



Good Nutrition = Good Learning
Nutritious Food Choices for Breakfast, Lunch and Snacks





Healthy Foods at School

For many families, the end of summer means the return to the daily school routine. You may be thinking: What can I put in the lunch bag? What are quick and easy after school snacks? What is a fast, healthy breakfast to get us out the door in the morning? And how do I make all these choices healthy for my family?

These are questions that most families think about. We all know our children

should have breakfast. We all want to give our children a nutritious lunch (and one that they will eat!) And, we all want to have healthy snacks in the cupboard. Read on for some ideas on how you can make healthy choices for your family.

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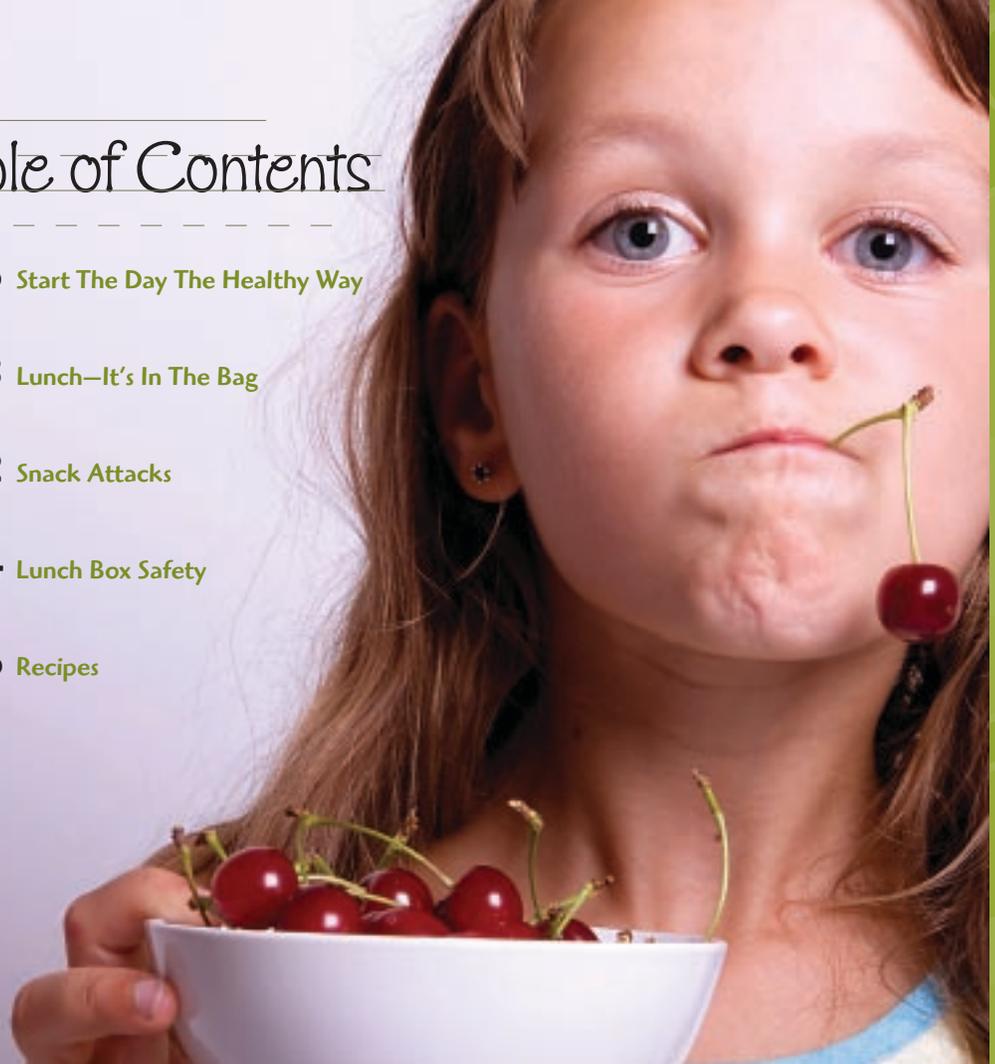
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TIP:

Kids are more likely to eat when they have some choices about what to eat—let your kids pick the dried fruit and nuts to include in the granola.





