

MENU PLANNING

Modifying Recipes to Meet the Practical Guide

When preparing meals and snacks for children, ingredients can be modified to reduce sodium, sugar and increase whole grain content to meet the recommendations in the [Child Care Menu Planning - Practical Guide](#).

For changes to recipes for food allergies, refer to Common Food Allergen Substitutions for Child Care Settings.

Nutrient	Suggested Recipe Modifications
Sodium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salt can be reduced by half or more.• Compare labels and choose ingredients with 10% DV sodium or less.• Dilute broth with water.• Rinse canned products when appropriate (e.g., black beans).• Enhance flavour by using herbs and spices.• Avoid adding salt to a recipe when using ingredients that are typically higher sodium (e.g., cheese, soy sauce).
Sugar	<p>Generally, $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sugar for 12 portions of a baked product (e.g., muffins) will meet sugar guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce sugar by half or more.• Substitute sugar with unsweetened apple sauce, mashed pumpkin or banana.• Use small amounts of dried fruit (e.g., raisins, chopped pitted dates) to add sweetness to some baked goods.• Enhance flavours by using spices and extracts like cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger, vanilla, almond, maple, orange or lemon.



Nutrient	Suggested Recipe Modifications
Whole Grains	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Substitute at least half the amount of white flour with whole wheat or whole grain flour in baked goods.• Add oats to recipes to increase the whole grain content (e.g., baked goods, meatballs).• Try using other whole grains such as barley, bulgur, millet, quinoa, spelt, whole grain couscous, wild or whole grain brown rice.

Baked goods and mixed dishes should not contain any **Do Not Serve** ingredients (e.g., chocolate chips, marshmallows, imitation bacon bits). For additional examples, see the [Child Care Menu Planning - Practical Guide](#).

