



For those of you new to CCSC, I am your team dietitian. I will email nutrition newsletters that can also be found on the team unify website.

Gone are the lazy, dog days of summer. We are back in busy routines. Nutrition can be the first thing to slip, so be prepared.

Breakfast

Yes, it is morning, same as every day. Yes, you have to wake up and go to school (or work). No amount of whining will change things...

Just Do IT!

Keep breakfast the least stressful part of your morning routine and have a breakfast menu plan. Breakfast is important, and the most skipped meal of the day. Adding variety to your breakfast will not only ensure you get a variety of nutrients, but may also help bring the kids to the table faster (hopefully dressed and ready for school too ;).

- Egg in the middle, toad in the hole, whatever you call it, its good nutrition and easy (Hole cut into bread, egg cooked inside)
- Non-fat/low fat yogurt with fruit and nuts
- Hot cereal such as oatmeal with cinnamon or nutmeg, toss in a few raisins and pecans.

- Peanut Butter on... anything: toast, warmed frozen waffle, apples, rice cake
- Smoothie – the options are endless, google some great fruit/vegetable combos.
- Egg, ham sandwich (bread, waffles, English muffin)
- Whole-wheat English muffin with a sliced avocado and slice of low fat cheese
- Scrambled egg rolled up in a whole-wheat tortilla with salsa
- Whole-wheat pita stuffed with (low-fat cottage cheese and peaches; peanut butter and banana; avocado and spinach; your wildest creations).

School Rules

Snack Time: My kids now have snack time at school. If your child has this luxury take this opportunity to offer healthy snacks (that you can't hear them complain about).

School rules are no nuts. Be creative with trail mixes: oats, granola, raisins, chopped prunes, popcorn. The no nut rule makes it hard to find premade snack bars. There are a few bars on the shelves with no nuts, compare the sugar content and go with the lowest or opt for ones sweetened with fruit.

You can always make homemade bars:

Banana Chocolate Chip Granola Bars

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 cups rolled oats
- 2 medium ripe bananas, mashed
- 1/2 cup honey
- 2/3 cup chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup crunchy flax cereal

Instructions

1. On an ungreased baking sheet, spread the oats out evenly, and bake at 350F for about 10 minutes, stirring once in the middle of that time.
2. Remove the oats from the oven, leaving the oven ON, and let them cool completely.
3. While the oats are cooling, you can mix together the remaining ingredients in a large bowl. After the oats are cooled, add them to the bowl, and mix thoroughly.
4. Lightly coat an 8x8 baking dish with cooking spray, and place the mixture evenly into the dish, using your fingers to help push it down flat and into the corners.
5. Bake at 350F for about 25 minutes.
6. After cooking, allow to cool completely.
7. After the bars have cooled and the chocolate has hardened, you can slice it however you prefer. I chose to slice down the middle and into six even cuts lengthwise to make 12 bars.

Hydration: Water bottles are also now allowed, and a great opportunity for kids to stay hydrated. Drinking water throughout the day is very important, especially for your athletic kids. Make sure their water bottles are full every morning. Encourage them to at least drink the one full bottle



and perhaps fill up again at school.

Dinner

The next busiest part of the day. Homework, swim practice (and all other activities), tired-cranky moods... not the best combination for cooking. Try these tips to be prepared for busy dinner times:

Have a Week's Worth of Menus in Mind

Whether you write them down or keep them in your head, you need five to seven kid-tested, parent-approved main dishes. Pick options that are easy and popular with everyone. Once you have an entrée, such as tacos, spaghetti, oven-baked chicken or slow-cooker stew, all you have to add is a vegetable and/or fruit and perhaps a whole-grain roll to complete the meal.

Keep Your Kitchen Stocked with Quick-to-Fix Foods

Whenever you shop, look for specials on staples (rice, pasta, beans, etc.) as well as frozen and canned fruits and vegetables with little or no added salt or sugars. With a wide variety of tasty choices on hand, you'll only have to worry about the main dish when it's time to make dinner. Add fresh produce items when in season.

Prepare Multiple Batches of Main Ingredients

If you're cooking ground beef, it's just as easy to cook a double

or triple batch. Freeze extra servings to reheat for tacos or casseroles. Try slicing, marinating and freezing extra beef, pork, chicken or fish for stir-fry dishes. Drop any one of these protein options into a wok or skillet for quick cooking on a busy night.

Time

"Please, just hurry up and eat!" To which my oldest replies, "But mom, you tell us that we should take our time and savor our food." 🙄 Of course, she remembered that. Life is give and take, you have to prioritize what comes first. Being on time for school trumps savoring the "toad in the hole". Maintaining good nutrition during stressful times requires planning ahead and realizing life still happens, just do the best you can.

Monthly challenge:

Parents – Before your next grocery trip, think of your week's worth of dinner ideas.

Teenage Athlete – You can do IT! Get up, and YOU take care of your own breakfast. Perhaps take a moment before bed the night before to have a plan.