

School Lunch Your Kids Will Munch



Nourish Your Child's Potential!

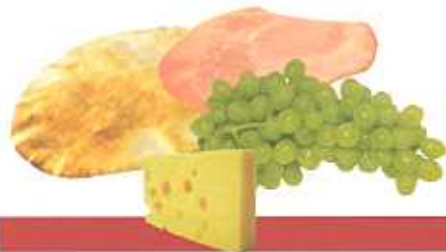
Studies show that well-nourished children are able to concentrate longer and perform better at school. Children are ready to learn and are more alert when they eat a variety of healthy choices from the four food groups of Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.



What to include in a Healthy School Lunch

Foods from the four food groups in *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating* give the nourishment kids need to grow and learn. A balanced lunch includes at least one choice from each food group. Get your kids involved in planning what will go in their lunch. They have probably talked about the Food Guide in class! Follow these easy steps:

- 1 Start with a choice of Meat or Alternative; for example sliced lean meat, a hard-cooked egg or bean dip.
- 2 Add a Grain Product to go with it such as whole wheat bread, crackers or pita.
- 3 Don't forget a Vegetable or Fruit choice.



Balanced Fuel for a Healthy Weight!

A growing number of Canadian children are overweight. To help your child keep a healthy weight, pack lunches that include fruit, vegetables, whole grains and lower-fat milk products. Avoid artificially-flavoured drinks, pop, and other snacks that do not provide good nutrition such as chips, chocolate bars and packaged snack cakes in your child's school lunch.

- 4 A choice of a Milk Product like chocolate milk, cheese or yogurt balances out the meal.
- 5 Finish up with some dessert. A choice from the Grain Products, Milk Products food group or some fruit is a healthy option.

Did you know . . . Children may have less than 20 minutes to eat lunch at school. For younger children with smaller appetites, keep portions small. Peel fruit when possible and cut up foods into smaller bite-sized pieces. Ask your child's school principal about allowing students to eat healthy snacks, like veggies and fruit, and having a water bottle in class.

Tips for Packing a Safe School Lunch

- Use insulated lunch bags and a thermal container to help keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Warm container with hot water before filling it with heated food.



- A frozen juice box, a freezer pack or sandwiches made with frozen bread can help to keep lunch foods cold.
- Thoroughly wash all vegetables and fruit before packing.
- Throw away perishable food that is not eaten at lunch. Do not re-use wrappings.
- Teach children to wash their hands before eating.

For some children, food allergies can be very serious. Check with your child's teacher about foods to be avoided in your child's classroom.



Make your own "Lunch Kits"

Kids often want fun, packaged foods they see on TV or in their friends' lunches. When pressed for time, convenience foods are helpful. But, packing these in your kids' lunches most of the time won't give them what they need to be healthy and stay energized all day long.

Ready-to-eat "lunch kits" are easy, portable and kids like them. But what are you paying for? They contain lots of fat, sodium and added sugar and few of the nutrients kids need to grow and learn. They are an expensive and nutritionally-poor choice!

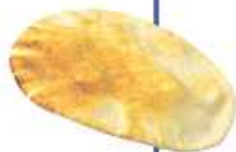


Store bought lunch kits contain:

- 300 - 600 calories
- up to 35 grams (9 tsp) of fat, including up to 17 grams (4 tsp) of saturated fat
- less than 1 gram of fibre
- 1000+ mg sodium

Make your own "lunch kits" using reusable containers with compartments. The chart below offers some ideas for packing healthier alternatives:

Grain Products	Vegetables / Fruit	Milk Products	Meat & Alternatives
Graham crackers	Baby carrots	Yogurt (fruit-flavoured or add fruit to plain yogurt)	Rolled-up sliced meat such as turkey, ham or roast beef
Bagels	Celery sticks	Cheese cubes or slices	Cubes or slices of leftover ham, chicken, turkey or beef
Tortillas/wraps	Strips of sweet pepper	Yogurt dip	Hard-cooked egg, sliced
Pita pockets	Slices of cucumber	Cheese strings	Hummus or bean dip
Dry breakfast cereals	Cherry or grape tomatoes		Sunflower or pumpkin seeds
Whole grain crackers	Broccoli or cauliflower florets		Peanut Butter, almond butter or cashew butter
Pasta salad	Salsa for dipping		
Rice			
Couscous			



Veggies and Fruit to Go

Many children do not eat enough vegetables and fruit. Try to include one of each in your child's lunch everyday. Locally-grown vegetables and fruit usually offer the best taste, freshness and value. Also, buying local helps to support our farms and to preserve the environment.



What's to Drink?

