in a bowl and mix well with a fork.
2. Serve the dip with the vegetables.

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Safety tips: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients. To prevent choking, do not give children under age 3 foods that may cause choking (for example, whole grapes, raw carrots, raisins). For children ages 3 to 5, modify these foods (for example, chopping raw carrots finely or into thin strips).

Corn and Black Bean Salad

Ingredients

1 15-ounce can black beans
2 cups frozen corn kernels, thawed
1 red pepper, chopped
2–3 tablespoons red onion, finely chopped
¼ teaspoon garlic, finely chopped
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground pepper
2 tablespoons cilantro, finely chopped
⅛ teaspoon chili powder

Directions

1. Put the black beans, corn, red pepper, red onion, and garlic in a large bowl.
2. Put the olive oil and lemon juice in a small bowl and mix well with a fork or whisk. Pour over the black beans, corn, red pepper, red onion, and garlic mixture.
3. Season with salt and pepper. Add the cilantro and the chili powder.
4. Mix well.

Makes 10 to 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Cream Cheesy Cucumber Bites

Ingredients

3 tablespoons low-fat cream cheese, at room temperature
¼ cucumber, cut into thin slices
2 slices whole wheat bread

Directions

1. Spread the cream cheese on one side of each slice of bread.
2. Place the cucumber slices over the cream cheese on one slice of bread.
3. Put the other slice of bread, cream-cheese side down, on top of the cucumbers.
4. Cut the sandwich into bite-size pieces.

Makes 10 to 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Cucumber Bites

Ingredients

4 ounces low-fat cream cheese, at room temperature
½ tablespoon powdered ranch dressing
1 cucumber, sliced into ½-inch rounds
¼ red, green, or yellow bell pepper, chopped fine

Directions

1. Mix the cream cheese and ranch dressing.
2. Spread the cream cheese mixture onto the cucumber slices.
3. Sprinkle the bell pepper pieces over the cream cheese mixture.

Makes 10 to 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Cucumber Hummus Rounds

Ingredients

2 cucumbers, ends trimmed
1 cup hummus
½ cup red or orange bell pepper, finely chopped
½ cup green onions, finely chopped (optional)

Directions

1. Slice the cucumbers into ¼-inch-thick rounds.
2. Spoon ½ teaspoon of hummus onto each cucumber slice.
3. Sprinkle the tops with the bell pepper and onion (if using).

Makes 15 to 20 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Cucumber Melon Salad

Ingredients

1 cucumber
1 tablespoon lime juice
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 pinch of salt
⅛ cup crumbled feta cheese (optional)
1 pinch crushed red pepper (optional)
1 cup diced melon (watermelon, cantaloupe, or other melon)
½ cup fresh cilantro

Directions

1. Cut the cucumber in half and then slice.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the lime juice, oil, salt, and feta cheese and red pepper (optional).
3. Stir in the cucumber, melon, and cilantro.
4. Sprinkle with the cheese (optional).

Makes 6 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Cucumber Snakes

Ingredients

1 cucumber, sliced and cut in half
½ red bell pepper, chopped into small pieces
3 black olives, chopped into small pieces
2 cups low-fat ranch dressing (¼ cup per serving) for dipping sauce

Directions

1. Put 10 pieces of cucumber end to end in the shape of a snake.
2. For the eye, put one piece of bell pepper with one piece of olive on top of it on the first cucumber slice.
3. For the tongue, put one piece of chopped bell pepper in front of the first cucumber slice.

Makes 10 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Easy Cheesy Bean Dip

Ingredients

16-ounce can refried beans
8 ounces low-fat cream cheese
1 cup shredded low-fat cheese (such as cheddar, Colby, or Monterey Jack), divided in half

Directions

1. Place the refried beans and cream cheese in a medium-size microwave-safe bowl.
2. Cover and microwave on high for 3 minutes.
3. Stir the mixture; then cover and microwave on high for another 3 minutes.
4. Add ½ cup of cheese to the mixture and mix well.
5. Sprinkle the remaining cheese on top of the bean dip and serve with corn chips or fresh vegetables.

Makes 12 to 15 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns, an adult should supervise use of the microwave.

