

# One Month of Mini-Meals for the Balanced School Day!



**40** mini-meal ideas for nutrition breaks during the balanced school day.

## REMEMBER:

Children on the balanced school day timetable need to eat the same amount of food during the day as children on a traditional timetable - only the timing is different.



## What should I pack in each mini-meal?

You should pack nutritious foods from the four food groups in Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide. Nutrition breaks are not the time to eat items like chips, candy and pop. Keep in mind that it doesn't matter if your children eat more at the first break and less at the second break or vice versa. It's more important that the foods they eat are healthy and satisfying.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
<b>WEEK 1</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• small muffin</li> <li>• yogurt</li> <li>• applesauce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ - 1 cup dry cereal</li> <li>• milk*</li> <li>• raisins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ bagel with cheese</li> <li>• orange juice*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ chicken sandwich</li> <li>• milk*</li> <li>• banana</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ english muffin with ham and cheese</li> <li>• clementine</li> </ul>
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cheese sandwich</li> <li>• broccoli &amp; dip</li> <li>• fruit juice</li> <li>• oatmeal cookies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 mini pitas with egg salad</li> <li>• carrot sticks &amp; dip</li> <li>• milk pudding</li> <li>• water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ bagel with cheese</li> <li>• red peppers &amp; dip</li> <li>• plum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• chicken noodle soup</li> <li>• soda crackers</li> <li>• yogurt</li> <li>• grapes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 slice veggie pizza</li> <li>• cucumbers &amp; dip</li> <li>• pear</li> <li>• chocolate milk</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 2</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 blueberry pancakes (yes they'll eat them cold!)</li> <li>• orange sections</li> <li>• milk*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tomato soup made with milk</li> <li>• whole grain crackers</li> <li>• kiwi slices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ ham sandwich</li> <li>• applesauce</li> <li>• water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whole grain crackers</li> <li>• cheese cubes</li> <li>• pineapple chunks</li> <li>• water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dry cereal with dried cranberries</li> <li>• yogurt</li> </ul>
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pasta salad with mozzarella cheese</li> <li>• peppers &amp; dip</li> <li>• juice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• small muffin</li> <li>• celery &amp; dip</li> <li>• fruit cup</li> <li>• milk*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ ham sandwich</li> <li>• carrot sticks &amp; dip</li> <li>• fig bars</li> <li>• milk*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• split pea soup</li> <li>• 1 slice whole wheat bread</li> <li>• milk pudding</li> <li>• peach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cheese tortilla with salsa dip</li> <li>• green grapes</li> <li>• animal crackers</li> <li>• water</li> </ul>



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
<b>WEEK 3</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 graham crackers with cream cheese</li> <li>• fruit cup</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• muffin</li> <li>• banana</li> <li>• milk*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raisin bread with butter</li> <li>• yogurt</li> <li>• orange juice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mini pitas with grated cheese</li> <li>• kiwi</li> <li>• water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pumpkin loaf</li> <li>• yogurt tube</li> <li>• apple juice</li> </ul>
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ roast beef sandwich</li> <li>• carrots &amp; dip</li> <li>• plum</li> <li>• milk*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bean salad with mini pitas</li> <li>• apple</li> <li>• date square</li> <li>• water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lunch Box Chili (see recipe)</li> <li>• whole wheat roll</li> <li>• pear</li> <li>• milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tuna wrap</li> <li>• cauliflower &amp; dip</li> <li>• peach</li> <li>• chocolate milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• macaroni &amp; cheese</li> <li>• peppers &amp; dip</li> <li>• grapes</li> <li>• water</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 4</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 slice banana bread</li> <li>• dried apricots</li> <li>• cheese slice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hot chocolate made with milk</li> <li>• 1 slice whole wheat bread with jam</li> <li>• banana</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raisin bread with cheese slice</li> <li>• juice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dry cereal</li> <li>• peach</li> <li>• yogurt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• muffin</li> <li>• pear</li> <li>• milk*</li> </ul>
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• salmon wrap</li> <li>• celery sticks &amp; dip</li> <li>• applesauce</li> <li>• chocolate milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mini pitas with corned beef</li> <li>• tossed salad (dressing on the side)</li> <li>• milk pudding</li> <li>• water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• baked beans with shredded cheese</li> <li>• whole wheat bread</li> <li>• baby carrots &amp; dip</li> <li>• water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hummus</li> <li>• pita triangles</li> <li>• cucumbers</li> <li>• tomato wedges</li> <li>• milk*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cheese cubes</li> <li>• ham slices</li> <li>• whole grain crackers</li> <li>• rice krispie square</li> <li>• juice</li> </ul>

**Note:**

See page 5 to know how much food to send.



