

PACKING HEALTHY SCHOOL LUNCHES THAT KIDS WILL ACTUALLY EAT

Avoiding the lunch rut

■ Dietitians recommend parents involve their kids in planning, and to vary the menu

By Helena Oliviero
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

You want to pack a healthy, appealing lunch for your kids every day. Problem is, it's easy to fall into a lunch rut. Who hasn't eaten the same turkey sandwich every day for a week?

Rachel Brandeis, an Atlanta registered dietitian, works with several families seeking healthy lunches that will also entice their kids to eat. She is also mom to two teenage children who are always asking her to mix up what goes in their lunchbox. Brandeis recommends that parents talk to their kids about what they want.

"There is a lot of food waste because of the monotony," she said. "Ask your kids: What did you eat? What did you throw away?"

She recommends giving kids choices and, as a general rule, aiming for at least three food groups in the lunchbox, i.e. protein, vegetables and whole grains.

Some of the lunches she prepares for her kids include the following: hummus and guacamole single-serving packs with baby carrots and Triscuit thin crisps to dip along with pressed fruit and vegetable bars; cheese stick or cubes, turkey pepperoni, grape tomatoes along with Triscuit thins and fresh fruit such as an apple or grapes; banana or apple slices with a peanut butter cup for dipping, Greek flavored yogurt and side of granola; a hummus wrap with a whole-grain tortilla with sliced cucumbers, tomatoes and spinach leaves, Greek flavored yogurt and berries.

Joy Goetz, a dietitian at the Atlanta Community Food Bank, offers the following five tips for making a healthy lunch.

Plan ahead

Whether you are sending a sandwich or leftovers from dinner the night before, make a plan for the week



A photo by Children's Healthcare of Atlanta's Strong4Life program shows a healthy lunch of hummus, whole wheat crackers, grapes and bottled water.

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— Rachel Brandeis, registered dietitian

so you can streamline the process and save time during the week. If you go grocery shopping on the weekend, take a few minutes when you get home to rinse fruits and veggies and pack them into containers or baggies, so you can grab and go during the week.

Involve kids in the process

Let them decide between several healthy options. Parents can ask questions like "Would you like to have oranges, grapes or bananas in your lunch this week?" and "Which flavors of yogurt would you like?" This lets kids feel like they have a say in what goes into their lunches, and you get to curate what those options are. (P.S. This works for any meal, not just lunch.)

Rethink the drink

Healthy beverages. Although juice boxes are very popular, fruit juice can

contain as much sugar as regular soda. Water and milk are still the best beverages for kids. If your child really enjoys flavored drinks, try infusing water with fruit such as oranges, strawberries, pineapple or watermelon.

Non-sandwich lunch ideas.

Aiming for including at least three out of the five food groups, ideally, you would include a protein, whole grain, fruit or veggie, and low-fat dairy or dairy substitute. Here are four ideas:

- Whole-grain tortilla with sliced chicken, low-fat (2 percent) cheese and lettuce, grapes.
- Low-sodium chicken noodle soup, whole-grain crackers, baby carrots, milk.
- Hummus with veggie slices and whole-grain pretzels, low-fat (2 percent) string cheese.
- Salad with various vegetables such as lettuce, car-

rots, grape tomatoes, along with boiled eggs; yogurt and granola.

Safety first

If the lunch contains meat, dairy, sliced fruit or veggies, or anything you would keep in the refrigerator, be sure to include an ice pack so that food stays cold until lunchtime. You can also freeze a water bottle or use a freezable lunchbox to keep foods at a safe temperature.

Study: Lower blood pressure to avoid dementia

By Melissa Healy
Los Angeles Times

For patients with high blood pressure who hope to ward off dementia, doctors have the same advice for those looking to protect their hearts and kidneys: Go lower.

In a comprehensive new study, researchers found that driving down patients' systolic blood pressure readings to a new lower target level reduced their risk of developing mild cognitive impairment, or MCI, by close to 20 percent. MCI is a decline in memory and thinking skills that is slight but noticeable, and it affects between 15 percent and 20 percent of people over 65. For as many as half of those diagnosed with MCI, a diagnosis of dementia will come later.

The new research found that compared to subjects whose blood pressure control regimen was more relaxed, subjects whose blood pressure was more strictly controlled were 15 percent less likely to be diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment and subsequent dementia.

The new findings, presented recently at the Alzheimer's Association's International Conference in Chicago, come a year after the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology adopted a new target for those with hypertension. Physicians groups had long considered blood pressure readings of 140/90 mmHG to be an acceptable target for those with hypertension, but in 2017, they urged physicians to get their patients with high blood pressure to 130/80 mmHG.

The new research suggests that there are powerful benefits to getting the first number in that reading — systolic blood pressure — to an even lower target: 120 mmHG.

Systolic blood pressure is the amount of pressure in a person's arteries during the contraction of the heart muscle. Because it is the highest pressure to which the blood vessels are subjected, systolic blood pressure is thought to have the most detrimental impact on the delicate capillaries that nourish the brain as well as the kidneys, heart and liver.

Study says diet soda can reduce recurrence of colon cancer

By Nyssa Kruse
The Hartford Courant

A new study by Yale University researchers found people who drank diet soda after beating colon cancer were less likely to see a recurrence and less likely to die than those who didn't drink diet soda.

Of the 1,018 patients researchers analyzed, those who drank one or more 12-ounce artificially sweetened drink per day saw a 46 percent improvement in risk of cancer recurrence or death compared to those who didn't drink such beverages.