Breakfasts for Champions

Try these breakfast ideas:

- Toasted whole grain bread, topped with peanut butter and sliced banana
- Waffles—cut them into sticks and dip in apple sauce (Make a large batch and freeze some for later.)
- Smoothies—all you need is yogurt, milk or 100% juice, banana, and chopped fruit of choice. Blend with ice and serve.
- Grilled cheese made with whole grain bread and a hard cheese of your choice.
- Leftovers from last night's dinner
- Breakfast burrito—check out the recipe in the *Recipes* section or use your imagination and make your own
- Make your own granola—try any combination of the following: rolled oats, rye or barley flakes, dried apricots, dates, raisins or cranberries, coconut, sunflower or pumpkin seeds, almonds, peanuts, hazelnuts, or cashews. Mix your choices together, sprinkle with cinnamon or nutmeg and top with milk or yogurt.

Breakfast foods to keep on hand

Grain products

- Whole grain bagels, breads, pitas, tortillas...
- Whole grain cereals—hot or cold
- Bannock made by substituting up to half of the white flour for either oats or whole wheat flour.

Milk and alternatives

- Milk: skim, 1% or 2%
- Yogurt 2% milk fat or less, brick cheeses 20% milk fat or less

Vegetables and fruit

- Fruit: apples, oranges, bananas, frozen unsweetened berries (store bought or locally picked), canned fruit piced in juice
- Vegetables: mushrooms, tomatoes, peppers or preserved vegetables from your garden
- Leftover homemade soup

Meat and alternatives

- Leftover cooked ham, caribou, moose, turkey, beef or chicken
- Eggs
- Dried meat or fish
- Peanut butter



Examples of Healthy Breakfasts

Each of these breakfasts includes three of the four food groups. Have a healthy start to the day.



Breakfast #1

- Homemade muffin or bannock with raisins
- Banana
- Milk

Breakfast #2

- Bowl of yogurt
- ½ toasted whole grain bagel
- 100 % juice

Breakfast #3

- Pancakes topped with yogurt and fruit or frozen berries
- 12–15 almonds
- Vegetable juice

Breakfast #4

- Porridge topped with dried fruit and cinnamon
- Milk







TIP:

Let your kids decorate reusable plastic containers with markers, stickers, and other decorations to create their own fancy packaging.



Lunch,

it's in the bag

A word about lunch: children want lunches that taste good, can be eaten quickly and keep them full for the rest of the school day. Parents want a healthy lunch that provides the fuel for learning and growing. Work together with your child to make good decisions about foods that can be included in the lunch bag—keep it tasty, convenient, and healthy!

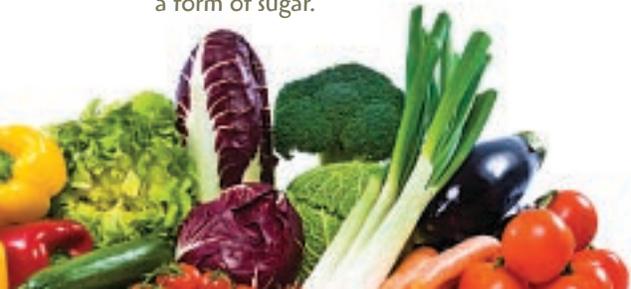
A healthy lunch includes food from at least three food groups, but checking off all four food groups is even better! Remember, no lunch is a good lunch if it is not eaten, so don't forget about your child's preferences when making selections.

When preparing your child's lunch, avoid foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar and have little nutritional value. Children often want convenience foods with fancy packaging. Read food labels to become familiar with the ingredient list and nutritional content of packaged items. In general, foods high in vitamins, nutrients and fibre are healthier than those high in salt, fat or sugar.



