



Eagle Bites

Nutrition News You Can Use

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Jeanette Tinsley, RD, LDN www.joshtinsley@bellsouth.net

Welcome Back! We hope everyone had a great summer. The JCS food staff is prepared to help your child get the most out of this school year by continuing to offer balanced, nutritious meals that promote good health. Many of you may also make the choice to send a lunch with your child each day. As we start a new school year we want to help you in minimizing your stress and ease the burden of making a healthy lunch for your child. These tips can help make filling your child's lunch box stress-free:



- Make several containers or baggies of items to include in your child's lunches for the week (vegetables, whole-wheat crackers, pretzels, dry cereal).
- Organize your storage container drawer and have a staging area set up with everything you need in one place, including:
 - At least on lunch box
 - Plastic baggies (snack size work great)
 - Storage containers in various sizes
 - Thermos or water bottle
- Buy 8-fl-oz of water or fill several water bottles, and keep the refrigerator stocked for the week; in the summer months you may choose to freeze these so the ice is melted into cold water by lunch.
- Let your child purchase milk or water at school; this way you don't have to worry about packing a drink, spoilage or leakage.
- Know what to pack:
 - It's okay if your child likes to have a conventional lunch that includes a sandwich, fruit, vegetable, snack item and drink.

➤ If your child prefers to "pick" and does better with yogurt or cheese, for example, make sure you balance the meal so that it contains a protein, fruit and/or vegetables, some carbohydrate and fat.

- Involve your child in packing the lunch, as much as possible; older children can often prepare and pack their own lunch with adult supervision.
- If you are planning to pack dinner leftovers for lunch, pack the storage container as you are cleaning up for dinner – this saves time.

Try these ideas:

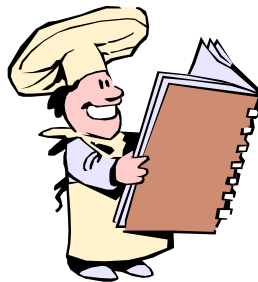
- Conventional sandwiches – deli meat, peanut butter and jelly, cheese, bagel and cream cheese, bagel and peanut butter.
- Other alternatives – single-serving cereal or cereal from home in storage container (just add milk), yogurt with granola, filled croissant, pasta salad, homemade smoothie, homemade muffin
- Fruits – apple, pear, banana, grapes, berries, oranges, grapefruit sections, canned fruit in juice, fruit cocktail, cherries, pineapple chunks, melon, clementine, fruit salad
- Vegetables – cucumber slices, celery, carrots, green beans, snow peas, broccoli florets, grape tomatoes, salad
- Snacks – sunflower seeds, baked potato chips, pretzels, multigrain crackers, high-fiber granola bar, graham crackers, applesauce, multigrain chips or tortilla, dried fruits, nuts, tube yogurt (try freezing), cereal bars, banana chips

Keeping your child's lunch safe

You can safely provide a healthy lunch for your child. However, if you don't package the food correctly, germs could grow in the food. To keep your child's food safe start by making sure you practice good food-safety measures at home. Keep raw meats away from foods that might go in your child's lunch, such as fresh fruit. This is more likely to occur before the food is brought from the refrigerator. To make sure juice from raw meat does not drip on other foods, store raw meats on the bottom shelf or in a bottom drawer in the refrigerator. Always wash your hands before packing your child's lunch. Rinse all raw fruits and vegetables that go in your child's lunch box before packing them. Try using salt water to clean fruits and vegetables to minimize germs even more. To keep food cold use a frozen ice pack or freeze juice boxes and place in the lunch box next to cold items. For after-school activities, pack shelf-stable snacks that don't need refrigeration, such as peanut butter and crackers, packaged pudding and juice boxes. Granola bars and sports bars are safe and convenient but are often times loaded with calories and fat. And remember, it is better to be safe than sorry. Throw away any leftover perishable foods from your child's lunch box. You can reuse shelf-stable foods, such as juice boxes or packaged crackers or cookies, without any risk of food borne illness.

Recipes for You

(This recipe is a great alternative to the conventional sandwich. It can be placed in your child's lunch box to thaw and heated at lunch time.)



Make-Ahead Mexican Roll-ups

- 3 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 (15 ounce) can of beans (black, pinto, chili, etc.)
- 2 cups frozen corn or 1 can whole kernel corn
- 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 cup salsa
- 8 (10-inch or burrito size) tortillas

Prepare rice according to package directions. Cool completely. Place beans in a colander or strainer, and rinse to reduce sodium. Transfer to a large bowl. Thaw frozen corn in microwave; drain and add to bowl. Or, rinse and drain canned corn and add to bowl. Stir in rice, cheese and salsa. Spoon ½ cup filling on each tortilla. Roll or fold up. To freeze for future use: Wrap each in plastic wrap and place in pan in freezer overnight. When completely frozen, place in freezer weight plastic bag. Seal, label with date, and return to freezer. To use from frozen: Thaw for best results. Microwave roll-up in plastic wrap for about 1 minute.

Super Sandwiches

Always a favorite meal for lunch, sandwiches have become a popular fare for dinner and even breakfast. Make the most of your sandwiches:

Start with great bread.

Try 100% whole-wheat bread, or find a light bread that is high-fiber and low-calorie. You can also try whole-grain pita pockets or low-fat tortillas for variety.

Add a delicious spread.

Go beyond the standard mayo by honey mustard or low-calorie salad dressings.

Top it off right.

Choose 2-3 ounces of lean meat. Find cold cuts that are lower in fat, sodium and additives. Try low-fat or fat-free cheeses. When making tuna or chicken salad, use low-fat mayo.

References

Partnership for Food Safety Education. Safe food handling: quick tips to packing a safe lunch

The University of Tennessee Extension Office

www.rd411.com

