

Drinks and Snacks at Home or in Nursery

Ideas for Healthy Lunchboxes

Common Festivals and Religious Celebrations

Food for Religious and Cultural Celebrations

Food for Parties

**Recipe Ideas
for Parents**



10: DRINKS AND SNACKS AT HOME OR IN NURSERY

Drinks

It is very important for infants and young children to have plenty fluids to drink, as it helps their body to function properly and helps prevent constipation.

- Milk and water are the only safe drinks for teeth so can be recommended between meals. Drinking water should be encouraged at all times.
- From the age of 2 years children can be given semi-skimmed milk at home providing they have a wide and varied diet, but children eating only a limited range of foods should continue to have full fat milk until the age of 5. Skimmed milk is not recommended for any child under the age of 5.
- Full fat milk should be the milk used in a nursery.
- Remember that cow's milk is unsuitable as the main milk for children under one year.
- Fresh fruit juice is a good source of vitamin C but is best given with breakfast or a main meal to help with the absorption of iron. Fresh fruit juices are quite acidic so can be harmful to teeth and so should be diluted with water (1 part juice to at least 2 parts water).
- Squashes are best avoided, especially between meals. If offering squash with a meal then offer "no added sugar" varieties and dilute well (1 part squash to at least 8 parts water). Squash should always be served in a feeding cup, not a bottle, to minimise risk of tooth decay.
- Fizzy drinks (either "diet" or sugar containing) should be kept for special occasions and, if given, preferably offered with food.
- At around 6 months of age it is a good time to encourage the use of a drinking cup instead of a bottle for water, diluted juices and even for formula milk or expressed breast milk.
- Tea and coffee are not recommended for children under 5 as the tannin present can hinder the absorption of iron. However, if tea is given to encourage a child to drink milk, make the tea as milky as possible and don't add sugar.
- All fizzy drinks and squashes (whether "diet" or otherwise) provide little in the way of nutrition and drinking them between meals may reduce a child's appetite for food at mealtimes.

Snacks

Children need a varied diet to ensure they get all the nutrients they require for growth and development. Nursery aged children often have small appetites and need regular meals with small snacks in between. Snacks should be as nutritious as possible and sugar free to prevent tooth decay. Chocolate bars, sweets, cereal bars and sweet biscuits should be saved for mealtimes and as treats rather than taken between meals.



Here are some suggestions for healthier snacks:

- Fruit - mouth size chunks, cubes or slices of apple, pear, Satsuma, orange, banana, kiwi, melon, strawberries and grapes.
- Raw vegetables - carrot, pepper, celery, cucumber, cherry tomato, red cabbage, turnip, radish and courgette.
- Toast, bread rolls, baps, French bread with a small amount of mono and polyunsaturated fat spread.
- Small sandwiches with marmite, cheese, tuna, thin slices of meat.
- Pita bread pockets - on their own or with a filling.
- Bread sticks - on their own or with a dip or soft cheese e.g. Dairy Lea, Philadelphia or cottage cheese.
- Oatcakes, rice cakes, crackers, crisp breads.
- Natural yogurt with fruit or fromage frais.
- Home-made pizza triangles.
- Muffins (home made), plain, potato or cheese scones, crumpets, pancake, plain buns.
- Plain microwave popcorn.
- Crisps or corn snacks e.g. Quavers, Golden Lights, Wheat Crunchies, Tortilla Chips or Twiglets - keep these to a minimum e.g. no more than once per day, because these are high in salt and fat.

11: IDEAS FOR HEALTHY LUNCHBOXES

It's easy to get stuck in a rut with lunch boxes, especially if children insist on having the same sandwich filling day after day. Changing a few items in a lunchbox over the course of a week can help to provide a range of important nutrients and encourage children to try new foods.

With a little careful planning, a healthy lunchbox can be prepared in just a few minutes.

Don't forget that the contents of a lunchbox have to survive until the middle of the day and by that time may have been dropped a few times! There are many novelty lunchboxes and bags to choose from, but remember a plain plastic box does the job just as well.

