

# WHAT WE'RE READING...



August 2014 | [foodandnutrition.org.com](http://foodandnutrition.org.com) | Amanda Proscia | Nutrition

## Back-to-School Nutrition Tips



Time to fall back into a daily routine — school is here (or almost here, depending on where you live)! Mornings may become a tad hectic this season with alarms going off, getting breakfast on the table (or on-the-go), packing lunches, finishing up homework, and never-ending carpools. Some days you may think, “How can I possibly prepare a nutritious and delicious lunch for my child during these busy mornings?!” Have no fear. ... there is a way. Below are a few tips on how to help minimize the stress and maximize your A.M. time to give your loved ones a healthy start.

### Preparation Tips

Pack balanced lunches at night and store in a certain spot in the refrigerator so you can grab and go in the morning. Try to include a serving of fruit, vegetable, protein, whole grain,

and a fun snack like baked chips or a dark chocolate square. BONUS: If you pack lunch at night, you have more time to prepare a healthy breakfast.

Store insulated lunch boxes in a designated area. Make sure to have ice packs on hand in the freezer to keep lunches from spoiling. When the kids get home from school, ask them to empty their lunch box, place it in the designated area and then place the ice pack in the freezer.

Start a “snack station.” Clear a pantry shelf and store with healthy snacks like granola bars, dried fruit, cereal, applesauce and crackers with peanut butter (if there are no allergies in the house!). Same idea for a “snack section” in the refrigerator where you can keep fruits and veggies with dips and yogurt and/or string cheese.

Shop for breakfast essentials like eggs, fruit, yogurt, low-fat milk, cereal, whole-grain breads and granola bars for those busy mornings. For a quick and healthy breakfast enjoy cereal (with less than 10 grams sugar/serving), low-fat milk and a banana and/or yogurt. Make sure to balance the breakfast with a protein and carbohydrate for lasting fullness and energy.

Prep meals and chop veggies on the day when you are least busy. Having the foods all ready to go will make cooking a lot quicker. BONUS: Kids are more likely to choose fruits and veggies if they are already cut up and ready to eat. Placing nutritious snacks in plain sight makes everyone more likely to pick them up.

Make lists, organize items, and have a plan. Before you know it, you and your family will have a stress-free and nutritious morning routine!

# READ MORE AT THE JUICE BAR

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[ NOTE: Some sentiments contained within "What We're Reading" articles may not strictly conform with Simple Again's nutritional outlook. We read articles containing opposing information all the time and derive our nutritional philosophies from the latest science, the opinions of experts worldwide and our anecdotal experiences in the field. We keep an open mind and a strong affinity for fact-based evidence to help make the world of nutrition "Simple Again" for you. ]

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## Quick, Healthy & Delicious Lunch Idea

Enjoy a wrap! Wraps are a nice change of flavor and texture from the usual sandwich. Use whole-grain tortillas, available in most supermarkets. Spread on mustard, hummus, some oil and vinegar-based dressing, or pesto sauce. Then fill it up with grilled chicken salad or assorted lean meats, cheese, tomato, sliced onion and shredded Romaine lettuce. Another way to pack a wrap is to make it with Mexican style ingredients like guacamole, salsa, black beans, grilled chicken and brown rice. Just roll it up, wrap in foil and store in a lunchbox!

## Tasty Sides

Add some of these to round out your child's lunch:

- Fruit cups (with no sugar added) or fresh fruit salad
- Applesauce (also with no sugar added)
- Nuts (if age and allergy appropriate), such as walnuts, pistachios, almonds or peanuts
- Raw veggies (ready to pack) such as carrot sticks, sugar snap peas or celery sticks
- Cheese sticks — available in 2% sharp cheddar or part skim-milk mozzarella
- Healthy snack bars (individually wrapped) with 3 or more grams of fiber, less than 10 grams sugar, and no more than 1 gram saturated fat
- Yogurt with less than 10-12 grams of sugar per pack (or purchase the plain and add honey and fruit)
- Once in a while, 1 or 2 whole grain (or homemade) cookies are OK as a treat

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