Fruit and Veggie Cones

Ingredients

1 cup carrots, grated
1 cup celery, chopped
1 cup apple, chopped
2 tablespoons low-fat mayonnaise
1 teaspoon lemon juice
4 small cake ice cream cones

Directions

1. Mix the carrots, celery, apple, mayonnaise, and lemon juice together in a bowl.
2. Scoop the mixture into ice cream cones.

Makes 4 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Gazpacho

Ingredients

1 15½-ounce can chopped tomatoes
1 cup tomato juice
1 small cucumber, chopped
½ onion, finely chopped
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
1 tablespoon vinegar
¼ to ½ teaspoon hot sauce (optional)
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper

Directions

1. Mix the chopped tomatoes, tomato juice, cucumbers, onions, garlic, vinegar, hot sauce, salt, and pepper in a large mixing bowl.
2. Cover and chill for 1 to 2 hours before serving.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Guacamole Dip

Ingredients

2 avocados
1 small onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
1 tomato, chopped
Juice from 1 lime
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Cut the avocados in half lengthwise, remove the pits, and scoop the avocado out of each half.
2. In a bowl, mash the avocados with a fork.
3. Stir in the onion, garlic, tomato, and lime juice.
4. Season the mixture with salt and pepper to taste.
5. Chill for ½ hour before serving with baked pita or tortilla chips.

Makes 12 to 15 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Hummus

Ingredients

2 garlic cloves, cut into very small pieces
2 15-ounce cans garbanzo beans (chickpeas), drained and rinsed
⅔ cup tahini (roasted, not raw)
⅓ cup lemon juice, freshly squeezed or bottled
½ cup water
¼ cup olive oil
½ teaspoon salt

Directions

1. Put the garlic, garbanzo beans, tahini, lemon juice, water, and olive oil in a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth.
2. Add the salt and stir into mixture.
3. Serve the hummus with pita bread, crackers, or raw vegetables (such as carrots or celery), cut into thin strips.

Makes 15 to 20 servings

Safety tips: To prevent injuries, an adult should chop ingredients. To prevent choking, do not give children under age 3 raw carrots that may cause choking. For children ages 3 to 5, chop raw carrots into thin strips.

Mini Pizzas

Ingredients

24 whole wheat crackers
4 tablespoons pizza sauce
Pizza toppings (such as diced vegetables like mushrooms, olives, or peppers, or cooked and cubed beef, chicken, or ham)
1½ cups shredded low-fat cheese

Directions

1. Spread each cracker with ½ teaspoon of pizza sauce.
2. Put the pizza topping on top of the sauce.
3. Sprinkle the pizza topping with the low-fat cheese.
4. Put the crackers on a microwave-safe plate.
5. Microwave on high for 1 to 2 minutes, until the cheese melts. Before serving, check to make sure that the cheese is not too hot.

Makes 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should dice ingredients and supervise use of the microwave.

Pepper Poppers

Ingredients

1 red, green, or yellow bell pepper
½ cup low-fat cream cheese
½ cup plain low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
½ teaspoon garlic powder
2 tablespoons green onions, chopped

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375° F.
2. Cut pepper into 8 slices and remove seeds.
3. Mix the cream cheese and yogurt.
4. Add the garlic powder and onions and mix well.
5. Fill the pepper slices with the mixed ingredients.
6. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes.

Makes 8 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the oven.

Pinto Bean Tacos

Ingredients

1 15-ounce can pinto beans, rinsed
¾ cup salsa
8 taco shells
8 lettuce leaves, torn into bite-size pieces
1 cup low-fat shredded cheese

Directions

1. Mix the pinto beans and ½ cup of the salsa in a microwave-safe bowl.
2. Microwave the mixed beans and salsa on high for 1 to 2 minutes.
3. Spoon the bean mixture into the taco shells.
4. Top the bean mixture with the lettuce and cheddar cheese.
5. Serve with the remaining salsa.

Makes 8 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns, an adult should supervise use of the microwave.

Pumpkin Hummus

Ingredients

1 cucumber
2 15-ounce cans drained chick peas (garbanzo beans)
1 15-ounce can pumpkin
2 tablespoons tahini
2 cloves garlic, peeled
1½ tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon ground cumin
¼ cup olive oil
¼ teaspoon paprika
2 cups low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
Vegetable sticks or whole wheat crackers

Directions

1. Cut the cucumber in half, slice lengthwise, and peel to make stripes.
2. Combine all the ingredients, except the cucumber, in a blender or food processer and blend until smooth.
3. Add more olive oil if the mixture is thick.
4. Put the hummus on a plate or in a shallow bowl and use the back of a spoon to form a pumpkin shape.
5. Add the cucumber to make pumpkin stem.
6. Serve with the vegetable sticks or whole wheat crackers.