- Sandwiches are an easy choice for a packed lunch. To give a little variety, try different breads and rolls such as whole-meal, granary, poppy seed, sesame seed, pita bread, bagels and baps. Try some breadsticks or crackers too.
- For sandwich fillings, include ham, turkey, chicken, fish, egg, banana, Edam, mozzarella or cottage cheese. Add plenty of salad, but avoid too much mayonnaise or salad cream, as these are high in fat.
- Home-made pasta and rice salads are ideal for packed lunches.
- Include some chopped raw vegetables such as carrots, cucumber, peppers or cherry tomatoes.
- An apple every day can soon become boring so include a variety of fruit. Choose fruits that are in season as this will be more economical. Include a pot of fruit salad as a change to a whole fruit. Try some dried fruit such as raisins, sultanas, mango or apricots.
- For a dessert include milk-based puddings such as yogurt, Fromage frais or a small pot of custard or mousse.
- Choose fruit scones, pancakes or fruit loaf as healthier alternatives to sweets and chocolate. Use fun-sized chocolate bars but encourage children to keep these for lunchtime, not as a snack.
- For a drink include milk or water. Small cartons of pure fruit juice are easy to transport but remember these should be diluted to 1 part juice to at least 2 parts water. Squashes should be diluted to 1 part juice to at least 8 parts water. Fizzy drinks, "diet" or otherwise, are not suitable for children under 5, so ask parents to include milk, water or fruit juice at lunchtime.

12: COMMON FESTIVALS AND RELIGIOUS CELEBRATIONS

Different festivals are celebrated throughout the year. Some of these originate from religious beliefs, while others are based on events from history. The celebration of festivals is often a child’s first introduction to understanding and appreciating the beliefs of children from other cultures. They can begin to learn to appreciate, respect and value the beliefs of their peers.

“Festival” derives from ‘feast’ and often a feast can be a delightful introduction to multicultural awareness. Nurseries can involve parents from different cultural backgrounds as they often appreciate being asked to contribute to an activity involving their own culture, for example, a baking activity.

Dates of festivals often change from year to year and it would be impossible to celebrate them all, so be selective and decide which ones are appropriate to your own establishment taking into account the needs of the children and their parents. It is often a good idea to celebrate a cultural event that may not be represented among children, as this may be the only occasion they have to learn about this particular culture.

January	1st	New Year
	6th	Epiphany: Three Kings Day (Christian)
	7th	Rastafarian New Year
	25th	Burns Night
Late January/ Early February		Chinese New Year Jewish New Year for Trees
February	3rd	Japanese Bean Scattering
	14th	Valentine’s Day
		40 days before Easter (Christian)
		Pancake Day (Shrove Tuesday)
Late February/ Early March		Caribbean Carnival Chinese Festival of Light Purim (Jewish)
March	1st	St David’s Day
	17th	St Patrick’s Day
		Baha’i New Year
		Holi (Hindu Harvest Festival)
March/April		Mothering Sunday Passover (Jewish festival of Pesach) Easter (Christian)
	23rd	St George’s Day

May	1st	May Day Wesak Buddhist festival, first day of full moon in May
Late May/June		Shavuot: Jewish Festival of Weeks Tuan Yang Chieh: Chinese Dragon Boat Festival
August		Raksha Bhandhan: Indian celebration of brother/sisterly love
September/ Early October		Jewish New Year: Yom Kippur Chinese Kite Festival Harvest Festival
October/ November	31st	Halloween Diwali Hindu Festival of Light
November	5th	Guy Fawkes Thanksgiving (American)
	30th	St Andrew's Day
December	5/6th	St Nicholas (European) Hanukkah (Jewish Festival)
	25th	Christmas Day (Christian)
	26th	Boxing Day (Christian)

Festivals such as Eid-UI-Fitr Islamic festival of fast breaking linked to Ramadan, occur at a different time each year. Parents will be able to advise carers of these dates.



13: FOODS FOR RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS

CHINESE

The Chinese New Year is seen as a time to celebrate the end of winter. It is a very colourful occasion and a time when Chinese people traditionally right their wrongs, discard negative thoughts, words and deeds and wish each other good luck for the coming year. It is a very important time for the family. Although many Chinese people in Britain have adopted a western lifestyle, at New Year they honour the ancient Chinese customs.

Chinese foods are readily available from supermarkets. Suitable snack foods might include water chestnuts, bean sprouts, lychees, cooked noodles, dates and mandarin oranges. Children love to experiment with chopsticks but this can become quite a messy business! The traditional Chinese New Year cake is 'Nin guo'. The children could help to make this.

Ingredients for Nin guo:

18 oz (500 g) brown sugar
18 oz (500 g) glutinous rice flour

Method:

- Boil 1 litre water, add sugar and mix well until it becomes syrupy.
- Pour the rice flour into a bowl, add syrup a little at a time, stirring the mixture until smooth.
- Pour the mixture into a 15cm round cake tin.
- Boil plenty of water in a large pot, place the cake tin on a steaming rack, cover and steam for an hour until cooked.
- Cut into slices and eat hot or cold.

