

NUTRITION BITS AND BITES

How to Build a Healthy School Lunchbox



The foods that our children eat at school can contribute up to 1/3 of their daily intake of nutrients.

It's important to pack a balanced lunch to ensure children get the nourishment they need to keep their bodies and brains healthy and energized. Life is busy for families and it can be challenging to find the time to prepare healthy lunches that children will enjoy. Keep reading for tips on building a healthy lunchbox!

Lunchbox Basics:

- Include food choices from each of the food groups: Vegetables and Fruit, Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives, and Meat and Alternatives.
- Let your child help choose the foods that go into their lunch. They can choose between foods from the same food group. For example, "Would you like an apple or a banana? Would you prefer yogurt or a cheese string?"
- Sending the same food items often is okay as long as they're healthy.
- Leftovers make great lunches and can save time. They can be sent cold or hot, in a thermos. You can also cook a large batch of something and freeze it until needed.
- Send fruit instead of juice.
- Water, chilled milk or fortified soy beverage are all good choices to send for lunches and snacks.
- Pre-packaged treat foods like cookies, candy and chips should not make a daily appearance in the lunchbox, but can be added occasionally for variety and enjoyment and to teach balance.
- Try adding non-food treat like a sticker, picture, funny joke, poem or a note to help kids get excited about their lunch.
- For more lunchbox tips and inspiration visit: <http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/School-Health/Articles/Packing-Healthy-School-Lunches-and-Snacks-FAQs.aspx>

Disclaimer: Some recipes or food suggestions may not be suitable for people with allergies. Please check with your local school to identify foods that are acceptable or unacceptable in the classroom.

Chicken Tzatziki Roll-ups

Ingredients:

Chopped cooked chicken	2 cups (500 mL)
Green onions, chopped	2
Small red, green, orange or yellow bell pepper, chopped	1
Shredded light cheddar cheese	½ cup (125 mL)
Tzatziki	¼ cup (60 mL)
Hot pepper sauce (optional)	¼ tsp (1 mL)
Large whole wheat flour tortillas	4

Directions:

1. In a bowl, combine chicken, onions, pepper, cheese, tzatziki and hot pepper sauce, if using.
2. Spread over tortillas.
3. Roll each up and cut into 2 inch (5 cm) pieces.

Tips:

- Cut into small roll ups and tuck into lunch boxes for small hands.
- Use leftover chicken to save time.
- For a vegetarian option, swap out the chicken for strips of tofu or a bean patty
- To complete the lunch box, include a piece of fruit, a yogurt and a refillable water bottle.



Recipe Source: <http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Recipes/Kid-friendly-award-winning-recipes/Chicken-Tzatziki-Tortilla-Roll-Ups.aspx>

Don't forget to pack a reusable water bottle! Look for the big blue W sign in your local business's window. When you see this sign it means that businesses and organizations in the community are participating in a national tap refilling initiative called blueW. Anyone can fill up their refillable water bottles with municipal, tap water at these premises for free. The goal of the blueW program is to encourage more people to drink healthy, safe water and reduce the environmental impact of using disposable plastic water bottles. Make it a habit. Take your refillable water bottle wherever you go and make water your beverage of choice. <http://www.bluew.org/>



Free water bottle refills
blueW.org

**** Refer to the Allergy Newsletter (September issue) for substitution ideas.**

For more nutrition topics, go to the news and events section of www.southernhealth.ca or

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