



## Pizza Biscuit Bears

## Pepper Dip Man

pepper and remove seeds. Cut out three mouths and chop 2 tablespoons red pepper; set aside.

In a small bowl, combine the cream cheese, salsa, pickle relish and pepper sauce until blended. Stir in the celery, onion and reserved chopped peppers. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Make cuts for mouths and eyes. Insert olives for eyes and reserved red pepper mouths. Place each pepper in a Ziploc brand Twist 'n Loc Container. Fill each with 1/3 cup dip. Insert reserved carrot sticks into dip for hair.

Use a sweet yellow or orange pepper instead of a green pepper to change up the fun look of Pepper Dip Man.

**NUTRITION FACTS:** 1 serving equals 138 calories, 9 g fat (5 g saturated fat), 27 mg cholesterol, 357 mg sodium, 11 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 5 g protein.

## Pizza Biscuit Bears

**YIELD:** 6 servings.

**1 tube (16.3 ounces) large refrigerated buttermilk biscuits**

**12 slices pepperoni**

**12 slices ripe olives**

**1 tablespoon chopped green pepper**

**1 jar (2 ounces) sliced pimientos, drained**

**2 tablespoons shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**

**1 can (8 ounces) pizza sauce, optional**

Separate biscuits; place six biscuits 3 inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet. Cut each remaining biscuit into six pieces; roll each into balls. Attach two balls to each whole biscuit for ears; pinch dough to seal.

Decorate each bear with a pepperoni slice on each ear, olive slices for eyes, green pepper for nose, two pimiento strips for mouth and mozzarella cheese for furry forelock. Bake at 375 F for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with pizza sauce, if desired.

**NUTRITION FACTS:** 1 bear equals 288 calories, 13 g fat (4 g saturated fat), 5mg cholesterol, 976 mg sodium, 35 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 7 g protein.

## Dentist offers some tips for packing school lunches

As kids head back to school, Dr. Justin Geller of Novi-based JMG Dentistry has some helpful tips for parents on packing lunches:

■ **Cut back on sugary snacks:** It's a well-known fact that many popular snacks and candies containing high amounts of sugar are among the main contributors to a wide range of dental health problems, including tooth decay, gum disease and the rapidly increasing problem of acid erosion. "Parents need to realize the implications of a high sugar diet," Gellar says. "Sugar is one of the most important dietary factors leading to the development of cavities. The amount, the frequency and the types of foods all play a role."

■ **Eliminate soda and energy drinks:** Experts agree that these sugary, highly-acidic beverages are the worst offenders and by far the most detrimental to a child's oral health. With 56 percent of 8-year-olds consuming soda drinks on a daily basis, long-term dental problems are developing at an earlier age than ever before. "Acidic foods and beverages put your enamel at risk," Gellar says. "That's why it's important to eliminate soda from your diet. It will actually eat away at the enamel." As a healthy alternative, Geller suggests water.

■ **Load up on fruits and vegetables:** Aside from the many health benefits associated with fruits and vegetables, there are several advantages for your teeth, as well. "While there is no substitute for proper and routine brushing and flossing, there are some foods that can help "clean" the teeth," Gellar says. He recommends apples, which are only mildly acidic and have an astringent property that helps to clean and brighten the teeth. Strawberries also share similar properties. Crunchy vegetables that require a little additional chewing — such as carrots and celery — help "scrub" the teeth of sugar and stains. Also, healthy greens like spinach and lettuce can help protect teeth from plaque by forming a slight film over the teeth.