N.B. This is a very sweet cake, serve small slices and keep for after a meal if possible.



SHROVE TUESDAY

'Pancake' day or Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday marks the start of Lent, a Christian celebration. The period of Lent, which leads up to Easter is a time when Christians used to abstain from meat, fat, eggs and dairy products. Shrove Tuesday was traditionally a time when people used up all the ingredients from their store cupboards and making pancakes has become a popular way of doing this. Pancakes can be made with many tasty fillings. A basic recipe would be:

Ingredients for pancakes:

4 oz (100 g) flour
Pinch of salt
1 egg (or dried egg equivalent in Nursery)
Approximately ½ pint (300ml) milk

Method:

- Sieve flour and salt into bowl.
- Make a well in the centre and add the egg.
- Add the milk a little at a time, mixing with a wooden spoon, drawing in all the flour.
- Beat the batter mixture until smooth.
- Heat a little fat in a heavy-based frying pan until hot. Pour batter into the pan until the base of the pan has a thin even covering of batter.
- Place over a moderate heat and cook until the bottom side of the pancake is golden brown.
- Carefully turn the pancake to cook the other side.

Try fillings such as cheese, mushrooms, tomatoes or vegetables.



EID-UL-FITR

This Muslim festival means 'festival of fast breaking and happiness forever' and marks the end of the fast during Ramadan. During this festival, Muslims fast through daylight hours by not eating or drinking anything at all. During this period of fasting Muslims are preparing themselves to face the difficulties of life which lie ahead and the regime is followed by rich and poor alike. This enforces an important rule of Islam - to give to charity, 'Zakat'. A traditional Eid dish is Wedhmi. This can be simply made by the children with some help from an adult.

Ingredients for Wedhmi:

Pastry:

4 oz (100 g) plain flour
Pinch of salt
4 oz (100 g) butter or margarine
Small bowl of water
(1 - 2 tbsp would be plenty)
Sunflower oil

Filling:

8 oz (200 g) desiccated coconut
(soak in water for 30 minutes)
4 tbsp sugar
½ tsp cardamom seeds
½ tsp cinnamon powder

Method:

To make dough:

- Mix flour and salt, rub in butter or margarine and mix to stiff dough with water.

To make the filling:

- Mix the desiccated coconut, sugar, cardamom seeds and cinnamon powder.
- Melt a little oil in a saucepan and gently shallow fry the ingredients.
- Divide the dough into fairly large pieces, roll out, fill with the coconut mixture and deep fry in oil.

N.B. This is a sweet cake, serve small slices and keep for after a meal if possible.

HOLI

Holi is an Indian spring festival when thanks is given for a good harvest. Since India is mainly an agricultural society it is essential to most Indian families that they have a good harvest. As well as a religious and social occasion, Holi has cleansing elements too. People in India traditionally 'spring clean' at this time.

At Holi the coconut is thrown on bonfires to symbolise triumph over evil. As a result coconuts often feature in religious ceremonies. Children could be given the opportunity to investigate a coconut and be told about its uses. They could taste some of the juice and flesh and decorate whole coconuts for display. Sweets are traditionally eaten at Asian festivals and a popular sweet at Holi is Gulab Jaman, although it is high in fat and sugar. Here is a healthier alternative. The children could help to prepare this.

Ingredients for Carrot Pudding:

1 lb (400g) carrots, grated	4 tbsp sugar
2 pints (1.2 litres) semi-skimmed milk	4 tbsp basmati rice

Method:

- Mix all the ingredients together in a pan and bring to the boil.
- Simmer for 20 minutes or until the mixture becomes a 'pudding' consistency.
- Top with raisins or almonds if desired.

EASTER

The Christian festival of Easter is traditionally a time for Easter eggs, but there are other foods which have come to symbolise Easter. There are many variations on the 'bird's nest', including melted chocolate through shredded wheat topped with mini chocolate eggs, but perhaps a healthier option would be this recipe:

Ingredients for Easter "bird's nest":

Raw carrot (grated)	Cherry tomatoes
Lemon juice	Raisins or sultanas
Grapes	Button mushrooms

Method:

- Soak raw carrot in lemon juice and shape into a nest.
- Use other ingredients to represent the eggs in the nest.

Hot cross buns are also traditionally eaten at this time of year.

