

# Busy Families Can Be Healthy Families

## Outfit Your Child for a Healthy Day

You found time to help your children with their latest homework or art project and their clothes are laid out for school. A plan for what you are going to feed them the next day will help them do their best. Healthy food gives them energy and brainpower.

### Breakfast

An energy rich breakfast helps get a good start on the day. Eating a combination of carbohydrates, protein and fat will provide lasting energy. An egg and cheese sandwich on a whole wheat English muffin, a piece of fruit and a glass of low-fat, fat-free or soy milk is just right.

### Fast Breakfast Tips:

- ▶ Purchase 100% whole grain or whole grain blend pancake or waffle mix. Make a batch over the weekend and reheat during the week — or some kids like them cold. Try frozen ready-made whole wheat waffles and top with a tablespoon of yogurt, peanut butter, jelly or 1/4 cup sliced fruit such as bananas.
- ▶ Forget about those cereal and “milk” bars counting as a healthy breakfast. Place 1 cup of your child’s favorite whole grain cereal and a 1/4 cup dried fruit (without added sugar) in a bag. Give them an 8-ounce box of flavored milk to drink for a balanced, energy rich meal.

### Lunch

Children can help pack their lunch. Try to include all the food groups: grain, fruit, vegetable, dairy and protein. For example, a peanut butter sandwich on whole wheat bread, low-fat string cheese, baby carrots and an apple.

### Grain Group

- ✓ Besides tasting good, whole grain foods such as 100% whole wheat bread and pasta, toasted oat cereal and brown rice contain more vitamins, minerals and fiber.
- ✓ Sandwiches with whole wheat pita pockets, tortillas, crackers or English muffins make for something interesting, fun and healthy.

### Fruit and Veggies

- ✓ Add variety and color to your grocery list. Purchase different fruits and vegetables. Expand the number of favorites your family enjoys.
- ✓ Stock up on frozen or canned fruits and vegetables such as frozen strawberries or canned green beans. These fast fruits and veggies can be added to meals in a hurry.
- ✓ Purchase varieties without added sugar or sodium.

### Dairy

- ✓ Dairy foods are a good source of calcium for strong bones and teeth.
- ✓ Fat-free milk boxes travel well and don’t need refrigeration. If your child prefers the milk chilled, pack it next to a freezer gel pack.
- ✓ 1 ounce single serving low-fat string cheese or cheddar cheese is a good quick dairy pick.
- ✓ Low-fat, low-sugar yogurt is a healthy choice.

### Protein

- ✓ Low-fat deli meat, water packed tuna, peanut butter or bean dip provide fast and easy protein to lunches.

### Snacks

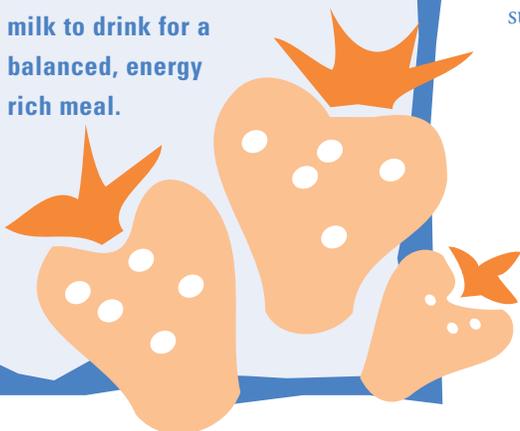
Here are a few healthy snack ideas. You can portion these foods at home and place them in small containers or buy single serving sizes at the store. Read labels of prepared foods to compare products. Choose the product with the least amount of added sugar and fat.

- Fat-free pudding
- Pop-top canned fruit
- Sugar-free gelatin
- Whole grain cereal or crackers
- Fresh fruit and veggies
- Low-fat string cheese
- Low-fat yogurt
- Almonds, peanuts or walnuts

## Learn To Live

Healthy Living From The Anne Arundel County Department Of Health

The services and facilities of the Anne Arundel County Department of Health are available to all without regard to race, color, religion, political affiliation or opinion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, or disability.



## Packing a Safe Lunch

- Always wash hands and kitchen surfaces before and after preparing food.
- Wash and dry all fresh fruits and vegetables before putting them in a lunch.
- Keep the lunch cold. Use an insulated lunch bag and include a freezer gel pack, frozen drink box or bottle.
- Toss out any leftover perishable food.
- Clean the lunch pack every evening with hot soapy water. Rinse and air dry.

## Fun Movement

Want your kids to do their best? Physical activity can help them learn better. Moving your body increases blood flow to the brain and helps you think. It works for adults too. Your school age child may only participate in physical education class once or

twice a week and recess time may be limited; so, encourage fun movement opportunities before or after school and on weekends. Whether it's sports practice or dancing to their favorite tunes, physical activity can benefit the whole family.

## Healthy Day Care or Classroom

Kids spend a lot of time in school or day care. Provide healthy snacks and rewards when it is your turn to bring them in. Also support activities that get them moving.

Encourage the use of fun rewards instead of candy. Stickers, bookmarks, colorful pencils and small toys are great alternatives to sugary snacks. Start the "Rewards Box" by donating a few items and encourage other parents to do the same. The teacher will appreciate the help and your kids will enjoy the prizes.

Next time you are asked to provide a snack for the class or group, bring a bowl of cut fruit or veggies.

Plan a fruit or vegetable tasting party. An easy and fun way for kids to get the nutrients they need is to "eat a rainbow" of fruits and vegetables. Green broccoli, purple grapes, red tomatoes and yellow mangoes are just a few of the fun colors they can try.

## School or Day Care Checklist

- Pencils and pencil case
- Crayons and art smock
- Big eraser
- Back pack or tote bag
- Healthy breakfast
- Healthy lunch
- Daily fun physical activity

## Easy Lunch Box Recipes

Place pre-cut and portioned ingredients in separate small containers or bags. With a little help, kids will be able to put these recipes together at the lunch table in seconds.

### Pita Pizza

- 1 Tbsp low-fat cream cheese
- 1 small whole wheat pita pocket (or 1/2 whole wheat English muffin)
- 1/2 cup chopped veggies (to add color chop up broccoli, red peppers and yellow squash yourself or purchase from the salad bar.)

**Directions:** Spread cream cheese on pita with plastic spreader and arrange chopped vegetables on top and enjoy.

### Perfect Parfait

- 4 ounces low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1/2 cup low-fat granola
- 1/2 cup frozen strawberries
- 1 clear plastic cup and plastic spoon

**Directions:** Layer ingredients and enjoy.

### PB & J Plus

- 2 slices whole wheat bread
- 1 Tbsp peanut butter
- 1 Tbsp jelly
- 1/2 apple, sliced
- 1/2 banana, sliced
- 1 plastic spreader

**Directions:** Layer sandwich ingredients and eat.

**For more information on ways to keep your family healthy, call the Learn to Live Line at 410-222-7979 or visit [www.aahealth.org](http://www.aahealth.org).**

