PREPARING HEALTHY LUNCH TIPS FOR TODDLERS AND PRESCHOOLERS

A healthy lunch is a great way to start teaching your child about the importance of healthy eating. Lunch provides one third of required daily nutrient needs.

Healthy eating for your toddler and preschooler will:
• Support growth
• Provide energy
• Increase learning capability
• Increase the ability to fight illness or disease

Healthy lunch choices come from:
• Foods from the five food groups
• Appropriate serving sizes
• Various fruits, vegetables and whole grains as snack choices

Build healthy lunches and snacks by including 4-5 of the food groups using the following:

MILK
PROVIDES CALCIUM FOR BONES AND TEETH

• Milk
• Yogurt (topped with granola or any other unsweetened cereal
• Homemade pudding
• Cottage cheese with fruit or raw vegetable
• Orange juice fortified with calcium
• Soy milk

ONE SERVING =1/2 C OF MILK OR ½ OUNCE CHEESE

*Low fat choices should only be offered to children over the age of 2 years

* Regular soy milk should not be offered to children less than 2 years. Offer soy infant formula instead.

MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES
PROVIDES PROTEIN FOR MUSCLES AND B VITAMINS

• Fish, egg, poultry, lean beef or leftover meats for sandwich filling
• Cold cuts of meat
• Mashed beans e.g. hummus
• Peanut butter combinations
• Tofu sliced, diced, mashed and seasoned

ONE SERVING= 1 OUNCE OF LEAN MEAT, FISH OR CHICKEN, 1 EGG, ½ CUP COOKED BEANS, 2 TBSP OF PEANUT BUTTER
These make excellent sandwich fillings.

BREAD, PASTA AND CEREAL
PROVIDE ENERGY, FIBER, VITAMINS AND MINERALS

• Sandwich breads (whole wheat, multi-grain, rye, pumpernickel, soft tortillas or bagels)
• Variety breads (herbed, pita pockets, onion, or raisin breads)
• Add whole grain breads with soups or salads
• Pasta/rice, salads, soups or casseroles
• Unsweetened cereals make good snacks with dried fruit

One serving= ½ slice of bread ¼ cup ready to eat cereal or ¼ cup cereal, rice or pasta

VEGETABLES
PROVIDE FIBER, VITAMINS AND MINERALS

• Vegetable sticks with a low-fat dip
• Vegetables in pasta salads or salad greens
• Vegetables added to sandwiches
• Vegetables mixed in muffins, bread or pies
• Soups

ONE SERVING =1/4 CUP COOKED OR CHOPPED RAW OR ½ CUP LEAFY GREENS

WHOLE FRUITS
PROVIDE FIBER, VITAMINS AND MINERALS

• Various of fresh fruits (continue to offer a variety of fruits to the picky eater
• Canned fruit in own juice or light syrup
• Dried fruit

ONE SERVING =1/2 PIECE OF FRUIT AND ¼ CUP CANNED FRUIT
1/8 CUP DRIED FRUIT

Offer your toddler and preschooler actual fruit more often and less juice. Provide water instead.

SNACKS

A child's stomach is small and energy needs are high. Provide snacks in between meals in order to meet nutrient needs.

• Cheese and crackers
• Peanut butter and graham crackers
• Fruit and cheese
• Unsweetened cereal and milk

Choose snacks from the five food groups and serve with a beverage such as milk.

SAMPLE am SNACK

½ c yogurt

1 ½ graham crackers

SAMPLE LUNCH

1 Meat or meat alternative = 1 ounce of tuna fish or ½ c chicken noodle soup

1 Vegetable = 1 slice of tomato

2 Bread = 1 slice of whole wheat bread

1 Milk = ½ cup of homemade vanilla pudding

1 Fruit = ¼ cup fruit cocktail in own juice

SAMPLE pm SNACK

½ Apple

1 ounce of cheese

Remember your responsibility is to provide your child with nutritious foods. It is your child's responsibility to decide if they will eat and how much they will eat from what is offered.

ENCOURAGE VARIETY

Vary the food you offer your child from each food group. Try all kinds of food even those you do not like. Be mindful that it takes several tries before a child adjusts to a new food.

Use the serving sizes as a guideline in providing your child with appropriate food portions. Start with these amounts and give your child more if he/she is still hungry. Your child may eat more or less. Don't worry - your child's appetite changes frequently as calorie needs are dictated by growth spurts.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL
NUTRITION SERVICES AT
278-6467/68/69
email : mlbfurbert@gov.bm or cahollis@gov.bm