Pass on these Foods

- x Packaged fruit leather and fruit snacks such as *Fruit-Roll-Ups*[®], *Yo-gos*[™], *Yo-gos Rollers*[™] and *Fruit by the Foot*[®]—these products are really candy in disguise. Although the packaging may show pictures of real fruit, there is actually very little fruit in the product. Don't be fooled—check the ingredient list on the food label. The first ingredient on the list is almost always a form of sugar.
- x Granola bars coated in chocolate or containing chocolate chips or marshmallows.
- x Instant soup noodles, pre-packaged cheese and cracker snacks and ready to eat lunch kits—these products most often are high in fat and salt and have very little nutritional value.
- x Cookies dunked in icing—these products have no nutritional value and too much sugar.



What can I put in the lunch bag?

Sensational sandwiches—mix and match from below

Base	Filling	Toppings
Whole grain tortilla wraps	Scrambled egg with cheese, black beans and salsa	Cucumber, lettuce, tomatoes
Whole grain bagel	Leftover turkey or roast beef	Grated or sliced cheeses—cheddar, mozzarella, gouda, monterrey jack, swiss
Whole grain breads—rye, multigrain, pumpernickel, whole wheat	Spreads such as hummus, bean spread, light cream cheese or goat cheese, nut butters	Roasted peppers, sliced pickles
Whole grain pitas or naan bread	Egg, tuna or chicken salad	Banana slices, apple slices, raisins, dried cranberries
Whole grain rolls, sub buns, hamburger or hotdog buns	Lean black forest ham	Sprouts, grated carrot, diced peppers



TIP:

Kids are more likely to eat fruit that is cut up. Make fruit kebobs using wood skewers, or include yogurt as a dip.

Lunch options

Sandwiches can be healthy and interesting, but kids also like variety. Other foods that can be included in a healthy and nutritious lunch are:

- Cold pasta salad
- Leftovers from last night's dinner—Homemade mac & cheese, pizza, cold chicken, spaghetti and meat sauce, caribou stew.
- Boiled eggs
- Homemade soup or salmon chowder
- Chili
- Cheese and whole grain crackers
- Yogurt
- Cut-up vegetables—sweet peppers, carrots, cherry tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower
- Fruit—whole or cut up
- Water, milk, 100 % juice, vegetable juice or fortified soy beverages





TIP:

Keep a list of your kid's favourite foods for school meals on the fridge to spark ideas. Add new items as you experiment with different foods that are nutritious and easy to serve.



Snack attacks



Snacks are a healthy part of a child's day. Children need to snack throughout the day to stay active, learn well and keep growing. During and after a busy school day, children need snacks to bridge the gap between meals. A healthy snack should pack lots of nutrition in a quick tasty bite. Snacks with at least one serving from two food groups fit the bill.

Use snack time to bolster your child's intake of milk and alternatives, and vegetables and fruit. These foods help children get the fibre, calcium and other important vitamins they need. Here are some "snackalicious" choices:

- **Fresh juicy fruits** such as melons, apples, oranges, grapes, pears and berries. Include yogurt for dipping and you have a high fibre, high calcium delicious snack.
- **In a hurry?** Grab a piece of dried meat or fish on the way out the door.
- **Fresh crunchy vegetables** such as carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, cucumber, mushrooms and celery, bite-sized and ready to munch.
- **Small tossed garden salad**—jazz it up with nuts, seeds, berries or beans. Offer dressing on the side.
- **Homemade trail mix**—Mix together cereal squares, nuts, whole grain pretzels, dried fruit such as raisins, cranberries, dates, figs, blueberries, and sunflower or pumpkin seeds.
- **Homemade baked goods** such as banana bread, whole grain muffins, oatmeal bannock and oatmeal cookies
- **Plain popcorn**
- **Homemade whole grain pancakes or waffles**—make in bulk and freeze



TIP:

Let your kids experiment with making trail mix. Give them the raw ingredients, and let them mix and match to discover their favourite combination.





TIP:

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency suggests the following as a bleach sanitizer for countertops and utensils. Combine 1 tsp of bleach with 3 cups of water in a labelled spray bottle. After wiping your countertop, spray with sanitizer and let stand briefly. Rinse with lots of clean water and let air dry.

Lunch Box Safety

Foodborne illnesses can arise if food is not prepared and stored safely. Avoid packing the potential of foodborne illness in your child's lunch. Read on to learn how to keep food bugs out of the lunch box.