Makes 8 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should supervise use of the blender or food processor.

Tomato, Avocado, and Cheese Melt

Ingredients

4 slices whole wheat bread
1 to 2 tablespoons low-fat mayonnaise
1 small tomato
½ avocado
8 slices low-fat cheese, such as cheddar, mozzarella, Colby, or Colby-Jack

Directions

1. Spread a thin layer of mayonnaise on each slice of bread.
2. Layer tomato and avocado slices on bread.
3. Cut tomatoes into thin slices.

(continued on next page)

4. Cut avocado into thin slices.
5. Place cheese over tomato and avocado slices.
6. Broil bread on high for 2 to 4 minutes, or until cheese is melted.
7. Allow to cool, and cut bread into quarters.

Makes 16 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the oven.

Tomato Salsa

Ingredients

6 plum tomatoes
½ white or yellow onion
½ cup fresh cilantro
1 tablespoon lemon juice
Dash of garlic powder or 1 teaspoon finely chopped garlic
Baked tortilla or corn chips

Directions

1. Chop the tomatoes, onion, and cilantro into small pieces and mix together in a bowl.
2. Add the lemon juice and garlic powder or chopped garlic.
3. Mix all the ingredients together.
4. Serve with baked tortilla or corn chips.

Makes 10 to 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should chop ingredients.

Veggie, Egg, and Cheese Faces

Ingredients

4 pieces small whole wheat tortillas, pitas, or round flatbreads
1 hard-boiled egg
Vegetables, such as sliced green and red bell peppers, cherry tomatoes, and cucumbers and alfalfa sprouts
1 cup shredded low-fat cheese, such as cheddar, mozzarella, Colby, or Colby-Jack

Directions

1. Place the bread on plate or paper towel.
2. Slice the egg.
3. Add vegetables, egg, and cheese to create a face on the bread.

Makes 4 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Veggie Rainbow

Ingredients

1 red, 1 green, 1 yellow, and 1 orange bell pepper, sliced into thin strips
1 head cauliflower, cut into bite-size pieces
1 cup low-fat ranch dressing

Directions

1. Arrange one slice of each colored pepper strip on a plate or in a bowl to form a rainbow.
2. Place one piece of cauliflower on each side of the rainbow to form a cloud.
3. Spoon 1 tablespoon of ranch dressing onto the plate or bowl for dipping.

Makes 15 to 20 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Veggie Sushi Rolls

Ingredients

1 zucchini, sliced lengthwise with a potato peeler
½ cup low-fat or fat-free cottage cheese
2 carrots, cut into thin strips
1 green, red, or yellow bell pepper, cut into thin strips
1 radish, cut into thick slices (optional)
1 bunch cilantro, broken into small stalks (optional)

Directions

1. Lay the zucchini strips on a flat surface.
2. Spread 1 teaspoon of cottage cheese onto one end of the zucchini strips.
3. Put a few of the sliced vegetables on top of the cottage cheese.
4. Roll up the zucchini strips with the cottage cheese and vegetables inside.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Seasonal
Recipes

Cheesy-Red-Nosed Reindeer

Ingredients

4 cheese slices
2 black olives
1 piece of red pepper
8 small pretzel twists

Directions

1. Cut the cheese into triangles that are ¼- to ½-inch thick.
2. Cut the olives into small pieces.
3. Cut the pepper into ¼-inch circles.
4. Put one corner of the cheese triangle into the bottom hole of the pretzel twist to make the first antler.
5. Put the other corner of the cheese triangle into the bottom hole of the second pretzel twist to make the second antler.
6. Add two black olive pieces onto the cheese to make the reindeer's eyes.
7. Add the red pepper circle onto the cheese to make the reindeer's nose.

