



Back to school bento box lunch ideas

School is back in session and you may find yourself scrambling to come up with healthy lunch ideas, especially if your child is active. Creating a bento box is a fun way to incorporate a variety of nutritious foods and make sure children are getting sufficient calories to fuel activity. Traditional bento boxes include a carbohydrate source such as rice, a protein source such as fish or meat and a variety of vegetables.

The Eat Well Plate can help to guide your bento box creation!



The Eat Well Plate helps show how carbohydrates, protein and fats can all be included into a balanced meal.

- Protein** → Helps build and repair tissue and muscles¹
- Carbohydrates** → Main energy source for fuelling physical activity and can be a good source of fibre²
- Fats** → Required for absorption of vitamins A, D, E, and K and helps with growth and development³

Here are some examples for each category:

Vegetables and Fruit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carrots - Celery - Cucumber - Peppers - Peas - Corn - Broccoli - Kale chips - Beet chips - Cherry tomatoes - Banana - Grapes - Berries - Apple - Peach - Avocado 	Grain Products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whole grain bread - Whole wheat wrap - Taco shells - Pita - Quinoa - Whole grain crackers - Brown rice - Whole-wheat pasta
Milk and Alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cheese - Yogurt - Milk (dairy or soy) 	Meat and Alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turkey - Chicken - Hummus - Nuts - Eggs - Canned salmon/tuna - Beans - Tofu

Bento Box Recipe: "Make Your Own Taco"

- Soft whole wheat taco shells
- Black beans & chicken
- Lettuce
- Peppers and cherry tomatoes
- Shredded cheese
- Guacamole and salsa
- Sliced apple and grapes



Tips for creating a bento box!

- Incorporate a variety of foods from the different food groups
- Get the kids involved! Let them help plan their bento box
- Try making your own sauces and dips



Seek support

from a Dietitian near you:
www.dietitians.ca/find

Helpful Links:

- [The Eat Well Plate](#)
- [Canada's Food Guide](#)
- [Tips for Health Eating](#)
- [UBC Thunderbird Nutrition](#)



References:

- 1) Health Canada. (2012). Protein. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/nutrients/protein.html>
- 2) Canadian Pediatric Society. (2013). Sport Nutrition for young athletes. Retrieved from: <https://www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/sport-nutrition-for-young-athletes>
- 3) Canadian Pediatric Society. (2013). Sport Nutrition for young athletes. Retrieved from: <https://www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/sport-nutrition-for-young-athletes>