

## When your child refuses to eat meat

### Meat and Alternatives are important

They provide an important source of protein and iron. Protein helps build and repair body tissues and iron helps make healthy blood.



Whether it is because of the texture or taste, sometimes children refuse to eat meat.

Canada's Food Guide recommends children aged two to eight have one Food Guide Serving of Meat and Alternatives each day.

### One Food Guide Serving equals:

- ½ cup (75 g) cooked fish, shellfish, poultry or lean meat
- 2 eggs
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) peanut butter\*
- ¾ cup (150 g) tofu
- ¾ cup (175 mL) cooked legumes (beans, peas, lentils, edamame)
- ¼ cup (60 mL) nuts and seeds\*

\*not recommended until after 2-3y of age






One Food Guide Serving can be divided into smaller servings throughout the day.

### Tips to encourage your child to eat meat

- Serve tender, juicy meats because they are easier to chew
- Poach meats in broth for added flavour and moisture
- Dice, grind or purée meat or poultry; add to soups, chili and sauces
- Make mini meat patties out of lean ground meat (beef, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb or veal) and serve in a small bun
- Make mini meatloaves out of ground meat in muffin tins
- Make tacos using ground or shredded meat and let your child add their own toppings
- Buy or make meat dumplings
- Roll up small pieces of meat in a soft tortilla or stuff into a pita
- Offer meat with a dip such as ketchup, mustard, plum sauce or Ranch dressing
- Roll poultry in bread or cracker crumbs and bake in the oven

If your child will not eat meat or poultry, offer fish, eggs and meat alternatives such as peanut butter, tofu, legumes, nuts and seeds. These foods have similar nutrients to meat and will help your child to meet their nutritional needs.

## Ideas for serving fish, eggs and meat alternatives

<p><b>Eggs</b></p> 	<p><b>Scrambled eggs</b> Serve with ketchup or roll up scrambled eggs in a soft tortilla.</p>	<p><b>Fried egg sandwich</b> Place a fried egg and a slice of cheese in a hamburger bun or English muffin.</p>	<p><b>French toast</b> Cut into pieces or long strips and serve with applesauce or yogurt to dip.</p>	<p><b>Hard cooked egg</b> Serve warm or cold. Slice a hard cooked egg and put slices on crackers.</p>	<p><b>Egg salad</b> Spread egg salad on top of bread, bagel, English muffin, pita pocket or tortilla.</p>
<p><b>Fish</b> (When using canned tuna, choose light canned tuna instead of white canned tuna)</p> 	<p><b>Fish melt</b> Mix a can of salmon or tuna with a small amount of mayonnaise and grated cheese. Spread on top of an open-face bagel, English muffin or toast. Broil in the oven for 1-2 minutes.</p>	<p><b>Fish burger</b> Mix a can of salmon or tuna with a small amount of mayonnaise. Spread on a hamburger bun. Top with lettuce, a slice of tomato and/or cheese.</p>	<p><b>Fish fingers</b> Dip pieces of white fish (e.g. sole, halibut, tilapia) in milk and then roll in bread crumbs, corn flakes crumbs or crushed crackers (seasonings can be added to the for additional flavour if desired). Place on a baking sheet and bake in the oven at 450°F for about 10-12 minutes. Serve with ketchup or plum sauce to dip.</p>	<p><b>Fish cakes</b> Mix together 1 can of salmon (drained), ¾ cup mashed potato and one egg yolk. With your hands, form mixture into 8 flat cakes. Using 1 tbsp of flour, sprinkle each cake with flour and then brush with one egg white (that has been beaten). Roll cakes in breadcrumbs and place on greased baking sheet. Bake at 375° F for about 15 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with ketchup or Ranch dressing to dip.</p>	
<p><b>Legumes</b> (e.g. kidney, white, black or navy beans, chickpeas; lentils; edamame)</p> 	<p><b>Blend or purée cooked or canned legumes</b> Add them to tomato or cheese based sauces. Use these sauces on noodles and cooked vegetables or as a dip for breads.</p>	<p><b>Hummus</b> Serve hummus as a dip for pita or vegetables or spread inside a sandwich.</p>	<p><b>Using cooked or canned beans</b> Add kidney beans, black beans or lentils to homemade or store-bought chili, stews, soup, casseroles or pasta dishes.</p>	<p><b>Edamame</b> (frozen soybeans) Add 1 cup of edamame to ½ cup of boiling water. Cover and simmer for 4 minutes. Drain, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and serve immediately.</p> <p>Note: Edamame can be found shelled or unshelled in the frozen foods section of the grocery store. Depending on your child's age, they may enjoy squeezing the beans from the pods into their mouth with their fingers.</p> <p>You can also add shelled edamame to stir fries, soups, casseroles and salads.</p>	
<p><b>Tofu</b></p> 	<p>Add crumbled firm tofu to soup, pasta sauce, stir fries, stew, chili or lasagne.</p>	<p><b>Tofu smoothie</b> In a blender, mix soft tofu, milk or fortified soy beverage and fresh or frozen fruit. Blend until smooth to make a fruity shake.</p>	<p><b>Tofu scrambled eggs</b> Melt a small amount of margarine in a frying pan. Add firm tofu and mash. Sauté until lightly browned. Add beaten eggs and scramble while cooking.</p>	<p><b>Breaded tofu cubes</b> Combine ¼ cup breadcrumbs, and salt and pepper to taste on a plate. In a bowl mix 2 tbsp milk and 1 egg. Dip cubed pieces of firm tofu in milk mixture and then roll in breadcrumbs. Place on greased baking sheet and bake at 400°F for 20-30 minutes. Turn once half way through cooking. Serve with ketchup or plum sauce to dip.</p>	
<p><b>Nut Butter*</b></p> 	<p><b>Banana dog</b> Spread nut butter on a hot dog bun and top with a banana.</p>		<p><b>Ants on a log</b> Spread nut butter on celery sticks and top with raisins.</p>	<p><b>Banana bites</b> Spread peanut butter on a tortilla and roll up a banana into the tortilla. Cut into bit size pieces.</p>	