



# The Cafeteria CONNECTION

## An Inside Look at School Lunches

### School Lunches Make the Grade

Lunch gives children's brains and bodies the energy they need to do their best in class and afterschool activities. If your children bring lunch from home, be sure it includes healthy items such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products. If they buy lunch at school, you can rest assured that they can make the same good choices in the cafeteria.

The National School Lunch Act mandates that school meals "safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's children." Schools must serve lunches that are consistent with the recommendations of the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans. These guidelines include the following:

- A variety of foods
- Plenty of grain products, vegetables and fruits
- 30 percent or less calories from fat
- Less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat
- Moderate sugar and salt content
- At least 1/3 of the daily Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) for nutrients such as protein, iron, calcium, and vitamins A and C

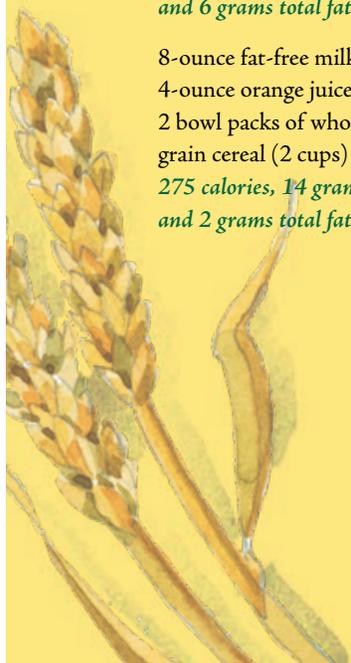
**Q: What does my child's school offer for breakfast?**

**A: Milk, orange juice and two breads**

A complete list of breakfast offerings are featured on the monthly lunch menu. Here are a few examples of what your child can get:

8-ounce 2% plain milk  
4-ounce orange juice  
English muffin with grape jelly  
*361 calories, 9.59 grams protein and 6 grams total fat*

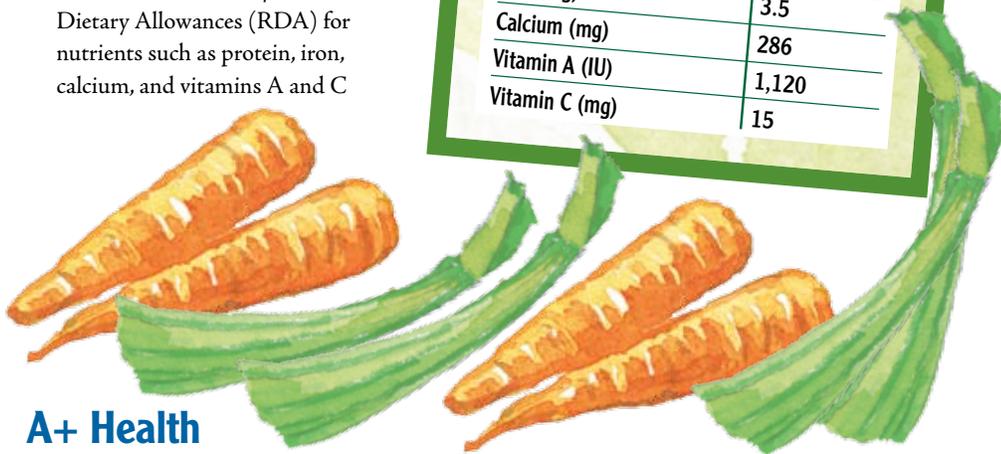
8-ounce fat-free milk  
4-ounce orange juice  
2 bowl packs of whole grain cereal (2 cups)  
*275 calories, 14 grams protein and 2 grams total fat*



### Helping Kids Get 1/3 of their RDAs Every Day

Over the course of the week, the average school lunch has to provide at least 1/3 of the RDAs for an elementary school-age child. These amounts are listed below.

Calories	644
Total Fat (% of calories)	less than 30%
Saturated Fat (% of calories)	less than 10%
Protein (g)	10
Iron (mg)	3.5
Calcium (mg)	286
Vitamin A (IU)	1,120
Vitamin C (mg)	15



### A+ Health

Interested in learning easy ways to encourage healthy eating and physical activity in your family? Check out A+ Health every month in your child's school newsletter from the Anne Arundel County School Health Advisory Council. The council is a partnership between the Anne Arundel County Public Schools and the County Department of Health, in conjunction with local community agencies. The council promotes a healthy lifestyle. Check out [www.aacps.org/SHAC](http://www.aacps.org/SHAC) for more information and resources.