Start with the basics:

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds, with warm soapy water before preparing lunch.
- Sanitize your countertops to prevent germs from spreading onto food.
- Teach your children to wash their hands before eating lunch.
- Clean your child's lunch box.



Safe food practices:

- Keep cold food cold and hot food hot. Foods such as ready to eat meats, eggs, mayonnaise, yogurt or milk need to be kept cold to stay safe (below 4°C). Foods such as soup, chilli, or stew must be kept hot (above 60°C) to stay safe.
- Practice safe storage at home. Keep ready to eat meats, fruits and vegetables separate from raw meats in your refrigerator.
- If a microwave is available at school send your child's food to school cold and teach your child how to safely use a microwave to heat their food at school.
- Throw away all perishable leftovers that return home.

- Wash raw vegetables and fruit thoroughly before you prepare and eat them.
- If lunch is prepared the night before, keep it in the refrigerator and then add the ice pack in the morning before your child leaves for school.

Safety Tips and Tricks for the Lunch Box

- Frozen 100 % juice boxes can double as an ice pack to keep foods cold.
- Encourage your child to keep his or her lunch box in a cool place in the classroom, away from the radiator or direct sunlight.
- Encourage your child to keep their thermos closed until lunch time.

Lunchbox Equipment

- The best choice is an insulated lunch bag.
- Invest in a good quality wide mouthed thermos for

sending soups, stews or heated leftovers. ·

- A small ice pack or freezer gel pack is perfect for keeping food cold.



Tip: Fill the thermos with hot water and let stand for a few minutes then empty and fill with your hot food and close right away.



Recipes

Nutritious and Delicious



Breakfast Granola

This recipe is fast, easy, and makes a great start to the day or a healthy snack.

- 1 cup large-flake oats, rye flakes or barley flakes
- 1 cup dried fruit—apples, raisins, cranberries, dates, figs
- ½ cup unsweetened coconut
- ½ cup seeds—pumpkin, sunflower
- ½ cup nuts—almonds, walnuts, peanuts, pecans
- sprinkle of cinnamon and nutmeg
- milk or vanilla yogurt

Mix together in a large container with a lid for storage. When ready to eat, take what you like and top with milk or yogurt.



TIPS:

- Add fresh fruit such as bananas or diced apples.
- Try different flavoured yogurt.
- If you're crunched for time —eat it in the car on the way to school, just grab a spoon!



Recipes

Nutritious and Delicious



Oatmeal Pancakes

- 1 ½ cups rolled oats
- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 Tbsp brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp baking powder
- ¾ tsp salt
- 2 eggs
- ¼ cup vegetable oil

Mix rolled oats and milk in a small bowl. Set aside until milk is almost absorbed, about 5 minutes.

In a large bowl combine flour, brown sugar, baking powder and salt. Stir well.

Add eggs and oil to oat mixture. Beat well.

Add oat mixture to flour mixture all at once, mixing until smooth.

Heat and lightly grease a skillet. Pour about ¼ cup batter for each pancake onto skillet and cook each pancake until edges become dry and surface is covered with bubbles. Flip pancake and cook until second side is golden brown.

Makes about 18 medium pancakes.

TIPS:

- *Replace some of the flour with whole wheat or other flour to increase fibre and create a nuttier taste.*
- *Top pancakes with flavoured yogurt and thawed frozen berries for a great afternoon snack.*
- *Use this batter in the waffle maker.*
- *Double the recipe and freeze extras for breakfasts, lunch and snacks throughout the week.*



Recipes

Nutritious and Delicious



Banana Muffins

- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- 2 ½ tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp baking soda
- ¾ cup rolled oats
- ¼ cup lightly packed brown sugar
- ½ cup white sugar
- 2 medium, ripe bananas
- 1 egg
- ½ cup milk
- 3 Tbsp margarine, melted

Preheat oven to 375°F

Combine flours, baking powder and baking soda in a large bowl and stir in oats, sugar and brown sugar. Set aside.

Mash bananas in a medium bowl. Add egg, milk and melted margarine. Mix well.