"Artificially sweetened drinks have a checkered reputation in the public because of purported health risks that have never really been documented," said the study's senior author, Charles Fuchs, director of Yale Cancer Center. "Our study clearly shows they help avoid cancer recurrence and death in patients who have been treated for advanced colon cancer and that is an exciting finding."

Risk factors for colon cancer include obesity and poor diet. Researchers attribute half the benefit of diet drinks to patients substituting diet sodas for drinks full of sugar. Drinking a diet beverage cuts that extra sugar from a patients' diet, reducing that particular risk factor.

"While the association between lower colon cancer recurrence and death was somewhat stronger than we suspected, the finding fits in with all that we know about colon cancer risk in general," Fuchs said. "Factors such as obesity, sedentary lifestyle, a diet linked to diabetes — all of which lead to an excess energy balance — are known risk factors."

Sugary drinks and diets high in sugar have been shown in dozens of studies to contribute to obesity in the general population.

There is no consensus on how bad artificially sweetened soda is for the general population, but a study released in April led by a

researcher at the Medical College of Wisconsin and Marquette University found that artificial sweeteners negatively affected energy metabolism and the processing of fats in rats. This could contribute to obesity in people.

NOTICE OF ROAD WORK

US 30 / OR7 / OR82 / OR237 / CHIP SEAL
(La Grande-Baker / Whitney / Wallowa Lake/ Union-North Powder Hwy's.)

Beginning **August 6** the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) will be chip sealing sections of OR7 (Whitney Hwy.), US30 (La Grande-Baker Hwy.), OR82 (Wallowa Lake Hwy.) and OR237 (Union-North Powder Highway) in the Baker and Union County areas.

- **Aug. 6-7:** I-84 freeway on/off ramps at Exit 306, then head toward Baker City on U.S. 30 to intersection of Auburn St. and Main St. at mile point 53.96 (near Chevron Station in Baker City). This work is expected to take about 2 days. Exit 306 will be closed August 8 for chip sealing of freeway on and off ramps.
- **Aug. 6-15:** OR82 between Elgin and Minan, mile points 20-34.
- **Aug. 7-9:** OR7 between mile post 35.42 near bottom of Mason Dam and mile post 41.85 at Salisbury Junction, where OR7 intersects with OR245. This work is expected to take about 2 days.
- **Aug. 13-15:** US30 between mile post 49.85 at Hughes Lane in Baker City and mile post 32.86 at west city limits of North Powder. Expect to be working in Haines on Aug. 14 and end at North Powder on Aug. 15.
- **Aug. 16-21:** OR237 (Union-North Powder) between mile post 22.8 (five miles south of Union) and North Powder west city limits, at mile post 32.45. This work is expected to take about 3 days. Chip seal through North Powder expected to occur Aug. 21.

NOTE: Dates are subject to change, depending on weather conditions and other factors.

PARKING RESTRICTIONS: During chip seal activities in downtown areas, vehicles will not be allowed to park in work zones along US30 in the Baker City and Haines area, or along OR237 in North Powder.

IRRIGATION PIVOTS/WATER SPRINKLERS: Local residents are asked to adjust irrigation pivots and lawn sprinklers to avoid spraying water onto the roadway, as this creates problems for chip rock application.

TRAVEL IMPACTS: Expect up to 20-minute delays, reduced speeds, loose rock on the roadway, flaggers, and pilot cars directing single lane traffic through the work zones. Minor delays during nighttime/early morning hours for road sweeping. Please reduce speed and watch for construction activities in the area. Plan extra travel time and slow down to prevent loose rock from flying onto other vehicles. Crews will sweep roadway, but expect some loose rock to be present for several days after chip seal.

REQUEST TO RANCH AND FARM OWNERS: ODOT is asking highway users to keep farm equipment off the impacted highway sections during and up to two days after the chip seal operations. To prevent chip rock adhesion problems due to animal waste on the roadway, ranchers are requested [please contact the ODOT maintenance manager listed on attached map](#) and advise of any plans to move livestock on impacted highway sections during spring or summer months this year.

Your local ODOT maintenance crews appreciate your support and cooperation during this paving operation.
For other eastern Oregon highway construction project information contact Tom Strandberg @ 541-963-1330, email: thomas.m.strandberg@odot.state.or.us or visit www.tinyurl.com/odot-region5

Spring Cleaning 101

What is household hazardous waste?
HHW is anything labeled toxic, flammable, corrosive, reactive or explosive. These materials can threaten family health and the safety of pets and wildlife.

What are some examples of hazardous waste?
Aerosols, Bleach, Drain Cleaners, Metal Polish, Mothballs, Oven Cleaners, Toilet Bowl Cleaners, Ammonia-based Cleaners, Mercury Thermometers, Wood Polishes, Waxes, Fertilizers, Insecticides, Herbicides, Rodenticides, Spa and Pool Chemicals, Roofing Compounds, Antifreeze, Batteries, Motor Oil, Paint Strippers and Thinners, Gasoline and more.

Where can I safely dispose of my hazardous waste?
La Grande Facility: Open to any resident of the three counties every other Tuesday, 8am-12 noon. By appointment, however, small labeled quantities accepted daily. (541) 963-5459.
Baker City Facility: Open the first Wednesday of each month, 10am-12 noon. By appointment only. (541) 523-2626.
Enterprise Facility: Open the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month 10am-12 noon. By appointment only. (541) 426-3332.

What you should know about the disposal of household hazardous waste.

Americans generate 1.6 million tons of HHW per year!

The average home can accumulate as much as 100 pounds of hazardous waste.