

# Nutrition Times

Oct 2020 Nutrition Services

## Nutrition & Covid-19: Keep Healthy at School

Although this school year may look and feel different, healthy eating continues to be important. While there are no single foods or health products that can fight against Covid-19, eating well helps to keep your immune system working its best.

Eating nutritious foods, such as **vegetables and fruits, whole grains** and **protein foods**, will also give your body the fuel it needs to focus in class and have energy throughout the day!



Use the **Eat Well Plate** from **Canada's Food Guide** to guide your food choices at meal and snack times.

### Make time for Breakfast

There are many benefits to eating breakfast. In addition to giving your body the fuel it needs for the day, it can also help with your memory, concentration, and learning. Some quick and easy ideas are a fruit and yogurt parfait, oatmeal, or a whole grain muffin with milk.



### Pack Lunch and Enjoy Mealtimes

Try to pack your lunch the night before so you have more time in the morning. This is a great way to get kids involved in the kitchen! Bring foods that can be eaten cold,

or if needed, use a thermos to keep food warm so you don't have to use the microwave. Some ideas are:

- ✓ Chicken and vegetable wrap (*use leftover meats and veggies from dinner*)
- ✓ Bean and veggie chili
- ✓ Lentil soup and whole grain bun
- ✓ Vegetable quiche

### Quick and Easy Snack Ideas

Fuel your body with nutrient-dense snacks throughout the day. Try some of the snack ideas below to take along with you to school, or enjoy as an after-school snack:

- ✓ Baked pita chips and veggie sticks with hummus
- ✓ Fresh fruit
- ✓ Trail mix (*nut free if needed*)
- ✓ Milk and whole grain bread with peanut or seed butter



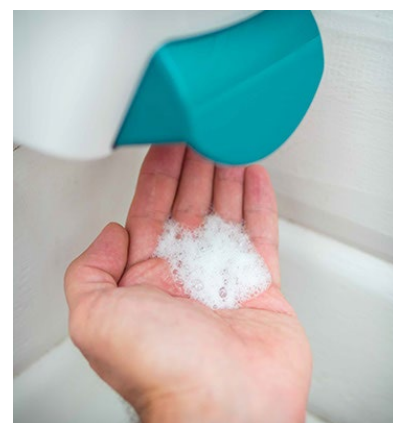
### Keeping Safe

Proper hand hygiene and physical distancing are essential to fight against Covid-19. To protect yourself and others:

- ✓ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds before and after eating food



- ✓ Maintain a distance of at least two metres between you and your classmates
- ✓ Avoid sharing food and drinks with your classmates
- ✓ Use hand sanitizer when unable to wash your hands



## Whole Grain Snacking

Granola bars are a common item in school lunchboxes, however many are high in added sugar. With a handful of ingredients and pantry staples, you can easily make them at home. This recipe, from the new **Canada's Food Guide**, is a great recipe to get kids involved in the kitchen! The addition of oats and bran make them whole grain and a great source of fiber. As an added bonus, no baking is required!

### No-Bake Toasted Oat Granola Bars

Yield: 12 bars

#### Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups rolled oats
- ½ cup chopped almonds (*optional*, can substitute with sunflower seeds if nut allergy)
- 1 cup bran flakes
- 1 cup Medjool dates, pitted (about 12 dates)
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ cup nut butter or nut-butter alternative (e.g. peanut, almond, sunflower seed or soybutter)



#### Directions

1. In a skillet, toast oats and almonds (if using), over medium heat, for about 8 minutes or until light and golden. Transfer to a large bowl to cool slightly. Add bran flakes.
2. Add Medjool dates to food processor and pulse until finely chopped.
3. In a small saucepan or microwave, mix honey with nut butter over medium heat until melted and smooth. Add dates and stir to combine. Next, add oat mixture and stir until everything is coated well.
4. Line a 23cm (9") square pan with aluminum foil or parchment paper. Add mixture to pan and press to flatten evenly. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hr. until firm. Cut into bars. Store in fridge for up to 1 week.

## Upcoming Nutrition Classes

**Due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, all in-person nutrition classes are now being offered online via Zoom.**

To look for upcoming infant and toddler classes, please go to: [szenutrition.eventbrite.com/](https://szenutrition.eventbrite.com/)

**Alberta Healthy Living Program:** Classes are offered virtually throughout South Zone to help manage chronic conditions. Topics include Diabetes, Weight Management, Stress Management, Healthy Eating to Reduce your Risk, Emotional Eating and more. To register call: **Lethbridge 403-388-6654, Medicine Hat 403-529-8969, Brooks 403-793-6659.**

## Contact

If you have questions, contact your local Registered Dietitian at Community Health Services:

Medicine Hat	403-502-8200
Brooks	403-501-3300
Lethbridge	403-388-6666

For more information on this or other nutrition topics, go to [www.healthyeatingstartshere.ca](http://www.healthyeatingstartshere.ca)