Makes 8 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Cheesy Snowmen

Ingredients

4 thin pretzel sticks
½ pounds low-fat mozzarella cheese, cut into 1-inch cubes
3 tablespoons seedless blackberry preserves
4 grapes, cut in half

Directions

1. Cut the cheese into 1-inch cubes.
2. Cut the grapes in half.
3. Break a pretzel stick in half and push each half into the sides of one cheese cube for arms.
4. Put the blackberry preserves in a small plastic bag. Cut a small corner off the bag, and squeeze small dots of preserves to make a face.
5. Build the snowmen with three cheese cubes, and put a grape half on the top cube for a hat.

Makes 4 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and cut the bag.

Coconut Snowflakes

Ingredients

1 small whole wheat tortilla
Canola or vegetable oil (just enough to lightly brush on tortilla)
½ teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon unsweetened coconut flakes

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400° F.
2. Soften the tortilla in the microwave for 15 to 20 seconds.
3. Fold the tortilla into fourths. Use clean scissors to cut shapes in the tortilla, the same way you would cut a paper snowflake.
4. Unfold the tortilla and place on a cookie sheet.
5. Lightly brush the oil on the top of the snowflake and sprinkle with cinnamon and coconut.
6. Bake for 4 minutes or until the coconut turns golden brown.

Makes 1 serving

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the microwave and oven.

Fruit and Cheese Flag

Ingredients

1 small watermelon
1 pound low-fat white cheese such as provolone, mozzarella, or Monterey Jack
1 quart blueberries

Directions

1. Cut watermelon into bite-size pieces.
2. Cut the cheese into small squares.
3. Place a small square bowl at the top left-hand corner of a rectangular plate or tray.
4. Arrange the watermelon and cheese pieces in alternating rows to form the stripes of a flag.
5. Put the blueberries in the bowl to form the stars of the flag.

Makes 24 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Fruity Candy Corn Parfait

Ingredients

1 cup orange slices
1 cup pineapple chunks
1 cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt

Directions

1. Cut the orange slices into chunks.
2. Layer the pineapple chunks and then the orange chunks in a small glass.
3. Spoon yogurt on top of the fruit.

Makes 4 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Holiday Crackers

Ingredients

10 round whole wheat crackers
2 slices low-sodium cooked lunch meat, such as beef, chicken, or ham
2 slices low-fat yellow or white cheddar cheese

Directions

1. Place the crackers on a plate or platter.
2. Cut the meat into circles using a round cookie cutter.
3. Place a meat circle on each cracker.
4. Cut the cheese into shapes using holiday cookie cutters in shapes such as trees, snowflakes, snowmen, stars, and bells.
5. Place a cheese shape on the ham on each cracker.

Makes 5 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should supervise use of cookie cutters.

Hummus Gobbler

Ingredients

1 slice whole wheat bread
1 red, yellow, or green bell pepper
1 carrot
1 black bean, cut in half (black olive pieces can be used as a substitute)
1 teaspoon hummus

Directions

1. Use a round cookie cutter to cut the bread into two 1-inch circles.
2. Cut the pepper into strips.
3. Cut the carrot into long and short sticks.
4. Cut the bean in half.
5. Spread the hummus onto one bread circle, and cover with the other circle.
6. Put the bell pepper strips around the top of the sandwich for feathers.
7. Put two long carrot sticks on the bottom of the sandwich for legs.
8. Put one short carrot stick on either side of each long carrot stick for feet.
9. Put a small piece of bread crust and a strip of bell pepper on the sandwich for the wattle.
10. Put the black bean halves on the sandwich for eyes.

Makes 1 serving

Safety tips: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients. To prevent choking, do not give children under age 3 foods that may cause choking (for example, whole grapes, raw carrots, raisins). For children ages 3 to 5, modify these foods (for example, chopping raw carrots finely or into thin strips).

Leprechaun Hats

Ingredients

1 cucumber
¼ yellow bell pepper
4 ounces low-fat cheese (such as mozzarella, provolone, cheddar, or Monterey Jack)

Directions

1. Cut ½ of the cucumber crosswise into three 1-inch sections.
2. Stand the cucumber sections up, and cut each section in half to make the top of the hat.
3. Cut the other ½ cucumber into thin strips that are a little longer than the cucumber sections to make the brim of the hat.
4. Cut the pepper into 6 small squares.
5. Cut the cheese into 6 thin strips.
6. Take one cucumber section, one strip of cheese, one cucumber strip, and one pepper square to form a hat.

