

# Packing Your Child a Healthy Lunch



Providing your child with a nutritious lunch helps to make sure they eat a healthy, well-balanced meal at school! It is important for kids to eat a variety of foods that provide them with the energy and nutrients they need for the rest of the day!

It is important to give kids a variety of foods that they enjoy! Foods packed for lunch should be ready to eat. Pre-washing fruits and vegetables and preparing snacks ahead of time gives kids more time to eat during the lunch period. Also, using containers will help to keep foods fresh and to reduce waste. Lunch can be made extra special by adding a surprise note or sticker!

Lunches from home should be fun and healthy for your child!

## Making Healthy Choices...

- Pack low-fat deli meats, like turkey, instead of higher-fat meats like bologna
- Choose condiments that are low in fat and calories, like mustard, instead of high-fat options, like mayonnaise
- Pack baked chips, whole grain crackers, pretzels, or air-popped popcorn rather than fried or sugary snacks
- Choose raw fruits and vegetables or canned fruit in natural juices rather than fruit with added sugars or packed in syrup
- Prepare sandwiches or wraps with whole grain bread or tortillas instead of varieties made with white flour
- Choose low-fat yogurt, trail mix, or low-fat fruit muffins instead of high-calorie desserts
- Pack milk, 100% juice, or water and avoid soda and other sugary drinks

*Healthy foods can be much more fun when they are prepared in creative ways!*

Here are some creative lunch ideas:

- Fruit, vegetable, or cheese kabobs making healthy snacking fun
- Dips like salsa, ranch, or hummus are great for adding flavor to raw vegetable slices
- Sandwich fillings can be layered between rice cakes, English muffins, pitas, bagels, or wraps for something different
- Cheese can be sliced in fun shapes and paired with whole grain crackers
- Sandwiches can be more exciting (and nutritious!) by trying new fillings like sliced apple or cranberry sauce with turkey, or topping peanut butter with banana slices and raisins
- Last night's leftovers can be reused by mixing pasta with salad dressing, adding grilled chicken to a sandwich or salad, or stuffing roasted vegetables into a pita
- Pack healthier homemade treats like oatmeal and fruit cookies or trail mix with nuts and dried fruit
- Find new varieties of fruits and vegetables for your child to try and add them to salads and sandwiches for lunch
- Try almond or cashew butter instead of peanut butter for some variety and use a variety of fruit jams and jellies

*Need Some More Ideas? Visit:*

**School Lunch Ideas**  
[www.school-lunch-ideas.com/  
Healthy\\_Kid\\_Lunch\\_Box.html](http://www.school-lunch-ideas.com/Healthy_Kid_Lunch_Box.html)

**Kids Health**  
[kidshealth.org/parent/  
nutrition\\_fit/  
nutrition/lunch.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/nutrition/lunch.html)

## Nutritional Development Services

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