

# Back to School, Getting Balance Back



## "Nutrition for Kids"

It's back to school and that means busier schedules with homework, after-school programs, sports activities and school activities. With today's busy lifestyles, eating has turned from three "square" meals a day to skipping breakfast, constant grazing on high fat, sugar loaded foods, and grabbing fast foods or take-outs loaded with calories, sodium and very little good nutrition. These meals lack nutrition rich foods from the fruits and vegetables group, whole grains group and lean proteins group.

So how do we get balance back into our meals?

Start by consuming a variety of nutrient rich foods and beverages:

- ❖ Vary your fruits and vegetables- these are low in fat and calories and are packed with fiber, vitamins and minerals. Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables.
- ❖ Include the power of lean protein foods-chicken, fish, tuna fish, turkey, lean beef, a combination of a complex carbohydrate (i.e.-brown rice) with beans, eggs, etc. Fill one-quarter of your plate with lean protein.
- ❖ Add the goodness of whole grain-such as rye bread, oatmeal (not instant!), stone ground wheat bread, quinoa, whole grain breads/muffins/waffles/tortillas.... Fill one-quarter of your plate with whole grains.
- ❖ Choose beverages wisely—move away from sugary beverages with lots of calories and no nutrient value.

Use tools to help you and your child healthy food choices:

- ❖ The Choose My Plate template is a great tool to teach your child what types of food to choose and portion control. It encourages your child to fill half their plate with fruits and vegetables,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the plate with grains, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the plate with protein. [Click here](#) to learn more about **Choose My Plate** program. Another great tool is **5 A Day—The Color Way**. This tool emphasis choosing a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables; red, white, blue, yellow, orange and green. [Click here](#) to learn how to use this creative tool.
- ❖ Is the school providing lunch for your child? Go over the menu with your child at home and teach him/her to choose nutritious and healthy choices. Use the above tools to help your child make those choices.
- ❖ Take your child grocery shopping and teach them to choose healthy foods they enjoy using these helpful tools. This is a great opportunity to teach your child what are grains, proteins, carbohydrates, fats and vegetables.



Getting this balance back into meals and snacks can have both short and long term benefits for your children; they get the nutrients they need for proper growth, feel better, have more energy and perform better in school.

For more information or to schedule an appointment with a dietitian to learn more about getting balance back through proper nutrition, contact PEDS, Inc. at 636-227-7337 or email us at [info@pedsinc.com](mailto:info@pedsinc.com).

Check out the following pages for great recipes and ideas for nutritious meals.

# "Nutrition for Kids"

## Getting Balance Back: Breakfast

The first, and most important, meal is your child's breakfast—it is absolutely critical for school age children. Research shows that children who eat breakfast daily perform better in school and have fewer behavioral problems. An ideal breakfast should include protein and complex carbohydrates because it is digested slowly and will give your child the energy for the entire morning. Foods high in sugar and refined carbohydrates should be avoided.

### Suggestions for Protein:

- Eggs, milk, yogurt or peanut butter on whole grain bread.

### Suggestions for Complex Carbohydrates:

- Nutrient rich whole grains—oatmeal, whole grain breads/English muffins/waffles/tortillas
- Fruits or vegetable—consider juicing fruits and vegetables with yogurt to make a delicious but nutrition packed smoothie

### Quick and Easy Breakfast Ideas:

- Fill a whole wheat tortilla with scrambled or hardboiled eggs and low fat cheese for a breakfast burrito
- Top a whole grain cereal with strawberries or blueberries
- Toast whole wheat or whole grain bread and top with peanut butter and bananas
- Add fresh fruit and chopped nuts into yogurt or oatmeal
- Microwave an egg and put it on a whole wheat English muffin or bagel with cheese for a quick but delicious breakfast sandwich
- [Click here](#) for juicing or blending nutritious smoothies
- [Click here](#) for a nutrition packed High Energy Oatmeal recipe



## Getting Balance Back: Mid-Morning and Lunch-Dinner Snacks

Nutritious dense snacks are essential for constant energy from foods throughout the school day. It is important for a child's focus and attention. A snack between breakfast/lunch and lunch/dinner will provide the fuel your child needs.

