

Quick & Healthy Ideas for Busy Kids

(and Parents)



Children need to consume adequate calories and nutrients each day in order to keep up with their rapidly growing and developing bodies. Despite this, we realize how difficult it can be for your family to eat balanced, healthy meals during the hectic school season. But difficult doesn't mean impossible. There are many ways you can incorporate a hefty dose of nutrients into simple and quick meals and snacks every day. Here are a few tips to get more key nutrients like calcium, iron, protein, and vitamin C – in your child's diet today. We ought to warn you: parents may just benefit from eating these tasty treats too.

Breakfast Pleasers:

- For those on the go, whip together a nutritious smoothie using low-fat vanilla yogurt, fresh or frozen fruit and 100 percent orange juice. Toss in some ground flaxseed for added fiber and brain-boosting omega-3 fats.
- Create an eye-appealing fruit and yogurt parfait by alternating layers of flavored yogurt, low-fat granola and fresh or frozen berries.
- Your child doesn't like dairy? Then serve up some calcium-fortified orange juice or soymilk with their breakfast.
- Make eating oatmeal fun! Stir in one tablespoon of natural peanut butter, a dollop of honey, and top with chopped organic apples, raisins and milk.
- Spread a toasted cracked-wheat bagel with crunchy almond butter and decorate with honey, raisins and banana slices.

Brown Bag Lunch Ideas:

- Fill a whole-wheat tortilla with turkey and soy cheese – top with organic spinach leaves, shredded carrots and cucumber slices. Roll and enjoy.
- Instead of a sandwich, pack your child's lunch with whole-grain crackers, sliced cheese, fresh fruit and a container of hummus to dip.
- Bring out the thermos and fill it with your child's favorite soup, tossing in a handful of spinach leaves and canned, drained beans for a nutritional boost.
- Let leftovers rule: use leftover chicken breasts to create a tasty sandwich – top with lettuce, tomato and a slice of cheese and enjoy in a whole-wheat pita.
- Spread organic carrot and celery sticks with natural peanut butter.



Healthy Snacks:

- Always send your child off with at least one piece of fresh fruit (or canned in its own juice). It can be a quick and nutritious snack, or a tasty alternative to high-fat desserts at lunchtime.
- Let your child munch on oat bran pretzels, trans-fat free vegetable sticks, or baked pita chips in place of potato chips.
- Create your own homemade trail mix by mixing together dry roasted or raw nuts, your choices of dried fruit and whole grain cereal. For a tasty treat, throw in some semi-sweet chocolate morsels.
- Does your child like carbonated beverages? Make them a citrus spritzer: fill a glass with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sparkling water or club soda and mix in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup 100 percent fruit juice.
- Serve up whole-grain crackers topped with low-fat cheese and apple slices.
- Keep a batch of frozen banana slices, grapes and cut up mango in your freezer. They make great before-dinner snacks for your kids.
- Yogurt or cottage cheese make quick and portable snacks (just make sure your child keeps it under ice in an insulated lunch sack.)

Sneaking Nutrients into Dinner:

- Toss sautéed vegetables into family favorite dishes:

Broccoli florets into macaroni and cheese

Spinach, mushrooms and zucchini in pasta sauce

Mushrooms, fresh thyme and rosemary into risotto

Garbanzo beans, roasted red peppers and kalamata olives into rice

Extra peas and carrots in beef stew

Green beans, corn and greens into chicken soup

Go meatless – without them knowing it! Toss frozen vegetable crumbles into spaghetti sauce and chili; serve meatless “burgers” for an on-the-go meal; and have meatless buffalo wings or chicken tenders for a Monday night football game meal.

Sautéed peppers and onions into chicken or beef fajitas

Fresh tomato slices slipped into grilled cheese

- Turn traditional “Friday night pizza” night into a family affair. Instead of ordering out, purchase or make your own dough. Top with fresh vegetables or grilled chicken breast strips.
- For dessert, slice a frozen banana and top with crushed peanuts and chocolate syrup; or top low-fat ice cream or puddings with fresh fruit.

Here's to Your Good Health

You can enjoy tremendous health benefits when you make small but significant changes in the way you eat. A great first step is to take advantage of the Healthy Appetite program, designed by Cleveland Clinic and Heinen's. For nutrition tips and meal ideas, please visit www.heinens.com/healthyappetite. Here's to your good health!

Healthy Appetite

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