

TIPS FOR PACKING A HEALTHY AND FUN SCHOOL LUNCH



- 1. Give your kids a choice.** If they get to decide, they are more likely to eat it. Make sure their choices are all healthy ones. Ask, “Would you like an apple or a banana in your lunchbox?” Or maybe, “Do you want carrots or celery today?”
- 2. Know the rules.** Some schools have rules about what children are and are not allowed to bring for lunch. Make sure you check with your child’s teacher before packing that peanut butter and banana sandwich!
- 3. Add some veggies and dip.** Kids love to dip foods so add a dip to make veggies more fun. Try making a quick dip with plain non-fat yogurt and garlic powder (or any other seasoning you want). Raw or lightly steamed veggies like broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, cucumber and celery are all easy to dip!
- 4. Make mini kebobs!** Cube up low-sodium deli chicken or turkey or low-fat cheese and place cubes on pretzel sticks. Alternate with grape tomatoes and green grapes.
- 5. Switch to whole grains.** Make a sandwich with whole wheat bread instead of white. You can also try whole wheat pita or tortillas to mix things up a bit.
- 6. Slice it up!** Kids are more likely to eat things in smaller bite-sized pieces or slices. Cut up an apple or create a fruit cup with different melons. Slice up a sandwich into four squares.
- 7. Use a thermos for warm foods.** A healthy mac and cheese made with whole wheat pasta and some small broccoli florets is perfect for a thermos. A three-bean chili with carrots and zucchini works great too!
- 8. Add a good source of calcium.** Yogurt makes a great addition and so do small pre-made smoothies that can be found in the yogurt section of your grocery store. Low-fat string cheese is always a hit and low-fat milk is an easy go-to.
- 9. Opt for water instead of sugary drinks like juices and sodas.**
- 10. Aim for baked chips.** Or low-fat popcorn or whole grain crackers if your child likes something crunchy!
- 11. Use an ice pack to keep cold foods cold.**
- 12. Make faces!** Let your child make a “face” on their sandwich with ingredients like hummus, low-fat cream cheese and cut up veggies.

As part of EmblemHealth’s commitment to supporting efforts to reduce childhood obesity, EmblemHealth offers these tips for packing a healthy and fun school lunch.

