



Is Your Child Running on Empty?

When summer brings longer, more active days – whether at the beach or at day camp – your children need enough nutritious food and water to be fueled for fun. If a day of summer activity causes them to crash and burn with fatigue or irritability, it might be time to look at what's going into the tank.

Fueling an Active Child for Fun and Fitness

Activity of any kind needs a source of energy. It's important that your child eats a variety of foods that will provide him with all the energy and nutrients he needs.

Your child's food and fluid needs will be influenced by the intensity of his activities. For example, your son will likely need more food and water for a day at soccer camp than a day at computer camp.

To maintain energy throughout the day it's important to eat healthy

carbohydrates like whole grain breads, pasta, veggies and fruits. These foods will provide a steady blood sugar level to keep your kids moving. Lunch ideas include whole wheat pasta with tomato sauce, or a tortilla wrap with chickpea or bean spread. Fruit – fresh, canned, frozen or dried – offers a quick energy boost.

Protein is key for your child's growth and energy. The body's muscles are made of protein and foods like fish, meat, eggs, nuts, milk and

fortified soy beverages help provide the building blocks for strong bodies that support physical activity. Lunch ideas can include a turkey sandwich or egg salad in pita bread.

Sometimes children need long-lasting energy, especially when they are very active. Foods such as homemade trail mix with dried fruits, nuts, and whole grain cereal are a great choice. They are loaded with essential nutrients and are high in energy so only small amounts are needed.

Lunch Box Ideas for Summer Camp Days:

According to Canada's Food Guide, children between the ages of 5 and 12 need the following foods every day.

- 5-6 servings: Vegetables and Fruit
- 4-6 servings: Grain Products
- 2-4 servings: Milk and Alternatives
- 1-2 servings: Meat and Alternatives

Healthy lunch ideas:

- pear slices with whole wheat crackers and cheese
- peanut butter and banana slices on rye bread
- ham, chicken, or turkey tortilla wraps with cucumbers
- tuna and apple slices in a pita
- salmon and pineapple in a whole wheat hot dog bun

Healthy snacks ideas:

- raisins mixed with almonds
- carrots, celery, and broccoli with a low-fat dip
- yogurt with fresh fruit and granola
- grain and fruit bars
- applesauce or fruit salad
- peanut butter on celery sticks
- smoothie made with fruit, yogurt and milk or fortified soy beverage

What About Water?

During summertime activity, water is lost quickly through sweat. Water helps your child perform better by allowing her muscles to contract and her body to cool down. Nothing quenches summer thirst like a glass of simple water.

Thirst is the number one signal the body uses to tell us we need water. Teach your child to drink water as soon as she feels thirsty.

Want to learn more about healthy eating? Visit: www.canadasfoodguide.org • www.dietitians.ca • www.sportsdietitians.com.au

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