




## What's In The Lunch Box?

What's in your preschooler's lunch box is important. Just like a car needs gas to run, your child's body needs lots of healthy foods, like fruits and vegetables, to give it the energy it needs to walk, run, play and learn throughout the day. Eating a variety of healthy foods every day is a great way to make sure that your little ones will have the energy they need to have fun and grow.

It's easy to pack healthy foods in your child's lunch box. Packing lunches for school can become a fun time for the whole family. Create a meal plan together and post it on the refrigerator. Decide together what type of lunch to pack for every day of the week. This way you can make a shopping list for the week and avoid those last minute dashes around the house to find something to put into the lunch boxes. Making a weekly lunch schedule makes life easier for adults and children.

Here are some *helpful hints* that will make planning and packing lunches much easier:

-  Pre-schoolers have small stomachs so they may not need as much food as you think. They do better when offered smaller amounts of food more frequently. That's why both healthful meals and snacks are necessary.
-  A child's dislike of a food should be respected, just as an adult's is. Preschoolers may not always want to try a new food the first time it is offered. Just try to serve it again once in a while.
-  To be sure that children get the variety of foods they need every day, use the guide on the reverse side of this page and keep it handy for frequent use.



### QUESTION OF THE MONTH ?

What must all adults and children do before eating any food at meals

**ANSWER:** Wash hands with warm soapy water for 20 seconds .



## Hooray for Hula Hoops!



- Now that you know that healthy foods give you energy to play and move, let's get moving! A hula hoop is one great toy that you and your family can use to get moving. There are so many different ways to have fun with a hula hoop. You can try to keep it spinning around your waist by twisting your hips around and around as fast as you can. Or you can use the hula hoop as a jump rope.
- Can you and your family members jump like frogs? Find out. Lay a few hula hoops on the ground. Can you jump like a frog from one hula hoop to the next hula hoop? Can your brother or sister do it? What about your parents? Try it and find out!
- How many different ways can you use the hula hoop? Let your teacher know your answer and maybe you could play one of your games at school.
- Healthy bodies like to move and play a lot! Remember to eat lots of fruits and veggies to give your body the energy it needs to move and play.

# Weekly Lunch Box Menu

To be sure children get the variety of foods they need every day, it helps to think about the food groups used to classify different foods. **Make sure that foods from each group are served every day.** The boxes below list just a few of the items found in each food group. Visit [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) for more ideas and information. Make meal planning and packing lunches fun for everyone...involve the children! Eat healthy, be well and grow strong together as a family!

## LUNCH BOX MENU PLAN

### MONDAY

1/2 sandwich  
Cherry tomatoes  
Banana  
Water or Milk

### TUESDAY

1/2 cup yogurt  
Berries  
Pretzels  
Green pepper strips  
Water

### WEDNESDAY

4 tablespoons hummus  
Pita bread  
Zucchini strips  
Peach slices  
Milk

### THURSDAY

Cheese & Crackers  
Broccoli [cooked]  
Apple slices  
Water

### FRIDAY

1/2 sandwich  
Green beans [cooked]  
Melon slices  
Water or milk

### NOTE:

All foods are not safe for all children.  
Please be mindful of choking hazards and food allergies.

### Vegetables



Broccoli  
Corn  
Cucumbers  
Eggplant  
Green beans  
Red peppers  
Spinach  
Sugar Snap Peas  
Sweet Potatoes  
Tomatoes  
Zucchini

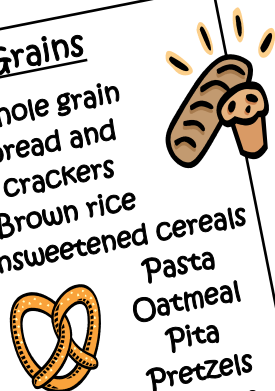
### Fruits



Apples  
Apricots  
Bananas  
Berries  
Melons  
Oranges  
Peaches  
Plums  
100% fruit juice

### Grains

Whole grain bread and crackers  
Brown rice  
Unsweetened cereals  
Pasta  
Oatmeal  
Pita  
Pretzels  
Graham Crackers

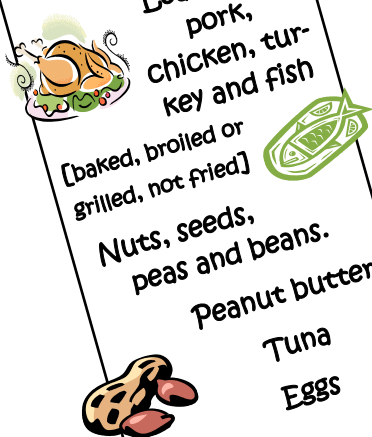


### Meat & Beans [Protein]

Lean beef, pork, chicken, turkey and fish  
[baked, broiled or grilled, not fried]

Nuts, seeds, peas and beans.  
Peanut butter

Tuna  
Eggs



### Milk

Low fat milk  
Low fat yogurt  
Low fat cheese  
Low fat cottage cheese



**REMEMBER**..Be sure that your child eats a variety of foods from each different food group, each day. Notice that soda, cake and candies are not included in the food groups...leave these foods, that are high in fat and sugars, out of your child's daily diet!

**→ DON'T FORGET!**

### We want to hear from you!

Let us know how you encourage a healthy lifestyle in your home or daycare. We want to print your ideas in future issues.



Contact Michele Hart-Loughlin, Healthy Lifestyles Gazette Editor,  
Bergen County Department of Health Services, at 201-634-2692 or email: [mhartlo@co.bergen.nj.us](mailto:mhartlo@co.bergen.nj.us)

The Gazette is produced quarterly by the Healthy Youth Network of the  
Partnership for Community Health, Inc. 690 Kinderkamack Rd., Suite 202, Oradell, NJ 07649  
Jackie Lue Raia, CEO, 201-986-7715, [jlueria@bergenpch.org](mailto:jlueria@bergenpch.org)