

# tasty times

important updates for success and more resources from the child care healthy food program



**Dear Child Care Provider,**

Processed foods, ready-to-eat meals, and restaurant-prepared meals often contain large amounts of salt, saturated fat, and sugar. These ingredients are known to contribute to childhood obesity and negatively affect children’s immediate- and long-term health. Childhood obesity is a serious problem that affects the child’s physical, mental, and social-emotional health. Therefore, serving homemade foods is a healthier option because you can control the ingredients. A healthy meal requires quality ingredients and appropriate cooking techniques. Cooking techniques such as deep frying, especially with fats like butter and lard contribute to chronic illness and childhood obesity. This issue of *Tasty Times* introduces some healthy cooking techniques that bring out food flavors and retain their nutrients with minimal additions of salt and fat.—Tran Huynh, UIC Dietetic Intern

**Techniques for Cooking Healthy Food**

**Bake:** Cooks foods slowly with gentle heat in the oven. With breading and at higher temperatures, baking can be used to replace deep frying since it still produces a golden brown, crispy result. Don’t use batter for coating and avoid overcrowding food in the baking dish.

**Roast:** Cooks foods uncovered in the oven and at a higher temperature to create a crispier exterior than baking.

**Grill:** Cooks food on a rack directly over a heat source. It helps retain nutrition and flavor. However, regularly consuming charred foods and/or fatty meat may increase the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases.

**Blanch:** Boil briefly. After 30 seconds (to 1 minute) in boiling water, submerge the vegetable or other food into ice water to stop the cooking to keep it tender-crisp. It is the best and easiest way to cook vegetables.

**Boil:** Cooks food in heated water or other liquid. It is best for making broth. Boiling vegetables for a long time and then draining them will cause nutrient loss.

**Braise or stew:** Cooks food slowly using heat from an oven or stovetop with a little bit of liquid, usually water or broth. Braising tenderizes the meat and enhances flavor.

**Poach:** Similar to braise/stew but it takes shorter time and is best for cooking fragile foods like fish and eggs.

**Best cooking techniques for different food groups**

COOKING TECHNIQUE	TOUGH MEATS (E.G. BRISKET, BEEF SHANK, ROUND STEAK, RIBS)	CHICKEN AND TENDER CUTS OF BEEF	FISH AND SEAFOOD	VEGETABLES
Bake		X	X	X
Roast	X	X		X
Grill	X	X	X	X
Blanch				X
Boil		X	X	X (without draining)
Braise or stew	X			X
Poach			X	
Sauté or stir-fry		X		X
Steam		X	X	X

**Sauté or stir-fry:** To cook food quickly in a small amount of oil or liquid over direct heat with continual stirring. It is best for cooking bite-size pieces of meat, grains like rice and quinoa, and thin-cut veggies like bell peppers, snow peas, and carrots.

**Steam:** To cook over boiling water in a covered pan with a collapsible basket. This helps retain foods’ shape, texture and nutritional value and avoid unnecessary fat intake. It is best for cooking more delicate vegetables and meats like chicken breast, fish, and shellfish.

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## Healthy Food Program Number

For the Out of Home voicemail, payment information or to speak to a customer service representative, call:

(773)  
564-8861



## Attention Providers! New Change—Reduced Number of Infant Groups

Effective October 1st, 2017, the new CACFP meal pattern went into effect for the Healthy Food Program. As part of these changes, the USDA has reduced the number of infant groups from 3 (0-3 months, 4-7 months, and 8-11 months) to 2 (0-5 months and 6-11 months). Infants 6-11 months are expected to receive foods from all food groups at meals and snacks once the child is developmentally ready to receive them.

It is the expectation that children 8 months and older are developmentally ready to receive all foods. If you have a child that is not developmentally ready or a child whose parents do not believe is developmentally ready at 8 months of age, please notify the Healthy Food Program.



Illinois Action for Children,  
4753 N. Broadway, Suite 1200,  
Chicago, IL 60640  
main: 312-823-1100  
direct: 773-564-8861  
fax: 773-564-8721  
web: [www.actforchildren.org](http://www.actforchildren.org)

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## Tips for food preparation

- Use minimal or no salt. Use herbs, spices, salt-free seasoning blends, flavored vinegars, peppers, garlic and citrus juice/zest. Also try dried vegetables and fruits because they have more intense flavor than fresh alternatives.
- Drain and rinse canned meat/seafood, vegetables, and beans to remove excess salt or oil.
- Trim all visible fat from meat before cooking.
- Use skinless poultry or remove the skin before cooking.
- Cook vegetables just long enough to make them tender-crisp. Overcooked vegetables lose flavor, color, and important nutrients.

## Welcome New Providers!

Paulette Bonaparte  
Eustacia Edwards  
Minerva Fernandez  
Delores Johnson  
Doris King-Wright  
Brittie Mitchell  
Nikia Norwood  
Melonie Rutues  
Virginia Williams

Remember, **May** claims are due **June 5th!**  
**Warning! Late claims WILL result in late payment!**

## Baked Broccoli Cheddar Tots

### INGREDIENTS

- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 2 broccoli heads
- 1 egg
- 2 cups shredded old cheddar cheese
- ¾ cup bread crumbs
- ½ cup chopped green onions



### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper
2. Blanch broccoli for 1 min, then remove and submerge it in a large bowl of ice water to stop cooking. Drain and dry with kitchen towel or paper towel
3. Pulse broccoli in a food processor until finely chopped, then transfer to a large bowl. Add egg, cheddar, bread crumbs, green onions, pepper and salt. Stir to combine.
4. Scoop out 1 tbsp of broccoli mixture and shape into a 1 in-long cylinder. Repeat with remaining mixture and place tots 1 in. apart on prepared sheet. Bake until golden brown, 28 to 30 min.



## Grilled Citrus Salmon

### INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup canola oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp orange juice
- 1 tsp grated lemon zest
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- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 salmon fillets (about 1 ½ lbs. each)
- Orange or lemon slices, optional

### DIRECTIONS

1. Combine all the ingredients except salmon in a jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake well
2. Grill salmon over medium heat, skin side down, for 15-20 min. or until fish flakes easily with a fork
3. Baste every 5 min. with citrus mixture
4. Garnish with orange or lemon slices (optional)

