

TIPS FOR HEALTHY LUNCHES

5-Step Meal Makeover

1. **Start Somewhere:** Don't strive for A-plus all of the time.
2. **Market Nutrition to Kids:** Make food taste good and be a good role model. (Example; add flavor to broccoli with a little olive oil and Parmesan cheese AND eat it yourself.
3. **Establish Food Rule:** We have no problem setting rules about brushing teeth and wearing seat belts, but for some reason, we're reluctant when it comes to food, Decide what's appropriate for your family and set rules that are REALISTIC & ENFORCEABLE. For example, serve only milk with meals and snacks.
4. **Streamline the Kitchen:** Stock the frig with a variety of grated and sliced cheese, yogurt, pre-washed vegetables, ready-to-eat salads, tortillas, fresh fruit, eggs, milk, flavored milk, In the freezer keep meat, waffles, leftovers, pizza, fruit and vegetables and frozen yogurt.
5. **Eat as a Family:** Studies show that families that eat together have healthier diets.

Getting Started

Every child needs...

- **2 (16 grams) Protein:** 2 slices of deli meat, string cheese, cheese slices, yogurt, peanut butter
- **2 Fruit or Vegetables:** Small piece of fruit, palm size serving carrots or celery, cut up and in small servings
- **2 Grains:** 2 slices whole grain bread, pita bread, 8-10 whole grain crackers
- **1 milk:** 1 cup white or flavored milk
- **Fat:** Small amounts will keep kids fueled until they get home

Mix It Up

Kids tire of sandwiches, so give them plenty of variety.

- Mix strawberries & blueberries into yogurt with graham crackers on the side.
- Snackable & Packable, in a re-sealable bag, add mini-pretzels, popcorn & shredded cheese

Make It Fun

- Use a cookie cutter to create fun shapes out of a sandwich.
- Try a new cheese on their sandwich, like pepper jack or muenster.
- Add variety to sandwiches by using different kinds of bread, like pita, tortillas, bagels, crackers.
- Spread cream cheese and turkey on a tortilla, then cut it into sushi-roll size bites.

- Blend instant chocolate pudding with 3 ½ cups milk, blend in 2 tablespoons of peanut butter.
- Cold pasta salad with some chopped veggies, meat, beans and cheese cubes.
- Roll a pretzel rod with 2 slices of Swiss cheese.
- Try ham & cheese quesadillas; grill the night before, cut into pie shapes and enjoy cold the next day.

Let Them Help

Kids are more likely to eat what you make if they have some say in the menu and preparation.

How to Build a Healthy Sandwich

1. **The outside:** whole grain bread, tortilla, pita or crackers
2. **The inside:** lean meat, cheese and/or peanut butter
3. **Add the unexpected:** flavored mustard
4. **Pile on the extras:** lettuce, tomato slices, peppers and cucumbers

Additional Ingredients for a Healthy Lunch

1. Canned or fresh fruit
2. Veggies like baby carrots or grape tomatoes
3. Yogurt
4. Milk-white or flavored
5. Something fun, like pudding or granola bar