Stir banana mixture into the dry ingredients until blended. Do not over mix.

Lightly grease 12 large muffin cups. Put the muffin batter into the muffin cups.

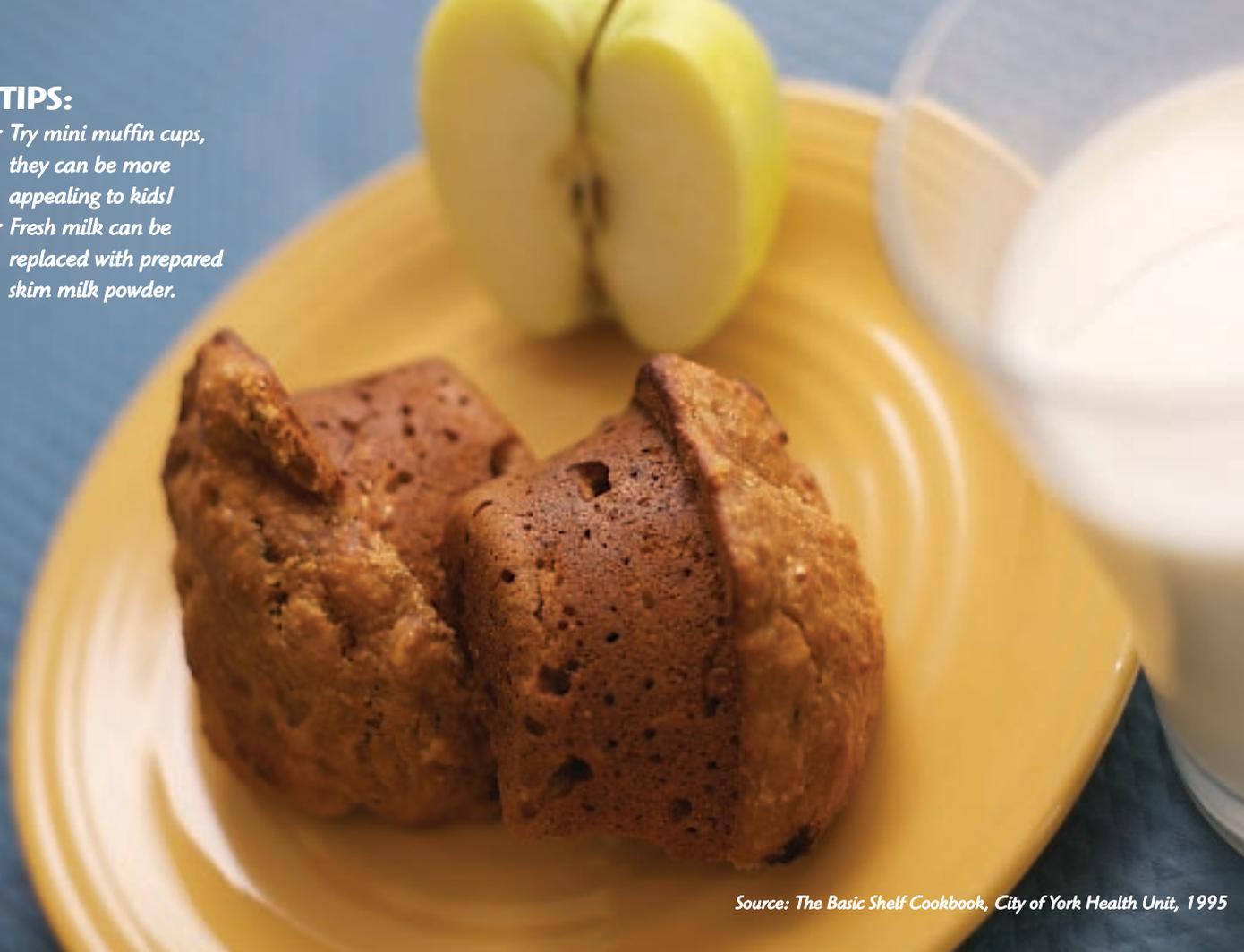
Bake in oven until tops are firm when lightly touched with your finger, about 18–20 minutes.

