



Tips for Making Sure Your Child's Lunch "Makes the Grade"



Back to school is a great time to remind children about the importance of developing lifelong healthy eating habits. By eating at least 3 to 5 cups of fruits and vegetables every day, children can reduce their future risk of diseases such as cancer, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease. And, don't forget, fruits and vegetables pack a powerful nutrition punch because they are loaded with vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other nutrients that give kids energy and the alertness to participate in their daily activities.

Include these items in your child's lunch:

- Stuff sandwiches full of veggies - Choose mixed greens or fresh spinach for more nutrients than iceberg lettuce.
- Add fruit to a peanut butter sandwich. Kids will love raisins, sliced bananas, or thinly sliced apples in place of jelly or jam.
- Combine chopped apricots, dates, prunes, raisins, or other dried fruit with almond slices and low fat granola cereal as a healthy snack. In a hurry? Toss in a single-serving box of raisins or other dried fruit.
- Fill a plastic sandwich bag with raw vegetables such as sliced celery, radishes, cucumbers, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, and bite-sized cherry tomatoes. To add even more flavor, you may want to include a tasty, low fat dip, such as salsa or low fat dressing.
- Don't forget to include fresh seasonal fruits like plums, peaches, apples, and grapes. These will add color and sweetness to the lunch.

Whether home-packed or hot from the cafeteria, school lunches are an ideal opportunity to incorporate fruits and vegetables into your child's diet. Participating in the school lunch program is a great way to ensure your child's lunch is filled with fruits and vegetables. Contact your child's school for information on participating and qualifying for free and reduced-price meals at school.



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For important nutrition information visit www.cachampionsforchange.net.