

**It's All About Balance: Eat Smart, Move More, Rest Well**

## **4 Tasty Ways to Enjoy Balanced Lunchtime Meals**

### **Eat lean with protein.**

Putting lean protein on your plate helps make a power lunch in several ways. Lean choices from the meat and beans group give you protein, iron and B-vitamins for muscle upkeep and repair. Lean protein helps with satiety. This means that you will feel fuller and more satisfied for longer. It doesn't take a ton of protein to keep the afternoon munchies away. Just three to four ounces of fish, skinless poultry or lean red meat will do.

### **Eat smart with a least four colors.**

Color is one of the food cues you can use to get the 40+ nutrients that your body needs. Brightly or deeply colored foods are naturally rich in nutrients. Red meats have iron and zinc. Breads with many shades of brown and tan have fiber and a variety of B-vitamins. All the colors of fruits and vegetables are a real nutrition bonanza. Different colors mean different phytonutrients. Make at least one green and one red/yellow/orange choice for every lunch.



### **Drink well with milk or water.**

If you usually drink a super-sized soft drink at lunch, it's time to make the switch to milk. A single 12-ounce can of regular soda has about 150 empty calories. Large drinks can easily have 300 calories or more with no nutritional value. Low-fat or fat-free milk is a smart choice. You get lots of nutrition for not that many calories. After an 8-ounce glass (or carton) of milk, switch to ice-cold plain or sparkling water with a twist of lemon or lime.

### **Start small, slow down, savor your food.**

With busy schedules, lunch is often a super-sized portion of fast food eaten quickly (maybe in the car). There is little time to savor the flavors. You don't pay attention to how full you feel. The healthier way to enjoy lunch is to start with a smaller portion. Try half a sandwich, a cup of soup with a side salad or shared entrée. Take at least 20 minutes to eat. Really pay attention to the quality of the meal and to your internal cues of fullness.

**Need some tasty tips for adding more fruits and vegetables to your lunchtime meals?** Help is just a mouse click away at [www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/). There are recipes from professional chefs, tips on best ways to shop for and store your produce. There is also a link to a new site just for kids at [www.foodchamps.org/](http://www.foodchamps.org/).