\* 1 serving of milk is 250 mL (1 cup)  
1 serving of 100% juice is 125 mL (½ cup)

## Balanced School Day Tips:

- It doesn't really matter which foods your children choose to eat at the breaks. It's more important that they eat a variety of foods over the course of the day.
- Sandwiches can be cut in half and wrapped separately - one half for each break.
- Foods that are packed in a thermos may be hotter and taste better if they are eaten during the first break.
- Cold foods like 100% juice and yogurt can be semi-frozen to help them stay cold to the second break.



## How will I know if my child is getting enough?

You'll need to ask! A healthy, active child's appetite is your best guide to how much food to pack. The two mini-meals for each day in this planner are designed to provide about 1/2 of the daily energy needs for kids 7-13 years old. Younger children need smaller portion sizes. Since boys may need more energy per day than girls, some boys may need more servings of food. If your child tells you he's still hungry after finishing his mini-meals, pack more whole grain products, vegetables and fruit. If food is coming home at the end of the day, pack smaller portions.

## What is a serving?

Canada's Food Guide gives details about the serving size and the number of servings to eat from each food group. The serving size of a food is the same for everyone older than two years. The number of servings of food to eat varies depending on age, sex and activity level. On page 5 you will find a condensed version of that information to guide you on portions to pack in the mini-meals.

## What's a Serving?

Food Group	# of servings to pack for school	Examples of one serving
<b>Vegetables &amp; Fruit</b>	<b>2 - 4</b>	1 medium apple, orange, peach, banana, pear, ½ cup berries, ¼ cup dried fruit (raisins); 20 cherries, grapes; 1 large kiwi; ½ mango, papaya; ½ cup pineapple (1 slice); ½ cup cantaloupe, watermelon; 1 large carrot, ½ cup broccoli, cauliflower 4 flowerets); 1 medium stalk celery; ½ cup mushrooms; ½ cup/1 medium pepper
<b>Grain Products</b>	<b>2 - 3</b>	½ whole grain (35 g) pita, english muffin, muffin; ½ whole grain bagel (45 grams); 1 slice (35 g) whole grain bread; 30 g whole grain crackers; 1 roll (35 g); 10 saltine crackers (30 g); 1 small pancake (35 g); ½ cup pasta/noodles/rice
<b>Milk &amp; Alternatives</b>	<b>1 - 2</b>	1 cup milk, chocolate milk, fortified soy beverage; ¾ cup (175 g) yogurt, 200 ml yogurt drink; 50 g (1½ oz) cheese (cheddar, mozzarella, feta)
<b>Meat &amp; Alternatives</b>	<b>½ - 1</b>	2 eggs; ¾ cup (175 ml) beans, lentils; ¾ cup hummus; ¼ cup nuts/seeds; 2 Tbsp (30 mL) peanut butter/nut butters; ¾ cup (150 g) tofu; ½ cup (75 g) meat (e.g. beef, chicken, low fat/salt deli meat, turkey, ham, lamb, pork; ½ cup (75 g) canned salmon, tuna

# Shopping List

## Plan for healthy eating!

Get top marks for nutrition by using fewer convenience foods. When your fridge, freezer and shelves are stocked with the right foods, healthy meals and snacks can be prepared quickly and easily. Here are some ideas of foods to have on hand!

### ✓ Grain Products

Bread & buns, bagel, pita, tortilla, pasta, noodles, cereal, muffin, pancakes, rice, crackers, bread sticks, couscous, oatmeal cookies, rice cakes, loaves.

### ✓ Milk Products

White milk, chocolate milk, yogurt, cheese, pudding (made with milk), soups (made with milk).

### ✓ Vegetables & Fruit

Apples, oranges, peaches, bananas, melon, grapes, fruit cup, juice, broccoli, carrots, celery, applesauce, pineapple, cucumber, dried fruit (raisins, apricots, cranberries)

### ✓ Meat & Alternatives

Baked beans, eggs, meatloaf, tuna, tofu, hummus, beef, turkey, chicken, port, salmon, bean salad, peanut butter, nuts and seeds.



