

ONE WEEK MENU PLANNING FORM FOR CHILD CARE

This resource is based on the nutrition guidelines outlined in the [Child Care Menu Planning Practical Guide, January 2024](#).

1. First plan a menu for one day. Start with LUNCH.
 - Select an iron-rich Protein food (e.g., eggs, tofu, lentils, black beans, chicken, beef, [fish that is lower in mercury](#))
 - Select a [Vegetable](#). Consider various colours, forms and textures (e.g., raw, steamed, roasted, grated, chopped, mashed, sliced, wedges)
 - Select another [Vegetable or Fruit](#).
 - Select a [Whole Grain food](#) (e.g., whole grain bread, naan, oatmeal or pasta). Try interesting grains like whole grain brown rice, barley, bulgur, quinoa, whole grain mini pitas and tortillas. Use the Nutrition Facts Table for products that have whole grain, whole wheat or bran listed as the first ingredient and contain less than 10% Daily Value for sugar
 - Offer milk or an appropriate fortified plant-based beverage for children over 24 months (e.g., unsweetened fortified soy beverage)
2. Then plan the two SNACKS for the first day. Snacks should consist of **one serving of Vegetables and Fruit** and one nutritious choice from another food group. One of the snacks offered (either morning or afternoon snack) should contain **one serving of Whole Grains** and the other snack should contain **one serving of Protein food**. For example, the morning snack could be berries with yogurt and the afternoon snack vegetable slices and whole grain crackers.
3. Use the one-day menu as a guide to build the other four days of the week. Simply substitute foods for other items within the same food group to make a one week menu. Make sure to include plant-based proteins (beans, lentils, tofu) each week and fish or egg weekly. [Dark green and orange vegetables](#) are a source of important nutrients, include one dark green vegetable daily (e.g. bok choy, kale, some seaweeds)
4. Then develop four weekly menus. Make each of the days in the four weeks unique. Try not to repeat menu items in the menu cycle.

Plan to have a different menu for winter and summer, and if possible, spring and fall, using a four-week cycle. Make the most of the colours and variety of vegetables and fruit available [in season](#). Water should always be available to drink.

Post menus for the current and following weeks in a prominent place for families to see. Keep used menus for 30 days after the last day for which it is applicable.

PUBLIC HEALTH

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Menu for week _____

	SAMPLE	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning snack						
One Vegetable and Fruit and one of either Protein food or Whole Grain food	Clementine orange					
	Mozzarella cheese cubes with water to drink					
Lunch	Vegetarian chili, whole grain roll and pears					
Iron-rich Protein food	Kidney beans and black beans					
Vegetable	Low-sodium canned tomatoes, carrots, onion, corn in chili					
Another Vegetable or Fruit	Soft, ripe pear slices (cut thinly for young children)					
Whole Grain	Small whole grain dinner roll with non-hydrogenated margarine					
Milk or appropriate fortified plant-based beverage	Milk					
Afternoon snack						
One Vegetable and Fruit and one of either Protein food or Whole Grain food	Sliced red and green peppers with hummus for dipping					
	Whole grain crackers with water to drink					

Note: Tap water must always be available. For more information on menu planning visit www.york.ca/childcarenutrition. 2024.