



Lunches for a Balanced School Day

The Balanced School Day is a change in routine for you and your child. Here is some nutrition information to make this change easier.

*** Allergy Alert** **Food containing life-threatening allergens (e.g., peanuts and other nuts) should not be available in schools or other settings where individuals may be allergic.**

How do I organize my child's lunch?

- Meals for your child's lunch bag can be balanced in a variety of ways. Talk to your child about which approach he or she would prefer when planning school meals. Consider unique eating habits, likes, dislikes and appetite.
- Put each meal into separate bags or containers which are labeled "Break One" and "Break Two".

Use the following guide to help organize your child's meals for his or her school breaks:

| | Break One | Break Two |
|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Example One | Snacks | Lunch |
| Example Two | $\frac{1}{2}$ of Lunch or Snack | $\frac{1}{2}$ of Lunch or Snack |
| Example Three | Lunch | Snacks |

What do I include in my child's lunch?

- Try to include foods from at least three of the four food groups from *Canada's Food Guide* for each break. The four food groups are: Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives, and Meat and Alternatives.
- Include two beverages. Choose from the following healthy beverages: milk or flavoured milk, fortified soy beverage, water, or 100% fruit or vegetable juice.
- On pizza or sub days, make sure your child has a healthy beverage to drink. Send healthy snacks for the other break.
- Keep a list on the fridge of favourite meals and snacks and let your child "order off the menu". Check back every few weeks to update the list and add new menu items.

- Involve your child in planning and preparing food for the two breaks. This can be done the night before. See "Menu Ideas for Your Child's School Lunch" on the following page for suggestions.

How do I safely pack my child's lunch?

- To keep foods hot, use an insulated bottle or thermos. First, fill the bottle with boiling water and let it stand for a few minutes. Then empty the bottle and fill it with steaming hot food.
- To keep foods cold, use an insulated lunch bag and a freezer pack. Try freezing drinks that will thaw by break time. Great food items to freeze are bottled water, juice boxes, reusable beverage containers filled with 100% fruit juice, mini yogurts, or yogurt tubes.

Menu Ideas for Your Child's School Lunch

| Monday | |
|--|--|
| Break One | |
| Milk pudding cup | Milk and Alternatives: 1 |
| Banana | Vegetables and Fruit: 1 |
| Milk | Milk and Alternatives: 1 |
| Break Two | |
| Sliced turkey on whole wheat bread or bagel | Grain Products: 2 Meat and Alternatives: 1 |
| 100% fruit juice; Baby carrots | Vegetables and Fruit: 2 |
| Tuesday | |
| Break One | |
| Container with whole grain cereal | Grain Products: 1 |
| Milk | Milk and Alternatives: 1 |
| Banana | Vegetables and Fruit: 1 |
| Handful of nuts or seeds * | Meat and Alternatives: 1 |
| Break Two | |
| ½ whole wheat pita with salsa and cheese | Grain Products: 1 Milk and Alternatives: ½ |
| Cucumber slices; 100% fruit juice | Vegetables and Fruit: 2 |
| Wednesday | |
| Break One | |
| Cherry tomatoes | Vegetables and Fruit: 1 |
| Grapes | Vegetables and Fruit: 1 |
| Cheese | Milk and Alternatives: 1 |
| Water | |
| Break Two | |
| Tuna salad sandwich on whole wheat bread, pita, bun or bagel | Meat and Alternatives: 1 Grain Products: 2 |
| Salad with dressing | Vegetables and Fruit: 1 |
| Fortified soy beverage | Milk and Alternatives: 1 |
| Thursday | |
| Break One | |
| One half cinnamon-raisin bagel | Grain Products: 1 |
| Applesauce | Vegetables and Fruit: 1 |
| Vanilla yogurt | Milk and Alternatives: 1 |
| Water | |
| Break Two | |
| Chicken and vegetable soup | Meat and Alternatives: ½ Vegetables and Fruit: 1 |
| Pear | Vegetables and Fruit: 1 |
| Whole wheat crackers | Grain Products: 1 |
| Chocolate milk | Milk and Alternatives: 1 |
| Friday | |
| Break One | |
| Whole wheat wrap filled with vegetables and hummus; cut in half | Grain Products: 1 Vegetables and Fruit: ½ Meat and Alternatives: ½ |
| Orange or apple | Vegetables and Fruit: 1 |
| Water | |
| Break Two | |
| Other half of whole wheat wrap filled with vegetables and hummus | Grain Products: 1 Meat and Alternatives: ½ Vegetables and Fruit: ½ |
| Whole grain fig bars (2) | Grain Products: ½ |
| Strawberries | Vegetables and Fruit: 1 |
| Yogurt drink or milk | Milk and Alternatives: 1 |