

Cherry Pecan Power Bars

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Adapted from *The Official Snack Guide for Beleaguered Sports Parents*.

2 cups quick cooking or instant oats

1 cup chopped nuts

1/2 cup butter or margarine

1/2 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar

1 teaspoon cinnamon or more to tastes

1/3 cup honey

1-1/4 cups dried cherries, Fruitlings or other chopped dried fruit of your choice

1 cup honey graham cereal squares, crushed coarsely

Line an 8x8 baking pan with foil, letting foil hang over sides. Spray with cooking spray. Preheat oven to 350. Pour oatmeal and nuts onto cookie sheet. Bake about 10 minutes or until fragrant, stirring every few minutes. Combine butter, brown sugar, cinnamon and honey in pan. Cook over medium heat until boiling. Pour oat mixture, dried fruit and cereal squares into honey mixture. Stir. Pour into pan, pressing firmly down on mixture. Bake 15-17 minutes. After it comes out of the oven and sits a few minutes, press again down firmly on top with foil, saran or waxed paper. Let cool and cut into bars or squares. Store at room temperature, covered.

HOMEMADE SPORTS DRINK

Diluting fruit juice is an **inexpensive** way to create your own sports drink.

Reduce with water to a 6-8% carbohydrate solution, diluted fruit juice will efficiently deliver just the right amount of carbs to working muscles.

Carbs are the main energy source for the body. They're stored in the muscles, liver and blood and the body can store only limited amounts. If an activity lasts longer than 2 hrs (120 minutes) and the movement is nonstop the muscles "run out of gas" and the athlete will hit the wall and crash.

Why dilute the juice? Undiluted the juice has twice the concentration of carbs as a diluted one:

That means it takes longer to digest. Fruit juice sitting in your child's tummy may increase chances of an upset tummy. The diluted juice will taste weak, but it will still do what you want – hydrate your child and provide necessary energy.

To dilute a powdered juice drink like lemonade in a packet, or any juice from concentrate, always use at least twice as much water as recommended on the package.

I like to use orange juice already made up in the carton – always choose a drink that contains 100% of the recommended daily value of vitamin C – read labels
For excess sugar, too.

Add twice as much water as juice along with a dash of salt which helps electrolyte balance (that's why commercial sports drink contain sodium) and replaces the salt lost through sweating, etc.

HELPFUL TIPS FOR FEEDING KIDS RIGHT

BY: RITA NADER HEIKENFELD, CCP, CMH

Yes, you can stock your kitchen with “will eat”, kid friendly foods. There are no rules for getting these little creatures to eat. Each child is different. **Relax, set a GOOD EXAMPLE** and be adventurous yourself. Remember, if Mom and/or Dad are picky eaters, guess what – the kids will be, too! And if you're a junk food junkie, they will be, too.

Preschool Quirks of Eating

“Food jags” – they want the same food day after day.

Don't make a big deal about it. Food jags seldom last long and make little difference in a child's nutrition. The bigger the fuss, the longer a jag is likely to last.

Serve the food your child wants *along with* other nutritious foods. Eventually, he will try new foods.

New foods

Your palate is more sophisticated. Lighten up on the spices. Have them eat a “no thank you”, very small portion if they fuss about what's on their plate.

Serve a mix of foods at every meal. Include a food or two your child likes and will eat.

It's OK to let a child wait until the next meal or snack if he refuses to eat.

Kids love to eat foods they prepare. Involve them!

Appetite Ups & Downs

These are normal. Provide nutritious foods and let your child choose. Children will eat the amount of calories or energy that's right for them.

Have three meals and two to three snacks daily. Preschoolers need to eat five or six times a day to meet nutritional needs.

Serve a variety of foods from **each food group daily**: milk, meat/protein, fruits, vegetables and grains.

Picky Breakfast Eaters/Breakfast on the Run

Addressed in my book *The Official Snack Guide for Beleaguered Sports Parents*. **Smoothies are the way to go** when kids just can't stomach solid food. Augment them with a shake or two of nonfat dried milk, silken soft tofu, liquid flax, etc. Keep banana chunks and other frozen fruit in the freezer – it adds nutrients and chills the smoothie all at once. Smoothies are easier to digest than solid foods.