# Help Your Child Choose a Nutritious School Lunch.

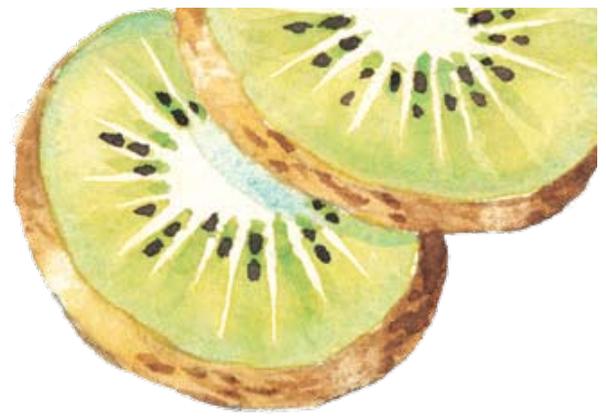
## Follow these steps to help your child make healthy lunch choices.

**Select entrée.** Review the entrées listed on the menu that is sent home each month. The menu is also available online at [www.aacps.org/nutrition](http://www.aacps.org/nutrition) under Menus. Help your children choose entrees they prefer. If they don't like the options on a certain day, consider a chef or garden salad. If your child has diabetes, Food and Nutrition Services and school nurses can provide carbohydrate counts for each menu item.

**Choose sides.** Fruits, vegetables and grain options vary each week. Contact your school's cafeteria manager for the week's selections. Help your children select a favorite or try something new. Ask them if they enjoyed the new food, and if so, offer it at home.

**Choose milk.** Fat-free and 2% plain milk, 1% chocolate milk and 1% strawberry milk are available. Milk is a great source of calcium for strong bones and teeth. So are cheese and broccoli. Children 4-8 years old should get 800 mg of calcium each day, and kids 9-18 need 1,300 mg. Check out Friday's sample meal below. Your child can get 823 mg of calcium in that one meal.

**Rate your child's plate.** Nutrient analysis of all menu items is available online at [www.aacps.org/nutrition](http://www.aacps.org/nutrition). Click on Nutrient Analysis and compare with the RDA guidelines.



## Here is a sample menu and nutritional analysis:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Entree	Beef and Bean Burrito	Garden Salad with Lite Italian Dressing	Teriyaki Veggie Burger on Whole Grain Roll	Roast Turkey, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy	Cheese Pizza
Sides	Steamed Corn Tossed Salad with Lite Ranch Dressing Kiwi	Whole Wheat Roll Pineapple Tidbits	Baked Potato Wedges Carrot & Celery Sticks Orange	Whole Grain Roll Steamed Green Beans Tossed Salad with Honey Mustard Dressing Sliced Pears	Steamed Broccoli Carrot & Celery Sticks with Lite Ranch Dip Apple
Milk	Fat-Free Plain Milk	1% Chocolate Milk	1% Strawberry Milk	Fat-Free Plain Milk	1% Chocolate Milk

### Nutrition Analysis for Each Day's Complete Meal

Calories	641	664	661	672	668
Protein (g)	29	26	31	33	36
Total Fat (g)	20	25	18	20	22
Saturated Fat (g)	5	13	4	3	10
Calcium (mg)	456	766	556	461	823
Fiber (g)	13	5	15	7	10

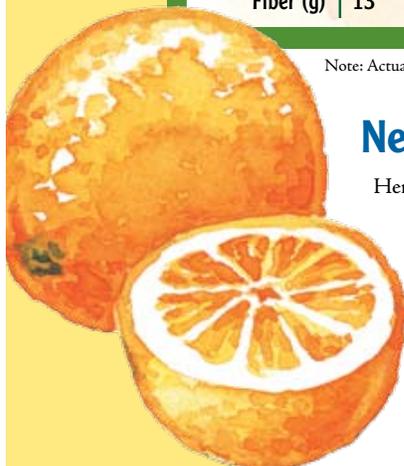
Note: Actual products and nutrients may vary due to product substitution.

## Need More Information?

Here are some local resources:

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH:  
Department of Health Web Site: [www.aahealth.org](http://www.aahealth.org)  
Raising Healthy Kids Resource Center:  
[www.aahealth.org/ltl\\_healthykids.asp](http://www.aahealth.org/ltl_healthykids.asp)

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS:  
Food and Nutrition Services: 410-222-5900  
or [www.aacps.org/nutrition](http://www.aacps.org/nutrition)



## Learn To Live

Anne Arundel County Department of Health  
[LearnToLiveHealthy.org](http://LearnToLiveHealthy.org)

Anne Arundel County Department of Health  
3 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis,  
Maryland 21401 • 410-222-7979

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.