HALLOWEEN

This is a time for the pumpkin - for making lanterns or for pumpkin soup or pumpkin pie. There are many recipes around for each, but here is a very simple one for cream of pumpkin soup:

Ingredients for pumpkin soup:

1 pumpkin (approx. 1.4kg)	1 pint (568 ml) milk
2 small onions	Salt and pepper
1 tbsp (25 ml) sunflower oil	little grated cheese
3 fl oz (100 ml) vegetable stock	½ - 1 small carton of cream
3 tbsp flour	

Method:

- Lightly fry pumpkin and onions in oil for 5 minutes - do not colour.
- Add stock, cover and simmer for an hour or until vegetables are soft, adding extra water as necessary.
- Sieve or puree soup and return to pan.
- Blend flour with a little of the milk to a smooth cream.
- Add the rest of the milk to the soup and reheat.
- Stir a little of the soup into the blended flour and milk and return this mixture to the pan.
- Bring to the boil, stirring until it thickens and cook for a further 2-3 minutes.
- Stir in cheese, cream and season.



CHRISTMAS

This is probably the most celebrated time in the nursery and there are literally hundreds of food ideas. The children could make mincemeat pies using ready-made pastry. They could also make biscuits in Christmas shapes. A very simple recipe for oatmeal biscuits is:

Ingredients for oatmeal biscuits:

4 oz (100 g) sunflower margarine
2 oz (50 g) caster sugar
4 oz (100 g) porridge oats
4 oz (100 g) plain wheat flour

Method:

- Cream the margarine and sugar. Add the porridge oats and flour.
- Roll the mixture into small balls and flatten slightly.
- Put in oven at 180°C/350°F/gas mark 5 for 15 minutes.

TIP: You can get cookie cutters in Christmas shapes – e.g. stars, trees, etc – to make the biscuits more interesting.

TIP: The biscuits could be eaten after a meal or sent home with the children.

Fruit Salad

A winter fruit salad is a delicious quick and easy snack for the children to make:

Ingredients:

4 ripe pears
3 bananas
6 tangerines

Method:

- Squeeze the juice and flesh from the tangerines. Chop the pears and bananas into the juice and mix together.

14: FOOD FOR PARTIES

A party is a time of great excitement and is the celebration of a happy occasion. The quality of food at a nursery party should be as high as it would normally be at any time.

Staff should use this opportunity to encourage children to continue to follow the healthy eating patterns already in place. It is important to explain to parents that the nursery has adopted a healthy eating policy. Instead of sweets, encourage parents to send fruit treats in to the nursery for the children.

Remember that it is important that the special occasion should look special. Use visual tricks and keep to the healthy ingredients! Use strips of coloured crepe paper, streamers and fancy drinking straws. The children could design their own placemats in advance. Food can be attractively presented with colours matching paper plates. There are many healthy foods that are ideal for party times.

Birthdays are often celebrated in nursery, which means that in a large nursery, there could be several birthdays in one week. Traditionally parents may provide a birthday cake for their child to share. Many cakes are high in sugar and fat. As a healthier alternative, staff could arrange for the child celebrating a birthday to take a small cake home. Birthdays can be celebrated in other ways, for example, receiving a card, blowing out candles on a pretend cake or wearing a birthday crown.

Breads

- Whole-meal, granary or multigrain bread
- Malted, brown or white bread
- Bagels, muffins or croissants
- Tortilla wraps or pita pockets
- Crusty bread with sesame or poppy seeds
- Finger rolls or baps

Sandwich Fillings

Make interesting sandwiches using bread cut into various shapes. Try different fillings. Here are a few suggestions:

- Tinned fish such as tuna, mackerel, pilchards and sardines
- Grated cheese with cucumber or pickle
- Roast beef and tomato slices
- Cottage or cream cheese with pineapple
- Thinly sliced ham and mustard
- Hummus with grated carrot
- Wafer thin turkey and coleslaw
- Mashed banana
- Chopped chicken in mayonnaise with mango or celery
- Chopped egg and watercress

Make face shaped sandwiches using circular cutters, Fromage frais, pasteurised curd cheese or sunflower spread as a base and add raisins, sultanas, sliced or chopped vegetables for features.

Finger Foods

Children love finger foods, try these served with healthy dips:

- Breadsticks
- Pita bread strips
- Cheese sticks
- Carrot batons
- Celery strips
- Courgette sticks
- Cucumber sticks
- Pepper batons

Accompanying dips could include:

- Fish pate - this is quick and easy, just mix some mackerel or tuna with some cottage or cream cheese.
- Curd cheese on its own or mixed with Fromage frais and lemon juice.
- Cooked carrot mashed with orange juice.
- Avocado.
- Mayonnaise mixed with a little tomato ketchup.

