



Smart Eating Makes the Grade! ABC's to a Healthy Lunch



A - Make it a Family Activity!

Children who help pack their lunch are more likely to eat their lunch instead of tossing it away.

Find a time when you and your child can prepare their lunch together. Provide your child with healthy lunch choices and allow them to choose what goes in their lunch bag. This allows the child to pick the foods they want to eat.

Making lunch prep into a family activity can also take the pressure off one individual.

Involve the whole family by making school and work lunches together. Soon it will become a daily routine for your child to help pack their lunch!



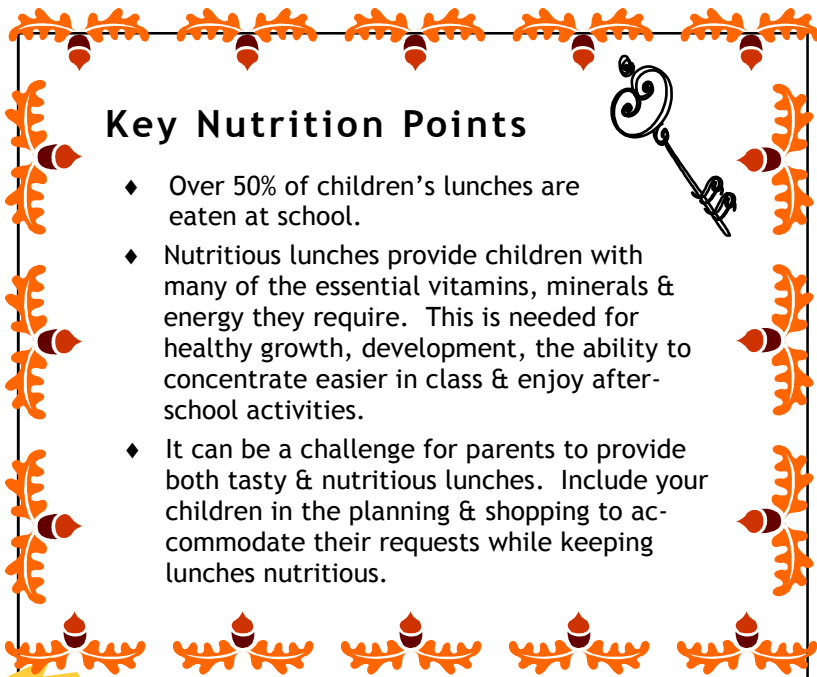
C - Be Creative!

Sandwiches again? A common complaint from many students is that their lunch is boring! Avoid the "brown bag blues" by putting a twist on old favourites.

Instead of a sandwich made with bread why not try... pitas, tortilla wraps, English muffins, or even a sub bun. Whole wheat versions of these grain products will add a fibre boost!

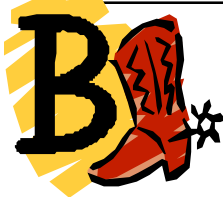
Add dips such as hummus, yogurt, salsa or guacamole to dunk fresh veggies and fruit!

Homemade "Lunchables" can save on money, fat and salt. Try it with whole grain crackers, cheese and a low fat deli meat, such as turkey or chicken breast.



Key Nutrition Points

- ◆ Over 50% of children's lunches are eaten at school.
- ◆ Nutritious lunches provide children with many of the essential vitamins, minerals & energy they require. This is needed for healthy growth, development, the ability to concentrate easier in class & enjoy after-school activities.
- ◆ It can be a challenge for parents to provide both tasty & nutritious lunches. Include your children in the planning & shopping to accommodate their requests while keeping lunches nutritious.



B - Strive for Balance!

Children and teens require nutrient dense foods to help them grow and learn. Provide foods packed with nutrients to fuel your child throughout the day.

A nutritionally balanced lunch includes at least 3 out of the 4 food groups. Try some of these suggestions:

Fruit & Veggies: fruit salad, fruit cups, dehydrated fruit, baby carrots, cherry tomatoes.

Grains: whole wheat breads, wraps, pitas & crackers, rice cakes, cereals.

Milk & Alternatives: yogurt cups or tubes, cottage cheese, block cheese.

Meat & Alternatives: chicken, beef, pork, tuna or salmon, boiled eggs, peanut butter, nuts & seeds

Kid Pleasing Extras: pudding, granola bar, cookies, rice krispie squares, mini chocolate bars.

Activity Corner

Back to school means Fall is just around the corner! Fall is a great season to spend outdoors. Here are a few ideas:

- ◆ Enjoy a nature walk to see the changing leaves!
- ◆ Get lost in a corn maze!
- ◆ Wander a local farmers market!



The Bottom Line

How to make healthy lunches your child will eat?

- ◆ Ask them to pick some of their favourite foods from the 4 food groups.
- ◆ Remember it's all about fun for children!
- ◆ Capture their interest with lunches that include a variety of shapes, colors and textures they like.



Safe Lunch Boxes

- ◆ Look for an insulated lunch box that is easy to open.
- ◆ To help keep foods cold, try adding in a small ice pack, frozen juice box, or frozen yogurt tube/cup.
- ◆ Reusable containers are a great eco-friendly choice.
- ◆ Keep reusable containers clean by washing them with warm soapy water.
- ◆ Unique personalized lunch boxes help make lunch fun!



Cookbooks: Kids in the Kitchen

Kid friendly recipes can make meal preparation fun! Using a kid's cookbook to prepare school lunches can add variety and excitement to your child's school lunch. Try some of these cookbooks to get your kids active in the kitchen:

The amazing little cookbook - downloadable at <http://www.healthyalberta.com/HealthyEating/319.htm>

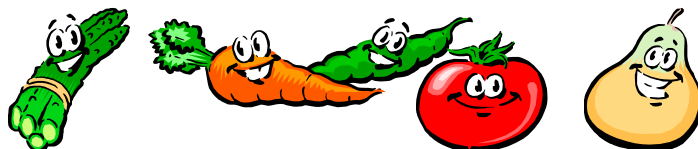
Company's Coming - Kids Healthy Cooking, By Jean Pare

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Kitchen for Kids, by Jennifer Low

Children's cookbook: Canadian Edition by Katharine Ibbs

Kitchen for Kids: 100 Amazing Recipes Your Children Can Really Make by Jennifer Low



California Roll Up

Quick and easy recipe idea: California Roll Up

- 1 whole wheat flour tortilla
- 2 slices turkey
- 2 slices mozzarella cheese
- 4 slices cucumber
- 4 slices avocado
- Handful of alfalfa sprouts

Layer the tortilla with meat, cheese, cucumber, avocado & sprouts. Roll it up. Hold in place with a toothpick. Wrap in plastic wrap. Enjoy.

Substitute the turkey with chicken or any lean deli meat, or lettuce for the alfalfa sprouts. Add pickles or olives for extra taste. Note: this recipe contains all 4 of the food groups!

Source: easy-kids-recipes.com

