

Peninsula POWERED BY PALO ALTO DAILY NEWS

- apartments
- commercial properties
- mortgage rates
- open homes
- list a home
- personal finance guide

SEARCH

YAHOO!

Advertisement

Most Viewed Most E-Mailed

(From the last 12 hours) RSS

1. Sales of 'Medal of Honor' video game blocked on U.S. military bases
2. Too high to drive? Policing subjective because no standard exists
3. Co-workers help San Jose couple deal with daughter's accident
4. Kawakami: For the 49ers and Raiders, it's the end of 'Era of Despair'
5. Stiff challenges ahead for governor, Senate contenders
6. Ugly incidents at dog park worry Foster City officials

Top Classifieds

- ALMADEN/Blossom Hill 2BD gar...
 - SJ East Foothills 3/2.5. Val...
 - S'VALE: -6 Ptx Lg 1bd grt loc...
 - Lakeshore Apartments
 - RICHMOND ANNEX 2/1
 - EL CERRITO...
 - BLOSSOM Valley 3/2, Great...
 - MILPITAS 3/1.5 Condo 2...
- ALL LISTINGS

Reprint BOOKMARK Print Email Font Resize

Sack it to me

By chrissey gray
Posted: 09/02/2010 05:24:55 AM PDT

It's official! Summer break has come to an end, and the kids are all back in school. This means that the endless summer snacking and inconsistent eating schedules are gone. It is time to get eating habits back on track for both parents and children alike. Whether the goal is weight loss or just eating healthy, it is very important to monitor the content and amount of food that you and your kids are consuming.

One great way to do this is by packing a sack lunch for your children to take to school and for you to take to work. This will allow parents to ensure that their children get the nutrients they need to equip them to learn and focus. It will also keep adults from succumbing to yet another fast-food run, and aid in monitoring portions if weight management is the goal.

There are plenty of products available today that are meant to make packing a lunch a snap, especially for children. Unfortunately, the majority of these items are processed foods that are jam-packed with saturated fats, sodium, sugar and calories. These foods are quick, easy, affordable and seemingly nutritious. But do not be fooled. It is these processed foods that are contributing to the increased epidemic of obesity in America.

In the Bay Area alone, one out of three children is obese, as are one out of four adults. To stop this growing trend, we all need to be proactive. By planning and packing a sack lunch with fresh, whole foods, you can better control what you and

your children are eating instead of depending on other food sources, such as a school cafeteria. When packing a lunch, keep in mind that there needs to be a balance of fresh produce, whole grains and lean protein to help fuel you and your child for the rest of the day. A healthy balance of these foods will keep you satisfied instead of feeling deprived.

The trick to encouraging kids -- and some adults -- to eat healthy is to make food fun to eat. Provide your child with food that is both enjoyable and healthy. Wraps, dips, smoothies and crunchy items are all great choices. A fun and colorful reusable lunch pail is always a good idea too, plus it is a great way to recycle and help the environment.

One easy lunch idea is Turkey Roll-Ups. With this dish, you eliminate bread and use a turkey slice like a tortilla. Allow your child to fill the "tortilla" with healthy items that are packed separately, such as low-fat cheese, mustard, sprouts, lettuce, tomatoes, etc. For adults, save time by filling and wrapping them ahead. Couple this with whole-wheat crackers, an orange and

water, and you have a healthy, fun to eat, well-balanced meal.

Here are a few other easy, delicious and nutritious lunch ideas:

- Tuna salad made with Greek yogurt: Pack a half-cup of salad into a whole-wheat pita half with some veggies for extra food value. Add hot tea or organic juice to round out this meal.
- Mini carrot sticks with hummus or black bean dip: Opt for organic dips when available, or when in doubt, make your own. This snack mixes both fiber and protein, which have great staying power and can drastically reduce hunger or cravings. (Cauliflower can be used in place of carrots for a nice change.)
- Celery sticks or sliced apples with peanut butter: Eating fruits or vegetables is filling without being dense in calories. By adding a tablespoon of organic peanut butter, you can get some added flavor as well as protein, which keeps you fuller longer.
- Nuts, particularly almonds, cashews, walnuts, pine nuts, pecans, or pistachios: Eat natural nuts with no added salt or flavors. Watch your portions because nuts are very high in calories, but they are also very filling. A little goes a long way.
- Crunchy raw green beans or broccoli: Couple these with a small container of organic, light ranch or French onion dip for extra flavor.
- Frozen grapes, cherries or berries: Try freezing these fruits for a different texture. Freezing fruits seals in their natural sweet flavors, making them tastier. These can often be substituted for dessert as well, in place of ice cream or Popsicle. Freezing orange slices also can offer a nice change.
- Cheese sticks: These go well with meat dishes and fruit. They are also a good source of calcium.
- Whole grain crackers: Add a nice crunch and lots of healthy fiber to any meal.

Happy Eating!

Chrissy Gray is manager of SkinSpirit REBALANCE Metabolic Weight Loss. E-mail her at rebalance@skinspirit.com.

Reprint BOOKMARK Print Email Font Resize Return to Top



Find "Secret" Bay Area Attractions