



Packing A Healthy Brown Bag

It is that time of the year again - back to school!!! Whether it is students taking lunch to school or adults packing lunch for work, millions will take "bag" lunches with them everyday. Soooo... take time to make lunch healthy and safe.

DOs	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in an insulated lunch box. • Use clean plates and tools when you prepare food. • Keep your sandwich in the refrigerator until you take it out of the house. • Wrap a sandwich tightly and put it in a sealed bag or container. • Wash fresh fruits and vegetables before you eat them. • Put a frozen juice box, yogurt, or a "freeze gel" in your lunch box to help keep your lunch cool. • Save foods that don't need to be kept cold for an after-school snack, such as fresh fruit or a cookie. • Use a straw or cup for your beverage. • Wash the inside of your lunch box each evening so it is clean for the next day. • Pack baby wipes or pre-moistened towels to clean hands before the meal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put your lunch into your school bag the night before. • Drink directly from the beverage container. • Use paper lunch bags more than once. Food and germs can't be washed out. • Save part of your sandwich for snacking on after school. It can spoil. • Eat fresh fruit that is unwashed. • Put your lunch bag in direct sunlight and next to a radiator / heater.



Brown Bag Tips:

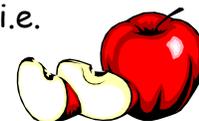
- Create interest by having your child assist in food shopping and preparing lunch. Let your child make his own sandwich.
- Pack protein foods with food safety in mind. Include an ice pack with perishable protein like meat, chicken, tuna, cheese, and milk. Making lunch the night before and freezing the sandwich is another way to keep the lunch cool. If kids won't take an ice pack and freezing isn't an option, pack only protein that is safe at room temperature. Peanut butter / Soy nut butter, nuts and seeds are your best bet.
- For carbohydrates, push whole grain breads, crackers, pita or pasta. And for dessert, try canned or fresh fruit like peaches, pears or a banana.
- Keep sandwiches simple - sliced turkey rather than turkey salad.
- Add fun to your child's lunch by using colored plastic wraps.



Brown Bag Tips:



- Beverages are not only to quench your thirst, but some add important nutrients to your lunch.
 - Low fat and skim milk supply protein, calcium, riboflavin and energy
 - 100% fruit juices supply vitamins, minerals and energy.
 - Fruit drinks, punches and ades are often fortified with nutrients but sugar may also be very high in these drinks. 12 oz often contains 12 tsp of sugar.
- Save your yogurt containers! After eating the yogurt, wash them thoroughly and fill with Jell-O or pudding mixture, cap, and refrigerate.
- Make your own "Lunchables": cut meat slices and cheese into pieces that will fit on crackers. Pack the meat, cheese, and crackers together. Have extra mustard or mayonnaise packets from your take-out? Pack those along for condiments.
- Select and prepare foods that are appropriate for your child's age, i.e. sliced apples are ideal for the younger child, while whole fruit is fine for older children.
- Pack cookies or cupcakes that supply vitamins or minerals as well as energy, i.e. oatmeal-applesauce cookies, fig bars.
- Kids love to dip! Send baby carrots, celery sticks, or broccoli trees with their favorite dip or dressing. Or send peanut butter or soynut butter as a dip, and include some slices of apples.
- If your child loves sandwiches and won't let you try anything new, have fun with the sandwiches - cut the sandwich into interesting shapes or cut with cookie cutters.
- It doesn't have to be jelly everyday! Some other ideas for sandwiches using with traditional peanut butter or soynut butter are: sliced bananas, honey, butter/margarine, raisins, and thinly slices apples.



- Pack string cheese or cheese cubes. Send along bread sticks or crackers to eat with them.
- Cut fresh fruit into bite-sized pieces and use fruit-flavored yogurt or pudding as a dip.
- Each day include a short note to your child. Anything that shows them you love them and you are thinking of them.
- Layer creamy peanut butter or soynut butter on a flour tortilla with jelly and roll-up "wrap" style. Slice crosswise into pieces.
- Heat frozen waffles and make a sandwich with them, using peanut butter or soynut butter and jelly.