



## Grab a Snack

A healthy snack is a great way to hold kids over before their next meal. Chop up some vegetables such as peppers, yellow squash or cucumbers and serve with 2 tbsp. of humous. No time for chopping? Grab a bag of baby carrots. It's just as easy as reaching for a bag of chips. Serve with low-fat ranch dressing. You can also try a low-fat cheese stick with 1 cup of fruit.

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## Back to School Tips

The back to school transition is in full swing. Here are two ways as a parent you can help your kids be prepared for those days ahead.

### Backpack Safety: Pack it light, do it right!

According to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), backpacks are designed to distribute the weight of the backpack load among some of the body's strongest muscles. When used correctly, backpacks can be a good way to carry the necessities of the school day. However, backpacks that are too heavy or are worn incorrectly can cause problems for children and teens. Improperly used backpacks may injure muscles and joints. This can lead to severe back, neck, and shoulder pain, as well as posture problems.

### Tips for avoiding backpack injuries:

- Purchase a backpack that is the correct size. The size of the pack should not be larger than the size of the child's back. Look for those labeled as toddler or children's size. Backpacks should also have adequate back padding and wide straps.
- Distribute contents evenly and don't overload.
- Adjust shoulder straps so the backpack fits snugly against the back.
- Monitor what your child is carrying to school each day to help him or her avoid carrying unnecessary items which add weight to the backpack.
- Ask your child if he/she has any discomfort during or after wearing the backpack.

### Breakfast: The most important meal

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. However, when trying to get kids ready



amidst the morning chaos, it's very easy to offer them a quick glass of juice or a muffin as they run out the door. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), several studies appear to link the consumption of a nutritious breakfast to improved dietary status and school performance.

### Quick and easy breakfast ideas:

- Grab something simple and nutritious like a low calorie fruit yogurt. Just be sure to watch the sugar content. Sprinkle in some high fiber cereal for an added crunch.
- Try a whole wheat English muffin with 2 tablespoons of peanut butter.
- Breakfast cereal (hot or cold) can be a good option if you make sure to purchase one with whole grains that is low in sugar. Enjoy with skim or 1 percent milk.
- Oatmeal is another great breakfast idea. Use skim or 1 percent milk and some fresh fruit like berries to sweeten it.

The back to school transition is always a tough one. Starting your kids off on the right foot will hopefully give them the tools to succeed. ■

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