



DIP INTO SOMETHING HEALTHY!

Kids love to eat with their hands—so let them! Dips are a favorite snack that provides an opportunity to add (or hide) more nutrients in a child’s daily diet. Ease of preparation makes dips great for engaging kids in the kitchen and letting them make choices, too.

DIP IT GOOD! Dips make a healthy power snack when you choose the right ingredients:



- **Journey beyond the ranch.** Blaze a tasty new trail with farm-fresh ingredients that pack more nutrition. Try the healthy, no-cook recipes on the back of this page!
- **Swap the fried chips for fresh and crunchy dippers** with equally satisfying texture and a healthy kick.
- **Hide nutrient-rich veggies**, especially leafy greens like kale or spinach, in blended dips and kids won’t even taste them!

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY Whip Up Your Own Dip

Get creative and invent a dip that tastes just the way you like it!

Simply choose a base ingredient (or two or three) and whirl it in the blender or stir it in a bowl with your favorite flavors.

Step 1: Choose Base Ingredients

- Beans are one of the most nutritious and budget-friendly bases for dips. They can be blended or left whole for a chunky dip. Try chickpeas (garbanzo beans), white beans, black beans or pinto beans. Check out the “Use Your Bean” edition of *Better Bites* to learn about bean benefits.
- Creamy dip bases with a healthy nutrition profile include **low-fat or non-fat yogurt or avocado** (mashed or diced).
- Nuts or seeds provide a satisfying protein base and crunchy texture (when left whole) or creaminess (when blended). Try cashews, pine nuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, almond or peanut butter or tahini (sesame seed butter).
- Chopped **tomatoes or other fruits** can also be used as the main base ingredient to create dips with salsa-style texture.

Step 2: Add Flavors

This is the really fun part! Add your favorite ingredients to the base for flavor, color, texture and nutrition:

- **Veggies or fruits:** fresh or roasted sweet or hot peppers, corn kernels, finely chopped or blended leafy greens, chopped tomatoes, cucumber, pineapple, strawberries, peaches, mango
- **Boost flavor with:** fresh herbs, garlic, onions, shallots, chives, ground spices (onion powder, chili powder, cumin), smoked salt or liquid smoke, lemon, lime or orange juice, vinegars, soy sauce, hot sauce

TIP: Add a little extra liquid (choose an ingredient above or add a splash of water or broth) to loosen or smooth the consistency of your dip or make blending easier.

Step 3: Pick a Crunchy Dipper

Skip the chips and get a satisfying crunch from these better bites instead:

- cucumber slices
- jicama slices or sticks
- whole grain crackers
- zucchini or yellow squash slices
- radish slices or sticks
- carrot sticks
- pretzels
- bell pepper strips
- apple slices



GO A STEP FURTHER

Dips are so quick and simple to make, they offer a great opportunity for parents to involve kids in food prep in a manageable way:

- Talk with your child about each ingredient added to the dip. Explain what's a protein, what's a fruit or vegetable, what has fat and what doesn't, etc. How much should you eat of each ingredient?
- Kids as young as 5 or 6 can learn to use the blender and make their own dips with minimal adult help.
- Use dips as an opportunity to teach young children about measurements and talk with older children about kitchen safety.
- Even toddlers love to push the button on the blender!



TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Kids get excited to eat raw veggies when they're dressed up with yummy dips.
- Dips are a great way to help your kids choose different colored foods for a complete range of phytonutrients. Check out the "Eat a Rainbow" edition of *Better Bites* to learn more.
- Set healthy dips and dippers out on the table so kids can graze while engaged in play and other activities.
- Save time by making favorite dips in batches and freezing in individual portions for the lunchbox. Simply put them in the fridge the night before to thaw out.
- Silky smooth blended dips may even win over kids who are picky about texture.
- For kids who like keeping ingredients separate, try layered dips so they can get what they want in each bite.

DIP RECIPES

Let kids help with the simple steps in **bold**!



Kale-a-Mole

Suggested dippers:
cucumber slices

Stir all ingredients together in a bowl:

4 ripe avocados, mashed
½ bunch kale, finely chopped
juice of 1 lime
¼ small red onion, minced
2 cloves garlic, minced
fresh cilantro leaves, minced
1 Roma tomato (optional)
1 jalapeño, minced (optional)
salt and pepper to taste



White Bean Dip

Suggested dippers:
carrot sticks or radishes

Blend all ingredients:

1 (15 oz) can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 garlic cloves
1 teaspoon dried oregano
¼ cup fresh cilantro or parsley
salt and pepper to taste

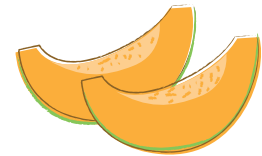


Greek Tzatziki

Suggested dippers:
bell pepper strips or
baked pita chips

Stir all ingredients together in a bowl:

1 cucumber, peeled, seeded and grated
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup plain non-fat yogurt (Greek style is best)
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon lemon zest
1 teaspoon chopped mint and/or basil (optional)



Fresh Melon Salsa

Suggested dippers:
whole wheat crackers or
apple slices

Stir all ingredients together in a bowl:

3 cups diced melon such as cantaloupe, honeydew and/or watermelon, seeds removed
¼ cup minced red onion
2 tablespoons lime juice
2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, minced
2 teaspoons jalapeño pepper, minced (optional)