## Delicious Dips!

Dips make veggies more appealing. Pack a small container of your child's favourite salad dressing (ranch is popular with kids) along with veggie sticks. Or, make your own dips by mixing lower fat mayo, plain yogurt or sour cream with these combinations: garlic & dill; salsa; honey mustard; shredded cucumber; ketchup & chili powder.

## Are Cereal Bars & Granola Bars a Good Choice?

Not always. Some are more like chocolate bars, especially if they're covered in frosting and filled with chocolate chips and marshmallows. Check the ingredient list and look for rolled oats or whole grain as the first ingredient. Pack them once in a while, not everyday.

## Make Ahead Tips:

- Bake double batches of muffins and freeze the extras.
- Bake breads and loaves (banana, pumpkin and date are some ideas) then slice, wrap and freeze individually. They can be added, frozen, to the lunch bag and will thaw by break.
- Make extra pancakes on the weekend and freeze individually on cookie sheets. Wrap in packs of 2 so they're ready to add to lunch bags.
- When making one-pot dishes like soups, stews and casseroles, make larger batches and freeze individual portions in microwave safe dishes. Thaw individual portions in the fridge over night, reheat to piping hot in the morning and spoon into a thermos for the lunch bag.
- Cut up extra veggies when making stir fry dishes to use with veggies and dip at mini-meals for the next day.
- When cooking pasta or rice, cook extra and freeze it in 1 cup portion sizes. These grains thaw quickly and are handy for making pasta or rice salads in a flash.

## Lunch Box Chili

1 cup (250 ml)	cooked rice
¾ cup (175 ml)	canned kidney beans rinsed and drained.
½ cup (125 ml)	frozen corn kernels
1 medium	tomato, chopped
½	green pepper, chopped
¼ tsp	chili powder



### Instructions:

In a microwave-safe container, stir ingredients until combined. Microwave on high, loosely covered, for 2 to 3 minutes or until hot. Spoon into a thermos.

### Variations:

Use 1 cup cooked couscous, egg noodles or pasta instead of rice; use frozen peas or carrots instead of corn; use black beans, romano beans or chick peas instead of kidney beans.

*\* Adapted from Great Food Fast, Dietitians of Canada*

## Pack Food So It Doesn't Go Bad!

### Three important steps:

#### 1. Be clean!

Clean hands, a clean working area and clean utensils are a must to prepare food that is safe to eat!

#### 2. Keep cold foods cold!

- Make sandwiches the night before and keep them in the fridge.
- Pack items like coleslaw, potato salad and bean salad in a thermos.
- Use an insulated lunch bag.
- Add frozen juice or milk, or an ice pack to help keep food cold.

#### 3. Keep hot food hot.

- Pack hot foods in a thermos. They should be piping hot when packed. Put hot foods in the thermos in the morning.

## Can convenience be nutritious?

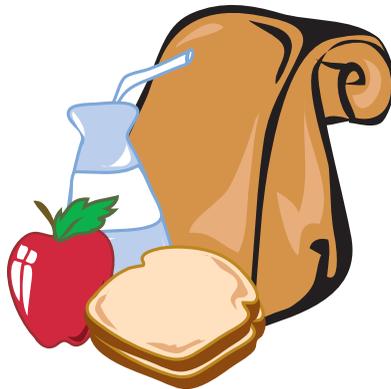
Pre-packaged snack foods, pre-packaged lunch trays and read-to-serve items are often costly and poor nutrition choices. If they're packed once in a while they won't offset an otherwise healthy eating plan. You can boost the nutritional value of convenience foods:

- Add frozen veggies and pastas to canned soups when heating them for the thermos.
- Make creamed soups with milk.
- Include veggie sticks & 100% fruit juice.

## Best Beverages

Milk (white or chocolate), water and 100% unsweetened fruit juices are the best choices. Fruit drinks, sport drinks, punches, beverages and cocktails are mostly sugar and water. Energy drinks are not safe for children.





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## **BRANT COUNTY HEALTH UNIT**

194 Terrace Hill St., Brantford, ON N3R 1G7  
(519) 753-4937 | [www.bchu.org](http://www.bchu.org)

