

# Nutrition for the *Balanced School Day*

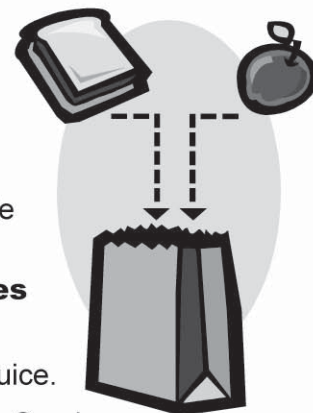
The *Balanced School Day* is a change in routine for you and your children. Here is some nutrition information to make this change easier.

## Frequently asked questions about the *Balanced School Day*

### How do I organize my children's lunch bag?

- Meals for your children's lunch bag can be balanced in a variety of ways. Talk to your children about which approach they would prefer when planning their meals for school. Consider their unique eating habits, likes, dislikes and appetite.
- If your child does not eat breakfast before school, this can be a time to add breakfast into their daily routine.
- Put each meal into separate bags labelled "Break One", "Break Two".
- Put dividers in the lunch bag so your child eats everything above the cardboard in the first break and then lifts the card and eats the rest at the second break.
- You can organize your children's meals for their school breaks according to any of the 3 examples:

	Break One	Break Two
Example One	Snacks	Lunch
Example Two	½ of lunch + snack	½ of lunch + snack
Example Three	Breakfast	Lunch



### What do I include in my children's lunch bag?

- Try to include foods from at least 3 of the 4 food groups from Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating for each break. The four food groups are: **Grain Products, Vegetables and Fruit, Milk and Milk Products, Meat and Alternatives**
- Add 2 beverages. Choose from the following healthy beverages most of the time: milk or chocolate milk, fortified soy beverage, water and 100% unsweetened fruit juice.
- On pizza and sub days, make sure your children have a healthy beverage to drink. Send healthy snacks for the other break.
- Keep a list on the fridge of favourite meals and let your children "order off the menu". Check back in a few months to update the list and add new menu items.
- Involve your children in planning and preparing their breaks. This can be done the night before. *See the back for menu ideas.*

### How do I safely pack my children's lunch bag?

- To keep foods hot, use an insulated bottle or thermos. First, fill the bottle with boiling water and let it stand for a few minutes. Then empty the bottle and fill it with steaming hot food.
- To keep foods cold, use an insulated lunch bag and pack a frozen drink that will thaw by their break. Or use a freezer pack. Great food items to freeze are bottled water, juice boxes, reusable beverage containers, mini yogurt or yogurt tubes.

# Menu Ideas for your Children's Lunch Bag

MONDAY			
Break One		Break Two	
Oatmeal Raisin Muffin	Grain Products: 1	Sliced turkey on whole wheat bread or bagel	Grain Products: 2 Meat & Alternatives: 1
Banana	Vegetable & Fruit: 1	100% fruit juice	Vegetable & Fruit: 2
Milk	Milk Products: 1	Baby carrots	
		Milk pudding cup	Milk Products: 1

TUESDAY			
Break One		Break Two	
Container with whole grain cereal	Grain Product: 1	One whole wheat pita with salsa & cheese	Grain Products: 2 Milk Products: 2
Milk	Milk Products: 1	Milk	
Banana	Vegetable & Fruit: 1	Cucumber slices	Vegetable & Fruit: 1
Handful of seeds	Meat & Alternatives: 1	Chickpeas	Meat & Alternative: ½- 1

WEDNESDAY			
Break One		Break Two	
Cheese	Milk Products: 1	Tuna salad sandwich(non-albacore) on whole wheat bread	Meat & Alternatives: 1 Grain Products: 2
Whole wheat crackers	Grain Products: 1	Salad with dressing	Vegetables & Fruit: 1
Grapes	Vegetables & Fruit: 2	Fortified soy beverage	Milk Products: 1
100% fruit juice			

THURSDAY			
Break One		Break Two	
1-2 Cold waffles	Grain Products: 1-2	Homemade soup (with lean meat, vegetables)	Meat & Alternatives: 1
Applesauce	Vegetables & Fruit: 1	Applesauce	Vegetable & Fruit: 2
Vanilla Yogurt	Milk products: 1	Whole wheat crackers	Grain Products: 1
Water		Chocolate Milk	Milk Products: 1

FRIDAY			
Break One		Break Two	
Whole wheat wrap filled with vegetables and hummus; cut in half	Grain products: 1 Vegetable & Fruit: ½ Meat & Alternatives: ½	Other half of whole wheat wrap with vegetables and hummus	Grain Products: 2 Meat & Alternatives: ½ Vegetable & Fruit: 1 ½
100% fruit juice	Vegetables & Fruit: 1	Fig Bars	
Milk	Milk Products: 1	Strawberries	
		Yogurt drink	Milk products: 1

## Want more tips and information?

The following resources are available on the Region of Waterloo Public Health website. Go to [www.region.waterloo.on.ca/ph](http://www.region.waterloo.on.ca/ph).

- **Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.** Click on Resources, follow the Nutrition link and click on General Nutrition.
- **School Lunch Your Kids will Munch.** Click on Resources, follow the Nutrition link and click on Child & Adolescent.
- **School Lunch Safety.** Click on Services, follow the Environmental Health link and click on Food Safety.