Breakfast to tote: Mix granola into a container of yogurt for a breakfast on the run or blend a banana with a little milk or OJ and pour it into a thermos. Pack her a school breakfast that includes a juice box, a muffin or high quality cereal bar, a banana or apple.

MAKE YOUR OWN INSTANT OATMEAL!

This is another great way to get kids to eat healthy. Let them choose the spice and fruit. Plus you don't get lots of additives in here, just the goodness of oats.

Buy a container of instant oats. For each serving, put 1/2 cup oats in a bowl. Stir in 1/2 teaspoon or so of cinnamon, pumpkin pie spice, apple pie spice and a few pieces of dried or chopped fresh fruit, or a teaspoon of jam or preserves, if you like. Pour 1 cup hot water over. Microwave on high for 2 minutes. Serve with milk.

IF YOUR CHILD IS HUNGRY BEFORE DINNER, let them have part of their dinner – a veggie, etc.

Beverage Choices

Years ago children drank plenty of milk to meet calcium needs. The American Academy of Pediatrics now recommends that children eat foods such as milk, cheese and yogurt to get calcium for growing bones.

Serve milk with meals and snacks. Flavored milk is OK – it has the same nutrients as white milk. Drink it yourself!

100% Fruit juices provide liquid and nutrition. Beware of fruit “drinks” with little vitamin c, pure fruit juice and lots of sugar.

Give them lots of water – in their own special cup.

Snacks

Pick two to three food groups in snack size portions instead of chips, cakes and fruit-flavored, high sugar snacks. Examples: yogurt in a tube, precut veggies.

Fill in nutrition gaps with snacks. Make up for food groups missed at meals. Serve little broccoli “trees” or carrot & celery “logs” with yogurt dip for veggies missed at lunch.

Have children sit down to eat. Discourage other activities such as eating while watching TV or playing. Join your child for snacks and meals as much as possible!

Be creative – if your child likes the same food, serve it in different ways. Try round apple slices, grated cheese or yogurt in a cone. And it's OK to serve leftovers – wrap up chicken in a tortilla or reheat a small amount of mac&cheese.

How much?

Judge serving portions with kids' eyes. Child-size portions are about 2/3 what an adult eats.

A simple guide: 1 tablespoon for each year of age.

Let your child's appetite guide you. Serve less than you think she'll eat – you can always give her more.

Involve them – let them serve themselves!

Smart snacks: flavored milk with plain cookies or crackers; milk based puddings with bananas; yogurt with fruit; string cheese with crackers; cheese melted in tortilla or on bread

Smart snacks: tortillas, pita, bagels, bread sticks, crackers with cheese or peanut butter; ready to eat cereal with milk; dry cereal such as min-wheat squares; mini-muffins with milk or juice; plain cookies like graham crackers, ginger snaps, vanilla wafers or animal crackers.

SNEAKING IN VEGGIES: Here are some great ideas!

Wrap pre-sliced cheese and lean meats around celery or carrot sticks

Veggie stuffed celery

1 carrot, finely chopped

1/4 cup finely chopped green bell pepper

1/2 cup cottage cheese

1/4 cup Parmesan cheese or more to taste

6 celery ribs, 3-4" ea

Mix carrot, green pepper, cottage cheese, Parmesan. Stuff celery. Serves 6.

Bagel Faces

Let them name their bagel face!

1 thin carrot, sliced into thin rounds or 1 bag shredded carrots

Cherry tomatoes, sliced in half

Black olives, sliced

1 small bell pepper, thinly sliced into strips

Alfalfa sprouts

1 small cucumber, sliced into thin rounds

Other possibilities: grated beets, sunflower, flax or sesame seeds, minced chives

1 or 2 bagels, cut in half
1 small container whipped cream cheese

Arrange veggies in small bowls or paper muffin cups. Spread cream cheese on bagels.
Make faces – use carrots and olives for eyes, peppers for eyebrows and mouth,
cucumbers for ears, alfalfa sprouts for hair, tomatoes for nose and rosy cheeks.