Give some careful thought to what is packed for a lunch-time drink. Beverages should also give kids nutrients they need for growth and development. There are many kinds of packaged drinks in tetrapacks, cans, and plastic bottles. Read labels carefully to be sure you're making a healthy choice. Or, pack a beverage in a reusable, plastic drinking container.



Drinks to Grow On

- ▶ Milk - white or chocolate
- ▶ 100% fruit juice*
- ▶ Vegetable juice cocktail
- ▶ Water



Drinks to Pass By

- ▶ Pop
- ▶ Fruit punch, Fruit Cocktail and Fruit Drink – these usually contain less than 10% real juice plus 9 teaspoons of added sugar. These are more like pop.

* 100% fruit juice is a healthy choice for kids, but too much juice is not good. Limit the amount of juice your child drinks to 1 - 1 1/2 cups per day.

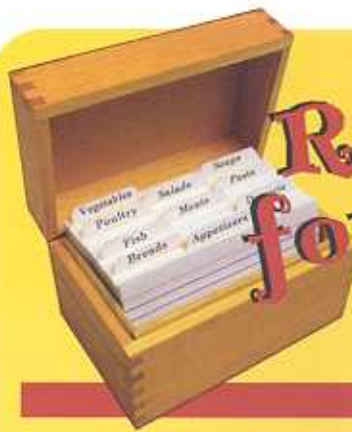
Does your school offer a milk, snack or breakfast program?

School nutrition programs that offer fresh fruits, vegetables and milk products promote and support healthy eating for students through actions as well as words! Well-nourished children and adolescents are better prepared to learn, be active and maintain their health as adults. **For more information on how you can help your school support a healthy nutrition environment, contact the Child Nutrition Network of Haldimand and Norfolk at 519- 587-2441 or on-line at cnn@hnreach.on.ca**

Super Sandwich Suggestions

Avoid the sandwich slump! Here are a few fresh ideas for the most common lunchtime food. Cut sandwiches or wraps into smaller pieces. Children usually like "finger foods" that can be easily picked up and eaten in two small bites.

BASE (Grain Product)	FILLING (Meat or Alternative)	TOPPER (Milk Products or Vegetable & Fruit)
Raisin bread or graham crackers	Peanut butter (if permitted in your school) or almond butter.	Slices of banana
Multi-grain bagel or whole wheat bread	Egg salad or tuna salad	Cucumber slices, lettuce leaf, grated cheese
Flour tortilla or flavoured wraps	Bean spread or grilled chicken slices	Grated cheddar cheese, chopped tomato or salsa, sweet pepper, and lettuce
Rye bread or mini pita pockets	Shaved Black Forest ham	Swiss cheese slice, sliced pickle or tomato
Whole grain roll or mini submarine bun	Chicken salad turkey or lean roast beef	Chopped tomato, sprouts lettuce leaf, grated cheese



Recipes for Kids

Chewy Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

1 cup	quick cooking oats	250 mL
3/4 cup	all-purpose flour	175 mL
1/2 cup	packed brown sugar	125 mL
1/3 cup	soft margarine	75 mL
1/4 cup	white sugar	50 mL
1	egg	1
1/2 tsp	baking soda	2 mL
1/2 tsp	vanilla extract	2 mL
1/2 cup	Sultana raisins	125 mL

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Place all ingredients except raisins in a large bowl. Beat all ingredients using a mixer at medium speed.
3. Stir raisins into batter.
4. Drop by teaspoonfuls, 1 inch (2.5 cm) apart on a cookie sheet.
5. Bake for 12 minutes, or until lightly browned.
6. Remove cookies from sheet and cool on wire rack.



Makes 4 dozen
small cookies



Tortilla Roll-Ups

4-8 servings depending on your child's age

4	large whole wheat tortillas	4
4 tsp	honey mustard	20 mL
8	slices turkey, smoked chicken or black forest ham	8
4	slices marble cheddar cheese, cut in half	4
1 cup	shredded lettuce	250 mL
1 cup	chopped tomatoes, cucumbers or peppers	250 mL

1. Brush tortillas with mustard.
2. Lay 2 slices of meat in centre of each tortilla.
3. Top with cheese, sprinkle with lettuce and other vegetables.
4. Fold over ends and roll up.
5. Serve with veggies and dip.

No Bake Trail Mix

4 cups	cereal (such as Shreddies, Corn Bran, Cheerios, Chex)	1 L
1 tsp	ground cinnamon	5 mL
1-1/2 cups	chopped mixed dried fruit	375 mL
1/2 cup	shredded coconut	125 mL
1/2 cup	sunflower seeds	125 mL

1. In a large bowl, combine cereal and cinnamon.
2. Add remaining ingredients and mix.
3. Store in an air-tight container.

