



Let's Read About Healthy Eating

Prekindergarten nutrition education newsletter

Lesson **6**

Protein for growth

We all need protein but most Americans get enough each day. Vary your protein food choices. Your children learn by watching you. Choose a variety of protein foods and they will too! We often center our meals around meat like beef, pork, or chicken. These can be great choices, but try to also add new main dishes that are made with fish, eggs, beans, or lentils. These are also good sources of protein that can help stretch your food budget.

What can you do to help your child choose a variety of protein foods?

Children love to be involved in choosing food.

- At the store, let your child choose a new bean, peas or lentil to try at home such as kidney beans, chickpeas or split peas. Add the new bean to a soup, stir fry, or casserole.
- Edamame are young soybeans, and they make a delicious snack on their own or with a little seasoning.
- Sandwich fillings are one way to try new protein foods like hummus. There are many different flavors to choose from.

Trying a new food?

Children may not take to new foods right away. Be patient! Offer new foods more than once.

Children can learn about healthy eating and being more active from reading books.

Want to find books on those topics to read with your child?

Go to our Goodreads account

<http://umurl.us/aGM>

(Case-sensitive URL)

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Recipes

Beany Pizza

(Makes 1 serving)

Beans and tortillas provide protein power!

Ingredients:

- 1 whole-wheat tortilla
- ¼ cup low-fat or fat-free refried beans
- ¼ cup part-skim ricotta cheese or 2 tablespoons grated low-fat cheddar cheese

Directions:

1. Wash hands and surfaces.
2. Heat beans in a saucepan on the stove or in the microwave until warm.
3. Spread beans on tortilla. Cover with ricotta or grated cheese.
4. Enjoy as is or broil on a baking sheet about 4 inches from broiler for several minutes until cheese is bubbly. Or, microwave until the cheese melts.
5. Refrigerate leftovers immediately.

Garlic Parmesan Edamame

(Makes 2–4 servings)

Ingredients:

- 1 10 oz. bag frozen edamame (with or without pods)
- ¼ cup water
- ⅛ tsp garlic powder
- 2 Tbsp grated parmesan

Directions:

1. Combine edamame and water in large bowl
2. Microwave for 4–6 minutes.
3. Drain water.
4. Add Parmesan and garlic powder, and stir.
5. Refrigerate leftovers immediately.

Kids in the Kitchen

Ask your child to help you prepare these recipes by:

- spreading beans on the tortilla
- sprinkling cheese on it or mixing ingredients



Edamame pods are tough and too fibrous to eat, but once cooked, the beans can easily be popped out while eating.

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For more information, call MU Extension's Show Me Nutrition Line at 1-888-515-0016.

Need help stretching your food dollars? Contact your local resource center or go online to mydss.mo.gov/food-assistance