

KNAPSACKS AND COLD PACKS

Your Guide to Packing School Lunches and Snacks

NFS 30.31 April 2019



HASTINGS PRINCE EDWARD
Public Health

Healthy Communities, Healthy People.



HASTINGS PRINCE EDWARD **Public Health**

Adapted with permission of the Brant County Health Unit and from the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit, 2015.

We are committed to providing accessible publications, programs and services to all.
For assistance, please call 613-966-5500; TTY: 711 or email accessibility@hpeph.ca.
For more information, please visit hpePublicHealth.ca



Eating for learning:

Eating well gives children the fuel they need to learn, play, and grow. Offer a variety of foods every day and encourage your child to listen to their body's hunger and fullness cues.



Pack nutritious school lunches and snacks!



Canada's Food Guide recommends including Vegetables & Fruit, Whole Grain foods, and Protein Foods regularly.

Make Canada's Food Guide your go-to tool for packing school lunches and snacks:

- Aim to pack all three (3) food groupings for lunch.
- Include at least two (2) of the food groupings for snacks.

How will I know if my child is getting enough?

Ask them! Your child's appetite is the best way to decide **how much** food to pack. Start by packing about **half** of the food your child needs in one (1) full day, from morning to bedtime. If your child says they are still hungry, pack more.

The amount of food a child needs can vary from day to day – they may eat a lot some days and very little other days. Encourage them to listen to their hunger and fullness cues.

**Your child's appetite
is the best way to
decide how much
food to pack.**



Talk with kids!

Children are the experts on what they like to eat. Let them guide what goes into their school lunches and snacks and how they are packed. Go through Canada's Food Guide together and let your child pick out foods that they are willing to try. Encourage them to choose what goes in their lunch and snacks.

Don't criticize or punish your child for not finishing what was packed. Remember that it is normal for their appetite to change from day to day. If you notice that the same foods keep coming back home uneaten, talk with your child about why.



Cut food into bite-sized pieces, use easy-to-open containers, and peel fruit (like oranges) ahead of time.

This will give kids more time to eat!

Don't be afraid to get kids in the kitchen! They are more likely to eat lunches and snacks that they help to plan and make.

Teaching them to prepare food early can reinforce lessons they learn at school, provide valuable family time, and help them learn skills for life.

Cook with Kids!

Kids can help prepare their lunch and snacks. This is a great way to support what your child will learn at school about healthy eating. It also helps children develop simple food skills at an early age.

Encourage tasks based on your child's skill and confidence level. For example, older kids can help peel, cut, or chop food. Younger kids can wash vegetables and fruit or put food into containers.

Make-your-own “lunch kits”!

Kids often want the packaged foods they see on TV or in their friends’ lunches. These options can be costly and may not offer the nutrition your child needs. Make your own “lunch kits” using reusable containers with compartments. ***Mix and match from the foods below!***

Vegetables and Fruit	Whole Grains	Protein Foods
Baby carrots	Bagels (cut-up)	Hummus or bean dip
Celery sticks	Tortillas/wraps	Yogurt or yogurt tubes
Strips of bell pepper	Pita pockets	Boiled egg, sliced
Slices of cucumber	Dry breakfast cereal	Cheese cubes or slices
Cherry tomatoes	Crackers	Pumpkin or sunflower seeds
Broccoli or cauliflower florets	Pasta salad	Cheese strings
Salsa for dipping	Rice	Cubes of leftover ham, chicken, turkey, or beef
Canned peaches packed in water or juice, drained	Homemade muffins	White milk
Unsweetened applesauce	Whole grain roll	

Make water your child’s drink of choice. Send a reusable water bottle to school with them every day.

Offer drinks like chocolate milk and 100% fruit juice less often.



Plan and prepare meals ahead of time!

- When making weekend meals, make extra and freeze leftovers into individual portions. These make quick and easy lunches later in the week.
- Cut up vegetables and fruit at the beginning of the week. Store in the refrigerator for easy access all week long.



Batch cook!

Cook or prepare a large amount of food once and enjoy different lunches later in the week. Foods like a whole chicken or pasta are great for this. With a little imagination, leftovers can be transformed!

For example, meat from the same whole chicken can make:

- Build-your-own chicken wraps;
- Chicken salad and cracker bites;
- Cold chicken legs and veggies.

Ensure that leftovers are used within 2-3 days of cooking.

Keep foods safe with these simple rules:

Keep cold foods cold (colder than 4°C)

- Use an ice pack or an insulated jar or bottle to keep foods cold.

Keep hot foods hot (hotter than 60°C)

- Use an insulated jar or bottle to keep foods hot.
- TIP: Warm the container first with boiling water. Drain and then add hot food.

Use an insulated lunch bag

Keep hands, food, utensils, and containers clean

- Wash with hot, soapy water before and after.
- Throw out leftovers at the end of each day.
- Don't reuse plastic wrap, tin foil, or plastic bags.

Soggy Sandwich Solution!

Pack “wet” ingredients like cucumbers, spreads, or tomatoes on the side. Let your child add these to their sandwich at school.



HASTINGS PRINCE EDWARD
Public Health

For more information, contact:

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health

Tel. 613-966-5500 or toll-free 1-800-267-2803