Sweet Dishes

Try to avoid commercially produced party foods as these may be high in fat and sugar. Instead offer healthier options:

- Banana bread or carrot cake (some cakes contain nuts, which may cause an adverse reaction in a small number of children).
- Make lollipops by freezing yogurt with fruit in plastic cups with a spatula in each one.
- Dried fruit or dried fruit salad.
- Serve a Greek-style fruit salad - Satsuma segments, pineapple wedges, small bunches of seedless grapes, mango slices and bananas.
- Sugar free jellies, frozen bananas on a stick, melon balls.
- Fruit kebabs.

Drinks

Party time may be a time when you decide to offer drinks other than milk or water.

- Diluted fruit juice - orange, apple, grapefruit, pineapple or mixed juices.
- Nursery 'punch' - diluted concentrated pear juice with fresh lemon - gives a lemonade like flavour.
- Nursery Gluwein - as above, but using warm water. Serve in large bowls with lemon slices as a winter treat.
- Fruit smoothies with bananas, fruit in natural juices e.g. tinned peaches or pears (in own juice), or fresh fruit in season such as raspberries or strawberries .

15: RECIPE IDEAS FOR PARENTS

Recipes in this section are based on adult portions and are intended for family meals.

CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP (Serves 4)

2 chicken breasts

Marinade:

4 tbsp soy sauce	2 pints (1.2 litres) chicken stock
2 tsp sesame oil	8 oz (200 g) egg noodles
1 tsp grated fresh ginger	6 oz (150 g) frozen or canned sweet corn
2 tbsp honey	6 spring onions, chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed	

Method:

- Slice the chicken in half to make 4 thin fillets.
- Mix all the ingredients for the marinade together and marinate the chicken for 30 minutes in the fridge.
- Bring the stock to the boil, then reduce the heat and poach the chicken for about 8 minutes.
- Remove the chicken and reserve the stock.
- Chop the chicken as finely as possible.
- Cook the noodles until soft.
- Stir the sweet corn, spring onions and any remaining marinade into the stock.
- Bring to the boil, then add the shredded chicken and noodles and heat through thoroughly.

CARROT & POTATO SOUP (Serves 4 - 5)

1 large onion, chopped	½ tbsp chopped parsley
2 medium potatoes, peeled and diced	2 pints (1.2 litres) vegetable stock
3 medium sized carrots, scraped and chopped	Black pepper

Method:

- Chop and prepare all the vegetables.
- Place in a large pan and add pepper and parsley.
- Pour in the stock, bring to the boil and leave to cook over a low heat, partly covered, for 30 - 40 minutes or until the vegetables are soft and tender.
- Puree three quarters of the soup.
- With the remainder of the soup reheat gently, taking care not to let the soup come to the boil.

PITA POCKETS (Serves 2)

4 oz (100 g) cottage cheese 2 oz (50 g) cheddar cheese, grated
1 stick celery, finely chopped 2 spring onions, sliced
1 tin sweet corn and peppers seasoning
2 pita bread

Method:

- Lightly brown pita bread under grill until softened and warm.
- Then cut in half and open to make a pocket.
- Leave to cool.
- In a bowl, mix together cottage cheese, cheddar cheese, celery, spring onions, sweet corn, salt and pepper.
- Divide mixture between pita pockets.

BAKED JACKET POTATOES (Allow 1 large potato per person)

Method:

- Preheat oven to 220°C/425°F/gas mark 7.
- Scrub and prick 2 or 3 times with a fork.
- Place on a tray in preheated oven (if no tray, just place on centre rack in oven).
- Bake until tender when gently pressed (time will vary from about 1 to 1½ hours depending on size).
- Remove from oven and cut a large cross on top of potato.
- Squeeze gently to enlarge cut.
- Serve hot with one of the fillings suggested below (or make 2 or 3 if cooking for several people).

Microwave Method:

- Prick the potatoes with a fork then place on a non metallic plate in the microwave oven.
- Cook on high, turning them over halfway through cooking until soft when gently squeezed.
- One potato will take 4 - 6 minutes, two will take 6 - 8 minutes, and four will need 10 or 12 minutes, depending on the wattage of the microwave.

