

NUTRITION BITS AND BITES

Get an A+ for a packed lunch



What about the Canteen?

Allowing your child to purchase food from the canteen or take part in the lunch program can be a great way to alleviate some of the stress of packing a lunch every day. Encourage your child to choose foods that will provide long lasting energy vs quick sources that can cause fatigue and lack luster energy later in the day.

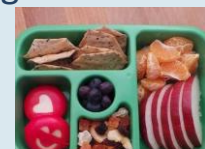
Continue to follow the formula:
carb+ protein+ fruit/veg

It's that time of year again.....

Love it or hate it, packing school lunches is a reality a lot of parents and caregivers face. Packing lunches, however, doesn't have to be such a daunting task if we keep the formula for a balanced meal in mind.

Here are some tips to help you make a well balanced and yummy lunch for your child.

1. Aim to pack a lunch that contains: Protein + Carb + Fruit/ Veg with other snacks as needed.
2. Make packages and containers easy to open especially for younger children.
3. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Utilize thermoses and ice packs to keep food tasty and fresh.
4. Get the kids involved- they are more likely to eat if they had a part in packing their own lunch.
5. Small portions of a variety of foods may be more appealing to younger kids. Consider using a bento box for lunches and fill with several items to keep the meal interesting.



Packing Lunch Pick Chart

Pick and choose something from each category to create a balanced lunch that will keep your child energized all day!

Protein

- Sliced meat/ chicken
- Boiled Egg
- Tuna/ salmon
- Peanut/ Nut/Seed butter
- Nuts/Seeds
- Beans/ chickpeas
- Hummus / Tofu
- Cheese stick
- Edamame
- Greek yogurt

Carb

- Whole grain crackers
- Mini naan bread
- Sandwich bread
- Chapati/ roti
- Pretzels
- Pasta
- English muffin
- Tortilla
- Bannock

- Muffin
- Croissant
- Rice
- Pita pocket
- Bun
- Bagel
- Tortilla chips
- Granola

Fruit/ Vegetable

- Apple slices
- Peeled orange segments
- Carrot sticks
- Cucumber slices
- Grapes
- Berries & cherries
- Pepper slices
- Broccoli pieces
- Snap peas
- Cherry tomatoes

Snack

- Energy balls
- Fruit leather
- Cookie
- Granola bar
- Graham crackers
- Banana bread
- Pudding cup
- Popcorn
- Jello cup
- Apple/banana chips

- Raisins
- Yogurt pretzels
- Fruit snacks
- Rice Krispie square
- Mini muffin
- Cereal bar
- Dry cereal
- Cheese crackers
- Trail mix

What if the lunch comes back uneaten?

An uneaten lunch can be frustrating especially with the time, effort, and money that goes into making a lunch. Kids may find it difficult to eat within the timeframe given at school, possibly not hungry due to extra snacks at recess, or the lunch was not what they were feeling like. If it happens often, perhaps getting feedback from the child as to why lunches are not consumed might be helpful in adjusting the lunches as needed.

Scan the QR code to get more ideas on packing lunches



For more information on nutrition and healthy eating, visit: <https://southernhealth.ca/health-topics/healthy-living-in-your-community/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/>

Contact Dial-a-Dietitian 1-877-830-2892 Health Links 1-888-315-9257

Created by Registered Dietitians from Southern Health-Santé Sud

May be photocopied in its entirety provided source is acknowledged.

Fall 2026