Makes 6 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Mini Bagel Wreaths

Ingredients

1 mini bagel
2 ounces low-fat cream cheese
1 tablespoon chopped red, green, and yellow bell peppers

Directions

1. Cut the bagel in half.
2. Spread 1 ounce of the cream cheese on each bagel half.
3. Sprinkle with the chopped bell peppers.

Makes 2 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Mummy Dogs

Ingredients

1 8-ounce roll or can of crescent dinner rolls
10 all-beef or turkey hot dogs
Cooking spray
Mustard or ketchup

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375˚F.
2. Unroll the dough and separate at the perforations, or cut into 4 rectangles.
3. Cut each rectangle lengthwise into 10 pieces.
4. Wrap 4 pieces of dough around each hot dog, stretching the dough slightly to completely cover the hot dog.
5. Place the wrapped hot dogs on an ungreased cooking sheet, and spray the dough lightly with cooking spray.
6. At about ½ inch from one end of each hot dog, separate the dough so that the hot dog shows through for the face.
7. Bake for 13 to 17 minutes or until the dough is light golden brown and the hot dogs are hot.
8. Using mustard or ketchup, add eyes to the mummy.

Makes 10 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the oven.

Mummy Toast

Ingredients

1 slice whole wheat bread, toasted
1 tablespoon pizza sauce with no added sugar
6 to 8 pieces low-fat cheese, sliced into thin strips
1 black olive, sliced

Directions

1. Spread the pizza sauce over the toasted bread slice.
2. Arrange the cheese on top of the pizza sauce.
3. Put the black olives on top of the pizza sauce for the eyes.
4. Put the mummy toast under the broiler to melt the cheese.

Makes 4 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the oven.

Pita Trees

Ingredients

Four whole wheat pita pockets
16 pretzel sticks
½ cup low-fat or fat-free sour cream
½ cup guacamole
¼ cup red bell peppers, finely chopped

Directions

1. Cut each pita pocket into eight wedges.
2. Cut the pretzel sticks in half.
3. Push a pretzel stick half into the center of the bottom of each wedge to form a tree trunk.
4. In a small bowl, mix the sour cream and guacamole.
5. Spread 1 teaspoon of the sour cream guacamole mixture on each pita wedge.
6. Sprinkle a few bell pepper pieces on each pita wedge.

Makes 32 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Pretzel and Cheese Broomsticks

Ingredients

4 low-fat mozzarella string cheese sticks
8 thin pretzel sticks
4 chives or green onion tops, sliced in half lengthwise

Directions

1. Cut the cheese sticks in half.
2. Using a small knife, cut the bottom half of each cheese stick into strips.
3. Push a pretzel stick into the uncut end of the cheese stick.
4. Wrap the cheese with the chive or thin strip of green onion and tie a knot.

Makes 8 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Red, White, and Blue Fruit Salad

Ingredients

4 red apples
1 pound of strawberries
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 pound of blueberries

Directions

1. Cut the apples and strawberries into bite-sized pieces.
2. Mix the lemon juice and apples in a large bowl.
3. Add the strawberries and blueberries to the bowl and stir.

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

St. Patrick's Day Hummus

Ingredients

1 10-ounce box frozen baby spinach or 10 ounces fresh baby spinach (if using frozen spinach, thaw for 2–3 hours)
2 15-ounce cans chickpeas (garbanzo beans)
4 cloves garlic
¼ cup olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
¼ cup tahini (optional)
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
pita bread (optional)
Vegetables, such as celery and cucumber (optional)

Directions

1. Put all the ingredients in a blender, cover the blender, and blend until the mixture is smooth.
2. Cut up the vegetables (optional).
3. Serve the hummus with the pita bread or vegetables.

Makes 10 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should supervise use of the blender.

Shamrock Chips

Ingredients

2 or 3 spinach tortillas
Pinch of salt for each shamrock
Cooking oil spray
1 cup low-fat ranch dressing

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375° F.
2. Use a small shamrock-shaped cookie cutter to cut out seven or eight shamrocks from each tortilla.
3. Place the shamrocks on a cookie sheet and spray lightly with cooking oil.
4. Sprinkle the salt across the shamrocks.
5. Cook the shamrocks for 5 to 6 minutes, checking often after 4 minutes to make sure they do not burn.
6. Serve with low-fat ranch dressing.

Makes 14 to 24 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of cookie cutters.

