



## PACKING A HEALTHY BROWN BAG LUNCH

March is National Nutrition Month, so it's a great time to focus on an often neglected meal, lunch! A lot of attention is given to starting off your day with a healthy breakfast, and there are countless resources for building a healthy dinner plate. Unfortunately, lunch is often relegated to the quickest option available during a busy workday: cafeteria food, vending machine options, nearby fast food restaurants, even skipping lunch altogether.

While checking out the local eateries can be fun and grabbing a quick bite from the drive-thru seems like the easiest thing to do, packing your own lunch is a much healthier and less expensive option. You control the ingredients (think fat, sugar, salt), the portions, the flavors, and the cost. Brown bagging it has come a long way from the soggy bologna and cheese sandwich your mom sent you to school with!

I know, you're thinking "but I don't have time to pack my lunch every day." With the right equipment, some simple planning, and a weekend trip to the grocery store, you'll be packing like a pro in no time. So, what does a healthy brown bag lunch look like?



### Pack with the elements below, in mind:



#### PROTEIN

If choosing deli meats, look for nitrate free and low sodium options.

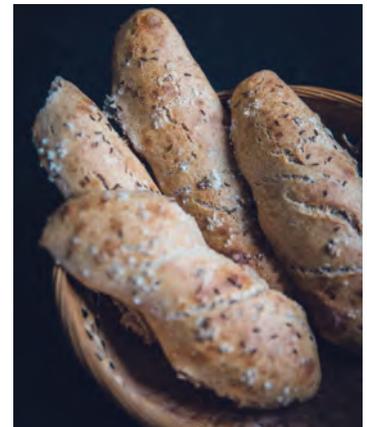
- Turkey, chicken, lean beef.
- Seafood: tuna, salmon, sardines, shrimp
- Eggs, cottage cheese, Greek yogurt, milk
- Legumes: chickpeas, lentils, peas, beans
- Nuts, nut butters, seeds



#### FRUITS AND VEGGIES

Fruits contain natural sugars to help satisfy your sweet tooth. They also have tons of fiber, vitamins, minerals, and water.

- Load up on non-starchy vegetables. They are packed with fiber which helps fill you up and have tons of vitamins and minerals. Try to include these as a swap for chips.



#### WHOLE GRAINS

Build a better sandwich by choosing spouted grain bread (Ezekiel bread) or 100% whole grain breads, wraps, and flatbreads.

- Choose brown rice, barley, quinoa, oatmeal, whole grain pastas
- Satisfy your crunch craving with low sodium, whole wheat crackers or a healthy popcorn.

## OTHER TIPS TO CONSIDER

**The Right Equipment:** While you could use resealable plastic bags, investing in usable containers will save you money, and the planet! There are a variety of sizes available, so choose what works best for you. Don't forget an insulated lunch bag & a reusable water bottle.

**Prep Work:** Spending a little time on the weekend allows you to have everything ready to pop into your lunch bag on busy mornings.

- Cook meats, make sandwiches (minus condiments) hard-boil eggs, and cut up veggies as soon as you get home from the grocery
- Store everything in reusable containers so you can grab and go.
- Buy pre-cut veggies if your budget allows. It's not cheating, promise.
- Buy in Bulk: Single serve portions are costly. Buy larger containers (yogurt, cottage cheese), bulk bags of nuts, and other items.
- Divide in to proper portions during your prep work, store in reusable containers.

# HEALTHIER PACKAGED SNACKS



- Skinny Pop
- Boom Chicka Pop
- Nuttzo Nut Butters  
-pair with a piece of fruit
- Larabars
- Kindbars



- Dry Roasted Edamame
- Pitted Dates  
add nuts or nut butter
- Krave Jerky
- Peeled Snacks Dried Fruit (no sugar added)
- Chia Squeeze



- The Good Bean Chick Peas
- Freeze Dried Fruit and/or Veggies
- Nuts
- Epic Bars



- Simple Mills Crackers
- Harvest Snaps Snap Pea Crisps
- Hard Boiled eggs
- Oscar Myer Adult Lunchables



- Sargento Natural Light String Cheese
- Rhythm Superfoods Kale or Beet chips
- Gold Emblem Sweet Sriracha Chickpeas
- Perfect Bar



- Starkist Chunk Light Tuna
- Enlightened Roasted Broad Bean Crisps
- Justin's Peanut Butter with an apple
- RX BAR



- Barbara's Cinnamon Puffins
- Triscuit Crackers  
-pair with hummus, cheese, etc.
- Pressed Bars by Kind
- Siggis 4% yogurt



- Harvest Hemp Heart Bites
- Skinny Pop Popcorn Cakes
- Wholly Guacamole Mims
- Sabra Hummus Singles

## THIS MONTH:

### MARCH WELLNESS ACTIVITIES:

#### Wrapping up Biggest Loser Challenge:

Final Weigh in Week is March 4th–March 8th

#### 7 Day Food Journal Challenge:

Starts March 17th–23rd. Sign-up on Connect.

## LOOKING AHEAD:

### APRIL WELLNESS ACTIVITIES:

#### Group Exercise Classes:

Harrison High School–Small Gym

April 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th

3:45PM–4:45PM Sign-up on Connect.