



Seasonal Menu (Spring)

Preface:

Balanced diet is an important foundation for establishing children's health, whereas schools are important places for nurturing and developing children's healthy eating habits from their early ages. In this context, the Department of Health encourages all pre-primary institutions to design menus with reference to the "Nutrition Guidelines for Children Aged 2 to 6" under the "StartSmart@school.hk" Campaign, so as to make campus environment friendly towards healthful diets and to make the diets of pre-primary pupils conforming to the "3 Low 1 High" (i.e. low fat/oil, low salt, low sugar and high dietary fibre) healthy eating principle.

Spring is forthcoming so what shall we consider when designing healthful and seasonal menus? Let us take a look at the distinctive examples below:

1. Cooking with a variety of spring vegetables, such as eggplants, tomatoes, winter melons, cucumbers, chayotes, Chinese spinach and pak chois, can not only enhance the colours, smells and tastes of dishes, but also make the dishes more nutritionally balanced.
2. Vegetables of different colours offer specific nutrients. Cooking with a combination of different-coloured vegetables every week compares to the scene where flowers of different species blossom together in spring.

Colours	Examples
Red	Apples, strawberries, red peppers, and tomatoes
Orange	Oranges, papayas, carrots, pumpkins, and sweet potatoes
Yellow	Bananas, yellow peppers, corns, and baby corns
Green	Pears, spinaches, cabbages, broccolis, and string beans
Purple	Purple sweet potatoes, purple onions, and eggplants
Black	Black grapes, black fungi, and shiitake mushrooms
White	Dragon fruits, lilies, onions, water chestnuts, and turnips



3. Vegetables and fruits, such as oranges, kiwifruits, lemons, garlics, spring onions, onions and shiitake mushrooms, can serve as natural seasonings when preparing dishes. At the same time, they can introduce novelty to the dishes.
4. Different foods should be supplied in breakfasts and snack times, so as to allow pre-primary children to absorb more comprehensive nutrition and increase menu varieties.
5. The following menus are designed in accordance with the recommendations from the “Healthy Eating Food Pyramid” supplying all food categories required by pre-primary children, so as to ensure balanced nutrition.

To learn more about the recommendations on healthful food ingredients and cooking methods, please refer to the “Nutrition Guidelines for Children Aged 2 to 6” under the “StartSmart@school.hk” Campaign

(https://www.startsmart.gov.hk/files/pdf/nutritional_guide_en.pdf)





Example of Spring Menu

Week One	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast	Oat bread with raisins +Low-fat milk	Spinach and minced pork congee ²	Oatmeal with egg in low-fat milk ⁵	Shanghai noodles with baby cabbage and shredded pork ²	Corn flakes +Low-fat milk
Morning Snacks	Apple	Dragon fruit	Orange	Black grapes	Pear
Lunch	Stir-fried pork slices with chayote and yellow peppers ¹	Stir-fried carrot, yard- long beans and eggs +Blanched choy sums	Stir-fried chicken with red peppers, lilies and cucumber dices ¹	Fish fillets with orange ¹ +blanched broccoli	Farfalle with onions and minced beef in pumpkin sauce
Afternoon Tea ⁶	Vermicelli soup with cauliflowers and chicken ²	Low-fat cheese sandwich	Boiled corns ³	Blanched purple sweet potato ³ + Low-sugar soy milk with added calcium	Tomato egg sandwich
Week Two	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast	Sweet bun +Low-fat milk	Congee with shredded cabbage, black fungus and lean pork ²	Oatmeal with raisins in low fat milk ⁵	Macaroni with choy sums and chicken ²	Peanut butter sandwich +Low-fat milk
Morning Snacks	Strawberries	Orange	Pear	Apple	Banana
Lunch	Stir-fried fish slices with black fungus and string beans	Pork chop with lemon and onions ¹ + Chinese spinach in broth ⁴	Bean curd sheets with assorted mushrooms and winter melon	Sir-fired beef with dragon fruit and green peppers ¹ +Blanched baby cabbages	Broad noodles with turnip, carrot and shredded eggs
Afternoon Tea ⁶	Alfabeto with assorted vegetable dices and minced pork ²	Mashed potato with low-fat milk	Tuna and tomato sandwich	Steamed bun +Low-sugar soymilk with added calcium	Job's tears porridge with corns, lettuce and minced pork ²



Week Three	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast	Oat bread with raisins +Low-fat milk	Congee with lettuce and fish meat ^②	Oatmeal with egg in low-fat milk ^③	Fusilli with winter melon and minced pork ^②	Corn flakes +Low-fat milk
Morning Snacks	Apple	Banana	Dragon fruit	Red grapes	Orange
Lunch	Steamed eggs with spring onions +Stir- fried Shanghai pak chois	Stir-fried dried bean curd with chayote and carrot	Stir-fried beef tenderloin with kiwifruit ^① +Steamed eggplant with chopped garlics	Stir-fried chicken fillets with snow peas and baby corns	Stewed udon with cabbage, shiitake mushrooms and shredded pork
Afternoon Tea ^⑥	Soba with baby pak chois and chicken ^②	Low-fat cheese sandwich	Boiled corn ^③	Blanched sweet potato ^③ + Low-sugar soymilk with added calcium	Tomato egg sandwich
Week Four	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast	Sweet bun +Low-fat milk	Job's tears porridge with mushrooms, corns and chicken ^②	Oatmeal with raisins +Low-fat milk ^⑤	Vermicelli soup with Shanghai pak chois and beef ^②	Peanut butter sandwich +Low-fat milk
Morning Snacks	Strawberries	Papaya	Banana	Apple	Dragon fruit
Lunch	Rainbow tofu (Bell peppers and assorted vegetable dices) ^① +Blanched broccoli	Pan-fried fish fillets with garlics and lemon juice ^① +Blanched lettuce	Steamed ground pork with oat and water chestnuts +Stir-fried baby pak chois	Stir-fried purple onions with eggs +Choi sums in broth ^④	Fried noodles with yard-long beans, carrots and black fungus
Afternoon Tea ^⑥	Macaroni soup with Chinese spinach and beef ^②	Mashed potato with low-fat milk	Tuna and tomato sandwich	Steamed bun + Low-sugar soymilk with added calcium	Congee with spinach and small dried fish ^②



Remarks:

Half-day pre-primary institutions can supply snacks to children with reference to this example:

One to two servings of grains and cereals, half serving of fruit or one serving of milk product.

Nutritional tips on “Less salt and less sugar”:

1. By using fruits and lilies as natural seasonings in dishes, the colours, smells and tastes of the dishes can be enhanced with less salt and sugar used.
2. Congee and noodle soup can be added with different vegetables for greater flavours and less salt.
3. Fresh food can be served as snacks to replace food containing higher salt and sugar content like biscuits and cakes.
4. Homemade vegetable broth can be used for replacing the ready-made ones with higher content of salt. It is not only delicious but also less salty.
5. Raisins contain natural sweetness, so they can enhance the flavour of oatmeal whilst reducing the need to use sugar or condensed milk for flavouring.
6. Serve plain water as the main drink, instead of beverages containing higher sugar content such as instant malted drinks, and juice with added sugar.