

# The Lunch Bunch

## TIPS FOR HEALTHY EATING

Brought to you by Holtz Children's Hospital



### **Wake up – it's breakfast time!**

#### **Why is eating a healthy breakfast before school important?**

- Breakfast is “brain food” that helps students score higher on tests and improve their grades.
- A full stomach makes it easier for students to pay attention in class.
- A well-fed child has less disruptive behavior in class and fewer visits to the nurse.

#### **Breakfast at home or school can be easy and healthy:**

- **Fresh fruits** – apples, bananas, grapes, strawberries are easy to serve and don't cost a lot.
- **Instant oatmeal** – just add hot water.
- **Whole-wheat or multi-grain bread and bagels** – spread with a little butter or cream cheese, low-sugar jelly or peanut butter.
- **Small muffins** – look for blueberry, banana or bran. Stay away from chocolate chip or crumbcake muffins.
- **Eggs** – scrambled, poached or hard boiled, eggs are great. You can hard-boil eggs ahead of time and have them ready to go each morning.
- **Yogurt** – look for low-fat flavors. Large containers are less expensive than the single-serving container. Just spoon some into a bowl, add some fruit and crunchy cereal – a breakfast sundae!
- **Milk** – low-fat is best for children more than two years old.
- **Cereals** – buy lower sugar cereals.

### **Pack a Healthy Lunch Box**

- Packing your child's lunch box is not only healthier but also less expensive than having to buy lunch everyday. If making lunch in the morning takes too much time, you can pack lunch the night before and keep it in the refrigerator until the morning.
- Your child's lunch box should have a healthy mix of foods, including breads, lunch meats, cheese, fruit and vegetables.
- Send milk or water in a thermos instead of packing a juice box or soft drink.
- Have your child make a list of what she likes to eat and help you pack the lunch boxes.
- Stay away from refrigerated, pre-packaged lunches found at local supermarkets. Although they are convenient, they are expensive and contain high levels of fat, salt and calories that are not healthy for children. Make your own version instead by cutting ham or turkey into fun shapes and adding crackers to the lunch box.

### **Lunch Box Safety Tips – Go Away Foodborne Bacteria!**

- Use an insulated lunch box or bag. Most brands come with their own thermos, and cost less than \$10.
- Wash the lunch container with warm soapy water if food or liquid has spilled during the day.
- Include a small ice pack in the lunch box to keep the food fresh before lunchtime. It could be a resealable bag filled with ice.
- Scrub all fruits and vegetables and wrap in plastic or paper towel before placing in the lunch box.
- Wrap loose chips, cookies and crackers in plastic or foil, or in plastic snack-size bags.



Holtz Children's  
Hospital

UM/JACKSON MEMORIAL  
MEDICAL CENTER



## Just Pack It – Simply and Healthy Lunch Box Ideas

### Lunch Box #1

Bagel with cream cheese and tomato  
1 fresh pear  
1 small muffin  
Yogurt drink

### Lunch Box #2

Pita bread stuffed with tunafish salad (canned tuna mixed with a little low-fat mayo), a slice of American or Swiss cheese, lettuce and tomato  
Raw carrots sticks  
Small box of raisins  
Drained pineapple chunks (from a can)  
Yogurt drink

### Lunch Box #3

Flour tortilla rolled up with diced chicken, cheese, cucumber and mild salsa and tomato  
1 peach  
Cheese cut into shapes (cubes, triangles, sticks)  
Milk or water

### Lunch Box #4

Cooked pasta with diced ham, cheese and tomato (send in a disposable plastic container)  
Small box of raisins  
1 banana  
A small snack bag with pretzels  
Milk or water

### Lunch Box #5

1 hard-boiled egg  
Sliced cheese and lean turkey or ham cold cuts with wheat crackers  
1 orange or tangerine  
Celery sticks with a side of cream cheese for dipping  
Milk or water

### Unpack A Surprise!

Place a fresh flower, a special sticker or just an “I Love You” note in your child’s lunch box.  
Your child will have a special reason to unpack his lunch everyday!



## Snack Recipes:

### Cereal mix:

- 2 cups cereal, 1/4 cup dried cherries, 1/4 cup peanuts (or soy nuts), 1/2 cup pretzels. Mix well and put in a resealable bag.

### Cheese kabobs:

- Cut block cheese into 1" cubes (the size of a quarter) and push onto a plastic coffee stirrer; add cubes of melon (such as cantaloupe), more cheese and grapes to make a kabob.

### Other great tasting healthy snacks:

- Pretzel sticks, graham crackers, whole-wheat crackers, sesame breadsticks, granola bars, applesauce, mini-rice cakes, air-popped popcorn (not microwave), low-fat yogurt, low-fat pudding.

**Sources:** American Academy of Pediatrics  
ParentCenter.com  
KidsHealth.org  
NutritionExploration.org



Holtz Children's  
Hospital

UM/JACKSON MEMORIAL  
MEDICAL CENTER