

LET'S GET PACKING:

- Use the above ideas to pack a healthy lunch – choosing from each group
- Save high sugar snacks, desserts, candies, and drinks for home
- Drinking fruit juices suppress appetite and can lead to tooth decay
- Get your child involved in choosing and preparing lunches
- Many foods that we usually eat warm, are actually fine to consume cold
- The above food groups can also be used to make healthy snacks (not just for lunch)



<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>



Look what I can bring for lunch

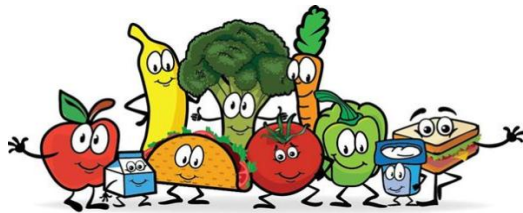


KEY POINTS:

- A healthy lunch gives your child energy to play, concentrate, and learn
- Make a lunch with a variety of foods
- Check the allowable food policy at the childcare center (ACE is peanut butter free)
- Be sure to cut food – being aware of food size needs
 - To avoid a choking hazard
 - To provide food that is easy for the child to eat

FOOD GROUPS TO INCLUDE:

- One fruit serving
- One vegetable serving
- One protein serving
- A complex carbohydrate (whole grains are essential for long-lasting energy and proper brain development)
- Include fats – young children need fats for healthy growth



FRUITS:

- Sliced apples
- Quartered Grapes
- Strawberries, Blueberries, Raspberries, Blackberries (diced or halved if large)
- Bananas – may have to be cut up
- Mandarin oranges – canned or fresh
- Cherry tomatoes - halved
- Applesauce or Fruit cups to go
- Watermelon, cantaloupe, honey dew, etc. – seedless, cut up
- Diced pears or peaches
- Dried fruit (raisins, cranberries, banana chips, etc.)

CARBOHYDRATES:

Pasta – whole wheat or whole grain

- Crackers or bread– whole wheat or whole grain
- Pita or pita chips
- Dry cereals – Cheerios, Puffs, Chex, etc. (low sugar)
- Goldfish crackers, Graham crackers, Pretzels, Veggie Straws, Rice cakes, etc.

VEGETABLES:

- Thawed frozen peas or corn
- Cooked green beans
- Slightly steamed broccoli
- Sliced cucumbers
- Sliced bell peppers
- Baby carrots (for ages 3 – 5)
- Guacamole to go

PROTEIN:

- Deli meats (low sodium/nitrate free – rolled, diced, or cubed)
- Cheese
- Rotisserie chicken pieces or shredded chicken
- Ground beef or turkey with taco seasoning
- Hard boiled eggs
- Meatballs cut up
- Hummus
- Nut butters like almond or cashew (not peanut butter due to allergies)
- Soy butter or sunflower butter
- Yogurt – watch sugar content
- Beans (black beans, chick peas) when combined with a starch is a complete protein