Ideas for fillings:

Cottage cheese and peach or pineapple

Coleslaw

Baked beans

Chili con carne

Grated cheddar cheese and chopped tomato/ham/onion

STIR-FRIED BEEF (Serves 4)

2 tbsp sesame oil	1 clove garlic
1 large carrot, cut into matchsticks	1 courgette, cut into matchsticks
1 yellow pepper, cut into matchsticks	1 red pepper, cut into matchsticks
1 lb (450 g) beef, cut into strips	1 - 2 tbsp corn flour
10 fl oz (300 ml) beef stock	3 tsp brown sugar
3 tbsp soy sauce	

Method:

- Heat the oil and stir-fry the garlic, carrot, courgette and pepper for 5 minutes.
- Add the beef and continue to stir-fry for a further 5 minutes.
- Mix the corn flour together with a tablespoon of water and stir into the beef stock.
- Stir this into the pan and then add the sugar and soy sauce.
- Simmer gently until slightly thickened.
- Serve with rice.

PAN-FRIED PIZZA (Serves 2)

4 oz (100 g) 1 heaped yogurt pot	8 oz (200 g) tin tomatoes, drained
wholemeal plain flour or 1 pot	4 oz (2 good slices) lean cooked
half wholemeal, half plain flour	ham chopped into squares or
½ tsp baking powder	mixed vegetables if you want
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda	a meat-free dish
3 tbsp plain natural yogurt	Large pinch mixed dried herbs
3 tbsp milk	(if you have it)
1 tbsp sunflower or olive oil	3 tbsp cheese, grated

(You can also do this in the oven which reduces the fat used)

Method:

- Put flour, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda into a bowl.
- Mix to a smooth dough with the milk and the yogurt.
- Knead lightly until smooth.
- Pat or rollout into a circle about 8 inches (20cm) across.
- Heat the oil in your frying pan.
- Add the circle of dough and fry for 3 minutes quite gently.
- Turn it over and fry the other side. Preheat grill on medium.
- Roughly chop the tomatoes and spread over the dough almost to the edge.
- Place ham or vegetables evenly over the tomatoes and sprinkle on the grated cheese and mixed herbs.
- Place pan under the preheated grill for 3 or 4 minutes until the cheese is bubbly and turning to a golden brown.
- If baking, don't fry the base. Instead have oven heated to 220°C/400°F/gas mark 6.
- Add toppings and bake for 15 - 20 minutes.

KEDGEREE (Serves 5 - 6)

12 oz (300 g) smoked haddock	½ pint (300 ml) semi-skimmed milk
Pepper for seasoning	1 tbsp sunflower or olive oil
2 - 3 medium sized onions, chopped	2 peppers, chopped
3 eggs, hard boiled and chopped	2 tsp curry powder, or to taste
8 oz (200 g) brown or white rice, cooked	

Method:

- Cook the fish gently in the milk and pepper for 5 - 8 minutes.
- Drain and keep the milk to one side.
- Heat the oil in a frying pan and add the chopped onions and peppers.
- Fry for about 10 minutes or until the onions are golden brown.
- Add the chopped boiled eggs and the cooked fish and fry for a few more minutes.
- Add curry powder, mix through and cook for a few more minutes.
- Add the cooked rice and mix in with the rest of the ingredients.
- Use the remaining milk from cooking the fish to moisten, as desired.

CHICKEN CURRY (Serves 5)

1 tbsp sunflower or olive oil	2 carrots, grated
2 apples, chopped	2 medium onions, chopped
1 tsp ground coriander.	1 tsp chili powder
1 tsp curry powder	1 tbsp flour
¾ pint (450 ml) hot vegetable or chicken stock	1 tbsp sweet pickle or chutney
1 lb (400 g) cooked chicken meat, chopped	½ tbsp lemon juice
1 oz (25 g) sultanas	

Method:

- Heat the oil in a pan and cook the carrots, apples and onions for about 8 minutes or until soft.
- Add the spices, mix well and continue to cook for 2 - 3 minutes.
- Add the flour, mix well and cook for 1 minute.
- Add the hot vegetable or chicken stock and the sweet pickle or chutney, stir well and bring to the boil.
- Add the cooked chicken meat, return to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes.
- Add the lemon juice and sultanas. Stir well.
- Serve with brown or white rice, or pita bread.

LASAGNE (Serves 5)

10 oz (250g) lean minced beef	3 medium sized onions, chopped
3 medium sized carrots, grated	3 sticks celery, finely chopped
1 clove of garlic, crushed	1 tsp mixed herbs
1 bay leaf	14 oz (400g) tinned chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp tomato purée	Salt and pepper
1¾ pint (litre) white sauce	10 sheets pre-cooked lasagna
2 oz (50g) grated cheese	

For white sauce (makes 1 litre):

1 onion	1 oz (25g) corn flour
2 bay leaves	1 tsp black pepper
1¾ pints (1 litre) semi-skimmed milk	

Method for the sauce:

- Add the onion and bay leaves to the milk and bring to the boil.
- Set aside for 10 minutes, and then remove the onion and bay leaves.
- Mix the corn flour with a little cold water.
- Add to the milk gradually, stirring all the time.
- Add the pepper and simmer for 5 minutes.

