

Tips for Packing Lunches

Planning and packing healthy school lunches and snacks are important because this food will account for a significant percentage of your child's nutritional intake as he or she grows and develops.

- **Make lunches and snacks balanced.** Prepare lunches with at least 3 of the 4 food groups and snacks with 2 of the food groups.
- **Think beyond sandwiches to keep lunches interesting.** See the chart below for ideas. Offer a variety of colours, textures, and shapes.
- **Involve children by allowing them to choose from the healthy options you provide.** Children are more likely to eat foods they have chosen.
- **Use Canada's Food Guide to help you determine how much food to pack for your child's lunch.** The food guide provides a recommended number of daily servings from each food group for different age and gender groups. Divide the recommended number of servings by 3 to know how much food to provide at each meal.

Mix and match foods from the different columns to get a variety of lunch meal ideas.

Vegetables and Fruit	Grain Products	Milk and Alternatives	Meat and Alternatives
Pepper strips; red, yellow, green	Tortilla, flatbread, naan, pita bread	Fruit, flavoured or plain yogurt	Hard cooked egg or egg salad
Carrot and celery sticks	Cold or hot cereal	Tzatziki dip-serve with breads or veggies	Tuna, salmon, or chicken salad
Cucumber or zucchini slices	English muffins	Milk or fortified beverage	Hummus (chickpea dip)
Cherry tomatoes or mushrooms	Oatmeal muffins	Cheese cubes, strings, or slices	Refried or baked beans
Cauliflower and broccoli florets	Traditional baked bread	Milk-based pudding	Sliced cold chicken
Berries and grapes	Whole grain crackers	Cottage cheese -serve with fruit	Ham or roast beef slices
Sliced or diced fruits: apple, pear, kiwi, melon	Pasta, rice, quinoa, couscous	Milk-based soup	Mixed bean salad

Table adapted from <http://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/articles/frequently-asked-questions/packing-healthy-school-lunches-and-snacks-faqs.aspx#.V1Gxt6unVdc>

References

1. Patten, A., Christie, B., Green, C., & Cook, J. (n.d.). *Nutritional supplementation and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder*. Retrieved from http://www.canfasd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Issue_sheet_-_FASD_and_Nutrition-Final.pdf
2. Fuglestad, A.J. et al. (2013). Inadequate intake of nutrients essential for neurodevelopment in children with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). *Neurotoxicology and Teratology*, 39, 128-132.
3. Nguyen, T.T., Risbud, R.D., Chambers, C.D., & Thomas, J.D. (2016). Dietary nutrient intake in school-aged children with heavy prenatal alcohol exposure. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 40(5), 1075-1082.
4. Werts, R.L., Van Calcar, S.C., Wargowski, D.S., & Smith, S.M. (2014). Inappropriate feeding behaviours and dietary intakes in children with alcoholic spectrum disorder or probable prenatal alcohol exposure. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 38(3), 871-878.

Nutrition for Children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)



Southwest Ontario
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Feeding Guidelines for Preschoolers and School-Aged Children

- **Children with FASD have the same nutrition needs as other children.** Offer your child a variety of foods from each of the four food groups in *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*. Each of the food groups provides nutrients necessary for your child's healthy growth and development.
- **Offer 3 meals plus snacks each day.** Children have small stomachs but high energy and nutrient needs, so it's best to offer small amounts of nutritious foods throughout the day. Schedule meals and snacks 2 ½ to 3 hours apart so that children come to the table feeling ready to eat.
- **Stick to a routine.** Have meals and snacks at about the same time each day so children know what to expect.
- **Respect your child's appetite.** Allow him/her to decide how much food to eat from the healthy choices you offer. Expect your child's appetite to vary from day to day and even from meal to meal.
- **Offer new foods often.** Encourage children to try a bite, but avoid pressuring them. Be patient and keep trying – some children may need to be offered the same food more than 15 times before they will accept the food.

Supplements, Special Diets, and Medications

Supplements

When possible, nutritional needs should be met with foods rather than with supplements. Talk to a dietitian if you are concerned about nutritional deficiencies and feel your child would benefit from a supplement.

There is some evidence that certain nutritional supplements may help improve memory and learning in children with FASD¹. However, this research is still in the early stages and more studies are needed to provide safe recommendations.

Elimination Diets

If you believe a particular food or ingredient is contributing to your child's symptoms, speak with a dietitian before removing this item from your child's diet. A dietitian can help you properly eliminate the food from your child's diet and find appropriate alternatives to avoid nutritional deficiencies.

Medications

Some medications should be taken with food, and others without food. Some medications may affect your child's appetite or sleep patterns. Speak to your doctor or dietitian about any special medication instructions or about how to manage any medication side effects.

Nutritional Intake of Children with FASD

Recent studies have found that children with FASD tend to have poorer nutritional intake compared to other children¹⁻³. Behaviour problems related to eating habits likely contribute to these findings. The best way to promote your child's nutrition is to offer a variety of healthy foods at each meal and snack and limit exposure to nutrient-poor foods.

The table below contains the nutrients most commonly found to be inadequate in the diets of children with FASD, along with lists of food sources of each nutrient.

Nutrient	Food Sources
Calcium	Milk, soy beverage fortified with calcium, cheese, yogurt, canned fish with bones, tofu prepared with calcium sulfate, cooked dark leafy green vegetables (collards, spinach, turnip greens), white beans, almonds, sesame seeds
Potassium	Sweet potato, white potato, banana, dark leafy green vegetables, tomato, avocado, orange juice, milk, yogurt, fish, beans and legumes, nuts and seeds
Vitamin D	Fish, milk, soy beverage fortified with vitamin D, yogurt fortified with vitamin D, eggs, orange juice fortified with vitamin D
Vitamin E	Avocado, leafy green vegetables, almonds, sunflower seeds, hazelnuts, peanuts, eggs
Vitamin K	Kale, collards, turnip/beet greens, spinach, broccoli, soybeans
Choline	Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, milk, soy beverage, tofu, wheat germ, flax seeds, quinoa, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, peanut butter
Omega-3 Fatty Acids	Fish and seafood, flaxseeds, walnuts, chia seeds, soybeans, tofu, dark leafy green vegetables

Nutrient-poor foods and beverages to limit

- Cakes and pastries
- Chocolate and candies
- Cookies and granola bars
- Donuts and muffins
- Ice cream and frozen desserts
- French fries
- Potato chips
- Nachos and other salty snacks
- Fruit flavoured drinks
- Soft drinks
- Sports drinks
- Sweetened hot or cold drinks