

# Intermountain Health Dietitians Offer Four Ways to Involve Kids and Pack Healthy Back-to-School Lunches

*Tiana Barker, a registered dietitian nutritionist with Intermountain Health, offers ways to help make sure kids eat the healthy lunch you pack*

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, USA, August 25, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The beginning of a new school year is a perfect time to begin introducing good eating patterns into children's lives. Starting early in life can help kids adopt good habits for a lifetime.

"One way to teach them to be healthy eaters is to involve them in packing their school lunches," said Tiana Barker, registered dietitian nutritionist with [Intermountain Health](#). "This allows kids to still have autonomy while being exposed to a variety of healthy foods in their lunch boxes."

Barker offers these tips on ways to introduce kids to healthy eating habits and trying new lunch foods:

Involve children in grocery shopping. Teach them about healthy foods and encourage them to select some of these foods to include in their lunches, such as:

Grains, specifically whole grains to increase fiber, like whole wheat bread, brown rice, corn tortillas, or whole-wheat crackers.

Proteins, especially lean cuts of meat, poultry, and fish, plus our plant-based proteins: beans, legumes, nuts, and seeds to increase their fullness and focus.



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Fruits and vegetables, including whole fruits, or even frozen or canned options with low sodium and no sugar.

Healthy beverages – focus on water, milk, and limited amounts of 100% fruit juice. Avoid soda and energy drinks, as these include added sugars and stimulants and lack nutritional value.

Involve kids in the kitchen to develop confidence and cooking skills.

Try new foods at home, where children may be more comfortable experimenting. Model good eating behaviors and encourage other family members to avoid making negative comments about unfamiliar foods. If the kids like the foods they try, include them as options for their lunches the next day.

Involved kids in packing lunches. Allow familiar foods you know they will eat, and a variety of options to try too.

“Beginning in the home is the best place where kids can observe healthy eating patterns and explore new foods in a comfortable place,” said Barker. “Consistent exposure to new foods will develop a child’s interest in them, and they may eventually be willing to at least try, and maybe even like them.

Barker said. “Remember, all food fits! Allow children a treat occasionally, but try not to make it the expectation, allowing for emphasis on foods that will optimize their health and nutrition.”

More information on nutrition is available on the nutrition services webpage at <https://intermountainhealth.org>

Original [press release](#) first appeared on PRUnderground.

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