



# Let's Read About Healthy Eating

Pre-kindergarten nutrition education newsletter

Lesson **6**

## Protein – enough? Too much?

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! Choose new whole-wheat breads such as pita bread or whole-wheat English muffins. Tired of sandwiches? Use whole-wheat tortillas instead and wrap your fillings in the tortilla. Experiment with main dishes made with beans, peas or fish.

### 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.
- Have you ever tried a veggie burger? Now may be the time! There are many flavors and options in the grocery store.
- Sandwich fillings are one way to try new protein foods like hummus. There are many choices, 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 more books to read with your child? Go to [www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Im\\_2010\\_Mahoney\\_Chidrens\\_booklist\\_332683\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Im_2010_Mahoney_Chidrens_booklist_332683_7.pdf)

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# Recipes

## 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.



Your child is more likely to eat the foods he or she is involved in preparing.

### 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.

### Tortovo

(Makes 1 serving)

#### Ingredients:

- 1 hard-cooked egg, chopped
- 1 teaspoon low-fat or reduced-fat mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon grated low-fat cheese
- 1 whole-wheat or corn tortilla

#### Directions:

1. Wash hands and surfaces.
2. Mix egg, mayonnaise and cheese. Spread on tortilla. Roll or fold the tortovo to make it easier to eat.
3. Optional: Cook under a broiler until bubbly.
4. Refrigerate leftovers immediately.