



February 2nd - Groundhog Day
February 3rd - National Carrot Cake Day
February 7th - National Fettuccine Alfredo Day
February 9th - National Pizza Day
February 14th - Valentine's Day
February 15th - President's Day
February 21st - National Sticky Bun Day
February 27th - National Strawberry Day

Kid Friendly Recipe

Chocolate Lady Bugs

Prep Time: 5 minutes



Ingredients:

5 medium strawberries
20 Semisweet chocolate chips or dark chocolate chips

Directions:

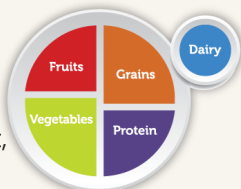
Cut leaves and top off strawberries, the cut each strawberry lengthwise in half.

Help your child gently push 2 or 3 chocolate chips, pointy side down, into the rounded side of each strawberry half to create the ladybug's spots.

Serve immediately and enjoy!

What Makes a Meal?

Each meal consists of **Five** components:
Meat/Meat, Alternate, Grain, Vegetable, Fruit, and Milk



For a Reimbursable Meal

- Students must select **three** out of the **five** components
- One of those components must be at least **1/2 cup of fruit or vegetable**



Home Cooking vs. Takeout

Studies have shown that frequently cooking food at home is associated with a healthy diet. Preparing food at home gives us choices with less fat, sugar, sodium and calories compared to eating out. Restaurants often serve food high in fat, sodium, sugar and calories. Some research also shows a correlation between dining out and increased body weight, diabetes, heart and other chronic diseases. It can also be costly! Below are some tips and tricks to make healthy choices when cooking at home or enjoying a meal cooked by your favorite local restaurant.

OPEN FOR TAKEOUT

Quick Home Cooking:

1. Try out one pot, slow cooker or instant pot recipes. They are typically easy to assemble and making a large portion batch allows you to enjoy leftovers.
2. Plan out and have a meal prepping day. Use 1-2 hours to wash fruit, chop vegetables, hard boil eggs, and make some breakfast muffins. These can save you time during the busy week and are a great opportunity for kids to get involved in the kitchen.
3. Use fresh herbs and spices to give food flavor instead of using salt.

Takeout/Dining Out:

1. When available, check the restaurant's website for calories, fat and sodium information before ordering.
2. Swap your usual for whole grain (for example, brown rice or whole wheat wraps).
3. Order a smaller (or lunch sized) portion or save half for later.
4. Look for grilled, steamed or broiled instead of fried.
5. Replace chips/French fries with a steamed vegetable or side salad.
6. Customize! Ask for dressing on the side, no cheese, etc. This can often be done when ordering online or through an app.

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Valentine's Day Chocolate

Did You Know?

The basic ingredient in chocolate is cocoa, which has a compound called flavanols. Researchers have shown chocolate (specifically dark) has health benefits for the cardiovascular system.

Dark chocolate: Contains cocoa solids, cocoa butter and sugar. You may see chocolate packages include different percent on the package. It indicates the percentage of cocoa solid content in the chocolate. The higher the percentage, the more bitter the flavor. Also, dark chocolate does not contain milk.

Milk chocolate: Milk chocolate has less cocoa solids, and added milk, and sugar.

White chocolate: White chocolate is not actually chocolate, it does not contain cocoa solids, but it includes a paste called cocoa butter with added milk and sugar.

The less the cocoa solid there is, the sweeter the chocolate tastes. Chocolate naturally is moderate in saturated fat; therefore choosing 60-70% or more dark chocolate are key.

Tip: Dark chocolate can be used widely in baking. Try putting dark chocolate chips in muffins or using them to make energy bites. Melted chocolate can be used as a dip for strawberries, clementine, cherries, peaches, bananas, pineapple, anything!



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