Remove muffins from the tin and cool.

Makes 12 muffins.

TIPS:

- *Try mini muffin cups, they can be more appealing to kids!*
- *Fresh milk can be replaced with prepared skim milk powder.*



Recipes

Nutritious and Delicious



Breakfast Burrito

This burrito is another great breakfast to eat on the go. A burrito also makes a great lunch. Just pop it into a wide mouth thermos to keep it warm.

- 1 whole wheat or flavoured tortilla
- 1–2 eggs, scrambled and cooked
- ¼ cup shredded cheese—cheddar, mozzarella, swiss or gouda
- Black beans, tomatoes, salsa, green pepper, mushrooms (optional)

Scramble eggs in frying pan, add optional ingredients. Place eggs on tortilla and top with cheese and optional ingredients. Fold in bottom, then sides of the tortilla.



Recipes

Nutritious and Delicious



Black Bean Spread

- 2 cups black beans
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 Tbsp lime juice
- ¼–½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- Salt, pepper to taste

In a food processor or blender, add beans and pulse until beans are well chopped up.

Turn food processor on to run continuously and slowly drizzle in olive oil.

Add spice and lime juice and blend well.

Taste and adjust salt and pepper to suit.

Process until the spread is smooth and has a lighter look to it, about two minutes.

Use as a dip for vegetables or as a spread for sandwiches.



Recipes

Nutritious and Delicious



Hummus

This is a simple version of hummus made without tahini.

- 1–19 oz can chickpeas
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 clove garlic
- ½ tsp salt

In a food processor, blend all ingredients together until smooth. Use as a dip with vegetables or pita bread, or in sandwiches.



Recipes

Nutritious and Delicious

Chilled Carrot-Orange Soup

- 1 Tbsp margarine
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 5 carrots, thinly sliced
- 2 cups chicken broth
- ½ cup orange juice
- Salt and pepper

Melt butter or margarine in a saucepan over medium heat.

Add onion, cook until soft.

Add carrots, broth, orange juice, salt and pepper.

Cover and cook until carrots are very tender, about 20 minutes.

Puree, chill and serve.



TIP:

- Sprinkle with fresh or dried dill.
- Chicken broth can be purchased already in liquid form or use chicken bouillon—use 1 tsp or 1 cube of chicken bouillon for each cup of water.



Recipes

Nutritious and Delicious

Vegetable and Bean soup with meat

- 12 oz lean ground beef, moose or caribou
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- ½ cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped zucchini
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 bay leaf
- 6 cups beef stock
- 1–28 oz can whole or diced tomatoes
- ½ cup macaroni (or any other small pasta)
- 3 cups fresh chopped spinach
- 1–19 oz can mixed beans, rinsed and drained



In a large saucepan, brown meat over medium-high heat.

Add garlic, onions, carrots, celery and zucchini; cook for 5 minutes.

Add basil, bay leaf, stock and tomatoes; bring to a boil.

Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes.

Add pasta; cook for another 5 to 6 minutes.

Add spinach and beans; cook for another 3 to 4 minutes.

Remove bay leaf before serving.

TIPS:

- Try adding different vegetables—experiment with whatever you have in your kitchen.
- Frozen vegetables are just as nutritious as fresh vegetables and work well in this soup.

• Frozen spinach should be thawed and drained before adding to the soup.

Source: Amended from Dietitians of Canada, Great Food Fast, Robert Rose Inc. 2000.

Recipes

Nutritious and Delicious

Blueberry Banana Popsicles



- 3 ripe bananas
- 1 ½ cup low fat yogurt
- 3 Tbsp sugar
- Juice from ½ lemon, or 1 Tbsp bottled lemon juice
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries

Puree bananas in a food processor or blender until smooth. Add yogurt, sugar, lemon juice and blueberries until just combined.

Pour mixture into popsicle molds and place cover on top.

Freeze until frozen, about 8 hours.



TIPS:

- Experiment with other kinds of frozen berries.
- Dip molds quickly in hot water to make it easy to get the popsicle out of the mold.



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