Makes about 6 cups (1-1/2 L)





Recipes for Kids



Parmesan Popcorn

8 cups	popped popcorn	2 L
2 Tbsp	butter or soft margarine, melted	30 mL
1/4 cup	grated Parmesan cheese	50 mL
1 tsp	dried oregano	5 mL
1 tsp	garlic powder	5 mL

1. Place popcorn in a large bowl.
2. Drizzle melted butter or margarine over popcorn and mix well.
3. In a small bowl, mix together Parmesan cheese, oregano and garlic powder.
4. Sprinkle seasoning mix over popcorn and mix well.
5. Store in an airtight container.

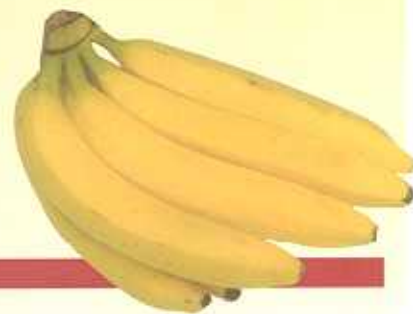
Makes 8 cups



Banana Bread

3/4 cup	all-purpose flour	175 mL
1/2 cup	whole wheat flour	125 mL
1 tsp	baking soda	5 mL
1/2 tsp	baking powder	2 mL
1/2 cup	white sugar	125 mL
1	egg	1
1/4 cup	lower-fat plain yogurt	50 mL
3 Tbsp	vegetable oil	45 mL
1 tsp	vanilla	5 mL
2	ripe, medium-sized bananas	2
1/3 cup	fresh or frozen blueberries or, frozen or dried cranberries (optional)	75 mL

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Sift together all-purpose flour, baking soda and baking powder. Mix in whole wheat flour. Set aside.
3. Mix bananas in a large mixing bowl. Add sugar, egg, yogurt, oil and vanilla. Mix well.
4. Add dry ingredients and frozen or dried fruit (if desired) to banana mixture. Mix just until combined.
5. Pour batter into a lightly oiled 9" x 5" loaf pan (2 litre).
6. Bake for 1 hour or until a tester inserted into the centre comes out clean.



What's for Dessert?

Healthier choices include:

- ▶ Fruit of any kind – Cut up fruit in small containers to make it easy for younger children to eat
- ▶ Pudding made with milk
- ▶ Fruit-flavoured yogurt
- ▶ Unsweetened fruit cups or applesauce cups
- ▶ Cookies, such as Oatmeal Raisin (See recipe page), fig or other fruit bars, graham crackers
- ▶ Mini muffins with fruit
- ▶ Home-made gelatin with added fruit
- ▶ Dried Fruit (see note on "Snack Attack")

Desserts to pass by:

- ▶ "Fruit" gel in cups – these contain water, sugar and artificial flavour and offer little nutrition other than calories
- ▶ Cookies with Icing Dip – loaded with unhealthy fat and lots of sugar
- ▶ Packaged cakes and brownies – loaded with unhealthy fats and lots of sugar



Healthy snacks include:

- ▶ Whole grain crackers, rice cakes, melba toast, bread sticks, or dry unsweetened cereal
- ▶ Plain popcorn or popcorn seasoned with flavourings such as Parmesan cheese and garlic powder (See recipe page)
- ▶ Trail mix, including dry cereal, nuts and seeds (See recipe page)
- ▶ Homemade baked goods, such as banana bread or oatmeal cookies (See recipe page)
- ▶ Cheese cubes or strings
- ▶ Raw veggies
- ▶ Any kind of fruit . . . grapes, bananas, cantaloupe, berries, clementines
- ▶ Fruit cups or applesauce in a cup
- ▶ Pudding made with milk
- ▶ Pumpkin or sunflower seeds, plain or seasoned
- ▶ Nuts or roasted soybeans or chickpeas
- ▶ Yogurt – try freezing containers for a fun treat!

Snack Attack

Unless children can brush their teeth at school, limit snacks that are sticky and high in sugar

Snacks to pass by:

- ▶ Granola bars that are chewy, coated in chocolate, or contain marshmallows or chocolate chips – These are often high in fat and sugar and are more like candy.
- ▶ Dry Instant soup noodles – loaded with salt!
- ▶ Chewy Fruit Snacks – Don't be fooled by pictures of fruit on the package and claims "Made with Real Fruit". There is only a small amount of fruit and these snacks are more like candy.
- ▶ Snack packs, such as cheese spread with crackers or breadsticks – high in fat and salt and low in nutrients.
- ▶ Potato chips, cheese puffs, flavoured tortilla chips – high in unhealthy fats and loaded with salt.



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