Method for lasagne:

- Preheat oven to 190°C/375°F/gas mark 5.
- Brown the mince in its own juices then drain off excess fat.
- Add onions, carrots, celery, along with garlic, herbs and bay leaves.
- Add the chopped tomatoes, tomato puree and seasoning.
- Simmer for 20 - 25 minutes.
- Coat the bottom of an ovenproof dish with a little white sauce.
- Layer up one third of the meat sauce, lasagne sheets and white sauce.
- Repeat the layers twice more finishing with a layer of white sauce.
- Sprinkle with grated cheese.
- Cook towards the top of the oven for 30 - 40 minutes, until bubbling.

VEGETABLE GOULASH (Serves 41)

1 tbsp (25 ml) sunflower or olive oil	1 large onion, chopped
2 large carrots, chopped	1 green pepper, seeded & chopped
1 red pepper, seeded & chopped	8 oz (200g) mushrooms, wiped & chopped
2 medium potatoes, diced	14 oz (400g) tinned kidney beans
4 tbsp (60ml) tomato puree	pinch of paprika powder
14 oz (400 g) tinned tomatoes	
2-4 tbsp (30-60 ml) natural yogurt	

Method:

- Heat the oil; add the onion, carrots, peppers and paprika, and fry gently until soft.
- Add the mushrooms, cover and cook gently for 15 minutes.
- Add the potato, tomatoes, tomato puree and kidney beans.
- Simmer for 30 minutes or until potatoes and carrots are soft, adding extra water if necessary.
- Serve on a bed of rice, with yogurt spooned over the top.

LENTIL HOT POT (Serves 4)

1 tbsp (25ml) sunflower or olive oil	2 onions, chopped
1 clove garlic, chopped or crushed	2 large potatoes, cubed
4 carrots, diced	2 celery sticks, chopped
12 oz (350g) red lentils, washed	14 oz (400g) tinned tomatoes
1 tbsp (25ml) tomato purée	1 bay leaf
1 tsp dried oregano	1 pint (600ml) vegetable stock

Method:

- Heat the oil and fry the onion and garlic until soft.
- Add the potatoes, carrots, celery and lentils, and stir to coat the vegetables with the oil.
- Add the tomatoes, tomato puree, oregano, and the bay leaf.
- Stir and add the vegetable stock.
- Bring to the boil, cover and simmer gently for 40-45 minutes or until the vegetables are soft.
- Remove the bay leaf.
- Serve with new potatoes and green vegetables.

TIP: To shorten cooking time by about 20 minutes, use tinned lentils (preferably without added salt or sugar).

BUTTER BEAN & LEEK GRATIN (Serves 4)

1 tbsp (25ml) sunflower or olive oil	3 medium leeks, chopped
1 small cauliflower, cut into florets	1 large onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, chopped or crushed	1 tbsp (25g) plain flour
2 tsp ground coriander	4 fl oz (125ml) milk
4 fl oz (125ml) vegetable stock	14 oz (400g) tinned tomatoes
14 oz (400g) tinned butterbeans	3 oz (75g) Cheddar cheese, grated

Method:

- Simmer the cauliflower and leeks together in a small amount of water until tender (about 10- 15 minutes).
- Meanwhile in another pan, heat the oil and cook the onions and garlic until soft.
- Sprinkle the flour over the onion and cook for about 3 minutes.
- Add the coriander and stir in the milk and stock to form a smooth sauce, adding the tomatoes.
- Stir in the beans, tomatoes, cauliflower and leeks and simmer for 15- 20 minutes or until some of the liquid has reduced.
- Transfer the mixture to an ovenproof dish and sprinkle with cheese.
- Bake in the oven at 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4 for 30 minutes.

