

# Knowlton Nutrition Newsletter



Welcome to the Knowlton Nutrition Newsletter! This newsletter has been established by the Wellness Committee of Knowlton School to try to provide our school community with information regarding the changes in the school's Wellness Policy. We will include suggestions on ways to increase physical activity and improve nutritional intake. We know change can be overwhelming sometimes and so we hope you will find this information helpful and convenient. If you have any questions that you would like answered, you may send them to Mrs. Noone's attention. Feel free to send them in with your child, via email, or drop them in Mrs. Noone's mail box. We will do our best to provide you with an answer. We hope to feature a question of the month and a recipe of the month in every newsletter as well as the main topic. We hope you enjoy!

Kathy Garriques  
And Ellen Sagan



## Healthy Snacking

What is a healthy snack? A healthy snack should be one that is low in simple sugars, low in fat, and high in nutritional value. The purpose of snacking is to provide your child or yourself with additional energy and maintain adequate blood sugar to get your body through to the next meal. Our bodies work best by getting a combination of carbohydrate, protein and fat every 4-5 hours. By fueling our bodies in this way, we should feel energized and be able to remain more focused throughout the day. Have you ever noticed that "draggy" feeling around 3-4 in the afternoon? That is often due to a decreased blood sugar level and a decrease in serotonin levels in the brain. This can cause a sleepy, sluggish feeling. The best cure is a healthy, well balanced snack.

Great, now that we have that established, what would be a fast, easy, healthy snack? Time is often the problem with having to provide healthy snacks to our children or ourselves. The Federal government is encouraging all schools to abide by their recommendations of avoiding all snacks high in concentrated sugar (sugar as the first ingredient). It is well documented that high sugar foods increase the risk of dental caries and obesity. They also cause a rapid rise in blood sugar, followed by a rapid drop in blood sugar as there is no other macronutrient available to keep the blood sugar elevated (like protein or fiber). This may cause children to become restless when their blood sugar is high and sluggish when it drops rapidly. For best mental strength, we need a snack that has carbohydrate and either fiber or protein or both for lasting ability.

Fruit of any type is usually a great and fairly easy snack. Though fruit is high in carbohydrate, it also is usually high in fiber which will decrease the risk of a rapid blood sugar change (either up or down). Adding a low fat cheese (or for kids a cheese stick) will further give this snack lasting power by adding protein to it. Many fruits taste great with cheese whether it's apples, grapes, or pineapple.

## Question of the Month



*What do we do for our kids for Halloween at school to make it fun?*

In order to comply with our new Wellness Policy, we are asking that you do not send candy into school for Halloween. There are plenty of ways for you to make Halloween special without sending candy into school.

Some suggestions:

- Get little prizes or toys and make a goody bag out of them.
- Low fat bags of chips, pretzels, or popcorn.
- Boxes of raisins or craisins or other dried fruit.
- Fruit chips (banana and apple are some I've seen).
- Mini-muffins
- Pumpkin cookies.

Classroom teachers will also have suggestions regarding Halloween celebrations. Please communicate with them before sending in food items or goody bags.

## Healthy Snacking (cont.)

Of course raw vegetables of any type are also great snacks. Try to make them more appealing to your children by making the veggies interesting. Add peanut butter to celery, a low fat salad dressing for the kids to “dunk” their veggies into, or make colorful platters and create animals or shapes that your kids think are fun. Presentation means a lot to how our children perceive the food.

### **What to do about snacks for school:**

Trail mixes that have pretzels, goldfish, raisins, craisins, or other dried fruit are usually well received. You can also mix different cereals into the mix to add iron and B vitamins. Cheerios, Kix, and many of the Chex cereals go well in most of the mixes. Try to avoid nuts in the mixes you might send to school as many children are allergic to this item, or check with your child's teacher to be sure there is no one in the class who cannot have nuts. Let the children create their own mix. They always think it tastes better when they have had a part in creating it.

Other snacks suggestions are:

- Vegetables or cut up fruit
- part skim cheese sticks
- Whole wheat pretzels and gold fish
- Raisins or other dried fruit (small quantities as these are concentrated in sugar)
- Cheese and Crackers
- Granola bars (not with sugar listed first)
- Cereal bars (not Rice Krispy treats from store)
- Oatmeal cookies (from scratch) (Not a first choice but they are high in fiber.) (Try substituting applesauce for the oil, butter, or margarine; decrease the sugar and make it healthier.)
- Yogurts without sugar as first ingredient

Note: When looking at food labels other names for sugar are: high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, sucrose, concentrated juices, honey, and molasses. (Just because it is a different form doesn't mean there is less sugar.)

If you have any quick healthy snack ideas, send them to Mrs. Noone and we'll print them for others to use. The more suggestions we have, the better it will be for our kids. Her email address is [noonej@knowltonschool.com](mailto:noonej@knowltonschool.com)