

WEEK 2

My Glass is Why

How to Pack a Healthy School Lunch

Packing the kids' lunches for school means you know which nutritious foods they are eating – unless they trade or trash their lunch instead! Swap out your child's drink choice in their lunchbox with something healthier – this can be switching from soda to juice, or from juice to water. Here are some budget-friendly, creative ideas to keep kids happy and healthy at lunchtime:

Make a Smarter Sandwich

While some kids prefer the same thing every day, others may be OK with a slight switch to their sandwich.

- Use different breads like 100% whole wheat tortilla wraps (choose wraps low in saturated and trans fats) or 100% whole wheat pita pockets.
- Besides lettuce, try shredded carrots or avocado slices with a turkey or lean roast beef sandwich.
- Buy store brand blocks of low fat, low sodium cheeses. You save money when you slice it yourself. Or use a cookie cutter to cut into fun shapes.
- Instead of lunchmeat, try leftover grilled chicken, lean pork or an egg white salad sandwich.
- Always pack sandwiches with a mini cooler pack to keep them fresh and safe.

Love those Leftovers

Think about using the leftovers from a family favorite dinner for a next day lunch. Invest in a thermos to keep foods hot or cold until the lunch bell rings. Some ideas:

- Low sodium tomato, vegetable or bean soups
- Chili made with lean or extra lean ground meat or turkey
- Whole wheat spaghetti with low sodium tomato sauce
- Low sodium baked beans, bean casserole or beans & rice

Let Them Dunk

Sometimes it's OK to let your kids play with their food, especially when they are getting extra nutrition. Try packing one of these fun dunks with dippers:

- Apple and pear slices to dip into low fat or non-fat plain yogurt mixed with peanut butter.
- Carrot, celery and sweet pepper strips to dip into hummus, fresh salsa or homemade bean dip.
- Whole grain crackers (choose crackers low in sodium, saturated and trans fats) or slices of grilled low sodium tofu (a soybean product) to dunk into low sodium vegetable or tomato soup.
- Unsalted sunflower seeds, crushed whole wheat cereal and sliced banana to mix into low fat vanilla yogurt (no added sugars) to eat with a spoon like a sundae.

Get Them Involved

While letting kids in the kitchen might mean a bigger mess, if they help pack their lunch, they're more likely to eat that lunch! On nights you have a bit more time, like a Sunday night, have them choose which piece of fruit or what type of bread they want and let them assemble their lunch. Make this a weekly routine – it's another great way to spend family time together.