VEGETABLE BURGERS (Makes 6)

9 oz (225g) potatoes, chopped
1 tbsp (25g) sunflower or olive oil
1 small onion, chopped
2 oz (50g) broccoli florets, chopped into small pieces
3 oz (75g) leek, chopped
3 oz (75g) mushrooms, finely chopped
3 oz (75g) carrot, grated
2 oz (50g) frozen or canned sweet corn
1 tsp soy sauce
2 oz (50g) Gruyere or Cheddar cheese, grated
1 tsp dried parsley
Small pinch cayenne pepper
1 oz (25g) plain flour
2 eggs, beaten
5 oz (125g) whole-meal breadcrumbs

Method:

- Boil the potatoes until tender, drain then mash.
- Heat the oil and gently fry the onion, broccoli and leek until soft, then add the mushrooms.
- Add the carrots and sweet corn and cook for 5 minutes.
- Mix in the mashed potato, soy sauce, cheese, parsley and pinch of cayenne pepper.
- Coat with flour, dip in the beaten egg and then dip in the breadcrumbs.
- Dip in the egg again and coat with another layer of breadcrumbs to make a crispy coating.
- Heat a small amount of vegetable oil and shallow fry until crisp and golden on both sides.
- Serve on buns with lettuce and tomato.

BREAD & BUTTER PUDDING (Serves 5 - 6)

6 slices of whole-meal bread spread thinly with sunflower margarine.
4 oz (100g) mixed dried fruit
2 large eggs
1 pint (568ml) semi-skimmed milk
Pinch of mixed spice

Method:

- Preheat oven to 375°F/190°C/Gas Mark 5.
- Cut the bread slices into triangles or halves.
- Place a layer of bread, margarine side down, in an ovenproof dish and sprinkle with half the dried fruit.
- Add the mixed spice.
- Add another layer of bread, margarine side up, sprinkle with the rest of fruit and another pinch of mixed spice.
- Add another layer of bread, margarine side up.
- Whisk the eggs into the milk and pour over the bread.
- Leave for 30 minutes.
- Sprinkle with spice then bake for 35 - 40 minutes until set.

FRUIT KEBABS (Makes 12)

1 melon, cut into chunks
2 oranges, cut into quarters, then halved again
1 tin pineapple cubes in natural juice, or fresh pineapple, chopped
3 kiwi fruit, quartered
12 strawberries
2 bananas, chopped
Skewers

Method:

- Thread chunks of fruit onto skewers.
- Arrange the skewers on a plate and encourage everyone to take as much as they want.

SCONES (Makes 24)

3 oz (75 g) sunflower margarine
1 lb (400 g) self-raising flour
½ pint (250 ml) semi-skimmed milk
Milk to glaze

Method:

- Preheat oven to 230°C/450°F/Gas Mark 8.
- Rub the margarine into the flour until it resembles fine breadcrumbs.
- Make a well in the centre and stir in enough milk to give fairly soft dough.
- Turn onto a floured board, knead very lightly then rollout to about 2cm thick, or pat it out with your hands.
- Cut out the scones with a medium sized cutter.
- Place on a baking sheet, brush with milk and bake near the top of the oven for about 10 minutes, until brown and well risen.

Fruit Scones

Add 1 tbsp of castor sugar and 4 oz (100 g) currants, sultanas, raisins, chopped dates, or cherries, or a mixture of fruit, after rubbing margarine into the flour.

Cheese Scones

Add 3 oz (75 g) of grated cheese and 1 tsp of dry mustard to the dry ingredients. Sprinkle with a little cheese after glazing.

Whole-meal Scones

Use 12 oz (300 g) self-raising whole-meal flour with 4 oz (100 g) plain flour. Add 1 tsp of baking powder to the dry ingredients.

APPLE AND RAISIN MUFFINS (Makes 6)

2 oz (50 g) plain whole-meal flour	3 oz (75 g) unbleached plain flour
1 tsp baking powder	2 oz (50 g) sunflower margarine
4 tbsp skimmed milk	1 tsp ground cinnamon
Pinch of salt	2 eggs
2 eating apples, peeled, cored and grated	2 oz (50 g) raisins
6 paper cake cases	

Method:

- Beat together 50 g plain whole-meal flour, 75 g unbleached plain flour, 1 tsp baking powder, 50 g sunflower margarine, 4 tbsp skimmed milk, 1 tsp ground cinnamon, pinch of salt and 2 eggs.
- Stir in 2 eating apples (peeled, cored & grated) and 50 g raisins.
- Spoon into 6 paper cases or a muffin tin and bake at 200°C/400°F/Gas Mark 6 for 25 minutes or until an inserted skewer comes out clean.
- Cool on a rack for 10 minutes before serving while still warm.



The recipes in this section were adapted from a variety of publications:

Just For Starters pack - HEBS & Edinburgh Community Food Initiative

Hassle Free Food - HEBS, 1993

Baby & Child Vegetarian Recipes, Carol Timperley, Ebury Press, London 1997

Super foods for Babies and Children, Annabel Karmel, Ebury Press, London 2001