Snowman Crackers

Ingredients

1 carrot
1 red or orange bell pepper
1 to 2 celery stalks
1 package low-fat cream cheese, softened
1 box round whole wheat or rice crackers
1 can black beans, drained and rinsed

Directions

1. Cut the carrot into thin strips about ¼-inch long.
2. Cut the pepper into strips about ¼-inch wide.
3. Cut the celery stalks into short thin strips.
4. Spread a thin layer of cream cheese onto three crackers.
5. Arrange the crackers to make a snowman.
6. Add the black beans for eyes, a mouth, and buttons; a carrot for a nose; a strip of bell pepper for a hat; and celery stalks for arms.

Makes 24 to 36 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Spider Sandwich

Ingredients

1 slice whole wheat bread
1 tablespoon peanut butter or low-fat cream cheese
6 pretzel sticks
2 black beans or 1 blueberry

Directions

1. Cut two rounds from the bread slice using a cookie cutter, biscuit cutter, or drinking glass.
2. Spread a thin layer of peanut butter or cream cheese on the bread rounds.
3. Press 6 pretzel sticks in the center of the peanut butter– or cream cheese–coated round to form the legs of the spider.
4. Cover the bread round with the second bread round.
5. Cut the beans or blueberry into 2 pieces.
6. Press 2 black beans or blueberry halves into the top of the bread to make the spider's eyes.

Makes 1 serving

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of cookie cutters or biscuit cutters.

Strawberry Cream Cheese Heart Sandwich

Ingredients

5 or 6 strawberries
4 ounces low-fat cream cheese
1 slice whole wheat bread

Directions

1. Chop the strawberries.
2. Put the cream cheese and strawberries in a bowl. Mash them with a fork until the mixture is smooth and pink.
3. Use a 2-inch heart-shaped cookie cutter to cut two heart shapes from the slice of bread. Use a smaller heart-shaped cookie cutter to cut a smaller heart shape from one of the heart-shaped pieces of bread.
4. Spread the cream cheese mixture on the larger heart, and top with the smaller heart, so the cream cheese mixture shows through.

Makes 1 serving

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of cookie cutters.

Strawberry Hearts with Yogurt Dip

Ingredients

1 pint fresh strawberries
½ cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt

Directions

1. Wash and dry the strawberries.
2. Cut each strawberry in half.
3. Use the tip of the knife to cut the top of the strawberry half in a V-shape and remove the stem and leaves.
4. Put the yogurt in a bowl for dipping.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Thanksgiving Pumpkins

Ingredients

2 clementines or tangerines
2 celery stalks

Directions

1. Peel the clementine, orange, or tangerine.
2. Cut the celery stalks into thin strips.
3. Push a celery stick into the center of the clementine or tangerine.

Makes 2 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Toasted Shamrock Rounds

Ingredients

1 green pepper
6 English muffin halves
6 thin slices of low-fat cheddar cheese

Directions

1. Cut off the top of the green pepper and remove the seeds from the inside.
2. Cut the green pepper crosswise near the pointed end to get six thin shamrock shapes.
3. Cut the remaining green pepper into six thin slices to form the stem of each shamrock.
4. Toast the English muffin halves.
5. Put a slice of cheese and a slice of green pepper on top of each English muffin half.
6. Put the English muffins on a tray, then broil until the cheese is melted.

Makes 6 servings

Safety tip: To prevent burns and other injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of the oven.

Watermelon Stars

Ingredients

1 small seedless watermelon
1 cup low-fat or fat-free cottage cheese
½ cup blueberries

Directions

1. Cut the watermelon into ½-inch-thick slices, then use a star-shaped cookie cutter to cut the slices into stars.
2. Top each star with a teaspoonful of cottage cheese.
3. Place a blueberry on top of the cottage cheese.

Makes 10 to 12 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Watermelon Stars and Blueberries

Ingredients

1 small seedless watermelon
1 pint blueberries

Directions

1. Cut the watermelon into 1- to 1½-inch slices.
2. Use a star-shaped cookie cutter to cut pieces out of the watermelon slices.
3. Put a layer of the watermelon stars into a bowl.
4. Sprinkle the blueberries over the layer of watermelon stars.
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until all the watermelon stars and blueberries have been used.

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients and supervise use of cookie cutters.

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