



Brown Bagging It

How to pack a healthy lunch for your child

Lexington-Fayette County Health Department

Children's bodies and minds are still growing, so they need a nutrition-packed lunch that will help get them through the school day.

Pick one food from each of the groups below to pack a healthy brown bag lunch.

Grains

Whole wheat grains are best. Choose 100% whole wheat breads for sandwiches.

- Bagels
- Whole wheat pasta
- Low-fat popcorn
- Cornbread
- Whole grain rice
- English muffins
- Air crisp crackers
- Muffins
- Tortillas
- Pretzels
- Rice cakes
- Raisin bread
- Pita bread

Proteins

Choose lean meats most often.

- Turkey
- Ham
- Hard-cooked eggs
- Refried beans
- Peanut butter
- Marinated pinto beans
- Chicken
- Roast beef
- Tofu
- Hummus
- Tuna salad
- Egg salad

Dairy

Low-fat dairy products like 1% or skim milk are best for children over two years old.

- Low-fat yogurt
- Cottage cheese
- Cheese cubes
- Milk
- String cheese

Vegetables

These are fat-free and packed with nutrients!

- Red bell peppers
- Mushrooms
- Beets
- Eggplant
- Lettuce
- Spinach
- Artichoke hearts
- Cherry tomatoes
- Salsa
- Zucchini
- Cauliflower
- Squash
- Onion
- Cabbage
- Asparagus
- Broccoli

Fruits

Whole, fresh fruit is best, but if you choose juice make it 100% fruit juice and limit it to 1 cup a day.

- Apples
- Oranges
- Grapes
- Pears
- Melons
- Tangerines
- Figs
- Cherries
- Applesauce
- Bananas
- Peaches
- Raisins
- Berries
- Apricots
- Pineapples
- Kiwi



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Beverages

- Water
- Sparking water
- 100% fruit juice
- Diet soft drink
- Hot or iced herb tea



Sweets

- Low-fat cupcake
- Low-fat granola bar
- Vanilla wafers
- Low-fat animal crackers
- Ginger snaps
- Oatmeal raisin cookie
- Graham crackers

Sample menus

- Peanut butter and jelly on whole wheat bread, low-fat strawberry yogurt, a banana, five vanilla wafers and a bottle of water.
- Turkey and cheese on whole wheat with lettuce, orange wedges, an oatmeal raisin cookie and water.
- Marinated beans wrapped in a tortilla with grated cheese and salsa, an apple, low-fat cupcake and sparkling water.
- Tuna salad with air crisp crackers, fresh pineapple slices and low-fat cottage cheese, a low-fat granola bar and iced tea.

Food Safety

- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Use a thermos or insulated bag and ice pack.
- If milk is the only food that needs to be kept cold, have your child buy it at school.

Other Tips

- Go for color! Eat a variety of red, orange, yellow, dark green, blue and purple fruits and vegetables. The recommended amount is 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- Choose snacks that are 6 grams of fat or less and are less than 30% sugar per serving.
- Pack your lunch in the evening when you clean up from dinner.
- Have your child help you pack their lunch. Let them choose from a few healthy items.

List Your Child's Favorites Here