### Snack Ideas:

#### 100-150 Calories

- 1 cup nonfat or 1% cottage cheese and 1/3 cup pineapple chunks
- 2 large graham cracker squares and 1 Tablespoon peanut butter
- 15 almonds or cashews
- $\frac{1}{2}$  medium apple and 1 Tablespoon peanut butter
- 2 oz tuna salad with 3 saltine crackers
- $\frac{1}{4}$  grilled cheese:
  - $\frac{1}{2}$  sliced Whole grain bread
  - $\frac{1}{2}$  slice American cheese,
  - 1 teaspoon butter
- Tortilla pizza:
  - $\frac{1}{2}$  small whole grain tortilla
  - 1-2 Tablespoon pizza sauce
  - 2 Tablespoon Shredded mozzarella cheeseBake or broil until cheese melts
- 1 stick string cheese,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup honeydew cubes,  $\frac{1}{2}$  fresh peaches,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup blueberries



#### 150-250 Calories

- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cottage cheese, 14 light Pringles
- 1 oz. Cheddar cheese cubed, 12 pretzel sticks, 4 oz. Juicy Juice Harvest Surprise Juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked sweet potato cubes,  $\frac{1}{2}$  low fat or fat free vanilla yogurt

#### 300 Calories

- 2 hard boiled eggs; low-fat mayo, mustard, 1 slice whole grain bread
- 3 oz. Salmon
- 1 Apple and 2 Tbsp. Natural peanut butter
- 25 raw almonds and small piece of fruit

## Getting Balance Back: Lunch

Lunch is critical for your kids to maintain their energy throughout the afternoon. Whether it's from the cafeteria, from home or eaten at home, it should be filled with foods that contain 1/3 of the calories, vitamins and minerals needed for the day. The goal is a nutrient-rich meal to fuel their brains and bodies for the afternoon. Think a combination of complex carbohydrates and lean proteins. If packing a lunch, involve your child in food choices using the ChooseMy Plate template or 5-A-Day the Color Way tool to make varied healthy choices.



### Lunch Ideas:

- A lunch with peanut butter and jelly on whole grain bread, 1 carton of reduced fat milk and a serving of fruit is a perfect combination of complex carbohydrates and lean proteins your child needs
- Pack whole grain crackers with reduced fat cheese and fresh vegetable sticks
- Fill a whole wheat tortilla with chopped fresh vegetables and deli meat or tuna fish; or fill it with brown rice, beans and cheese
- Make little salads with protein, cheese and beans.

## Getting Balance Back: Dinner

Dinner is the perfect time to interact with your children and can be one of your "smartest" meals of the day. Encourage your child to participate in the food choices, the menu planning (they can't complain since they helped plan the meal!) and the food preparation.

### Dinner Ideas:

- Have Sloppy Joes or a hamburger on a whole grain bun and serve with a salad or vegetables
- Use frozen vegetables and brown rice to pair with lean protein
- Use whole-wheat pasta in your spaghetti or pasta recipes
- Make pizza as a family using pre-prepared whole-wheat crust, mozzarella cheese and provide a wide variety of toppings such as black beans, chopped vegetables and protein



## Quick Info:

### Best Brain Foods:

1. Oatmeal high in fiber for slower release of glucose
2. Tuna or Salmon or Nuts and Flaxseed high in omega 3 fatty acids for intelligence
3. Strawberries and Blueberries for concentration
4. Dried Fruits to keep kids alert
5. Yogurt or other high calcium dairy products for enhanced learning
6. Eggs for remembering

### Brain Drains:

1. Cereals with added sugar
2. Fruit juices and beverages with added sugar
3. White bread