

## The key to healthy eating is "Fresh" and "Back to Basics"

By Sheneen Stevens

In today's lifestyle, it is difficult to come home after a day of work, and prepare a wholesome meal. There just isn't any time, and it is so convenient to quickly microwave a ready-made meal. This is why we are experiencing many problems in children with regard to their weight, concentration and health.

So I will admit it isn't easy eating healthy, but as a parent you must realise it is essential, and by getting your children involved in preparing dinner or their lunchbox, you may find that you can be successful. I have 3 boys, and they love helping me chop vegetables etc... And while we are preparing dinner, we get the lunches ready at the same time, for school for the next day!

When preparing meals, always ask yourself, "how close to nature is this"? Choose low GI products that will keep you full for longer.

### What is G.I.?

It means Glycaemic Index. It is the speed at which food raises our blood sugar level after been eaten.

### Rating Chart:

G.I. value 55 or less ~ Low G.I. (Slow energy release foods) - Best Choice

G.I. value 56 -69 ~ Intermediate G.I. (Medium energy release foods) - Good Choice

G.I. value 70 or more ~ High G.I. (Fast energy release foods) - Worst Choice

**Please Note:** High G.I. foods are perfect during or after intense exercise. A rapid release of glucose into the bloodstream is needed for fast recovery and performance. For example: After your child is finished playing a soccer or netball game, it is perfect to give them a banana (which is a High G.I. food), to bring the sugar levels back to normal.

### What is G.L.?

It means Glycaemic Load. It is the amount of glucose that a specific food portion contains.

It is very important to ensure that your child has a good breakfast in the morning, to sustain his/her blood sugar levels, enabling him/her to concentrate better, and feel full until 1<sup>st</sup> break.

### Ideas for Breakfast

(Try to avoid sugar as much as possible. Rather cut up pieces of fruit and add to cereal to sweeten it).

#### Cereals:

Kellogg's Special K with Low Fat Milk

Pronutro Original with Low Fat Milk

Mielie Meal Porridge with Milk (but it must be cooled as the G.I. is lower than when it is still hot.

Rolled Organic Oats (or Jungle Oats is also acceptable). Have with Milk and you can also throw in a handful of dried cranberries (Woolworth's) when cooking, to give it a sweet taste.

**Instant Oats is not good because a lot of them have additives and sweeteners**

Muesli with plenty of nuts and seeds and fresh fruit, served with Milk or Fat Free Yoghurt.

**Be careful of certain types of muesli with too much hidden sugar - check the labels**

### A Muesli Recipe

(Makes 1 Serving)

75 g Oats

2 tsp Pumpkin Seeds

2 tsp Linseeds

2 tsp desiccated coconut

1 tsp Xylitol (Optional - replaces sugar)

1 tsp ground Cinnamon

1 tsp ground Ginger

1 tbsp dried cranberries

Mix together

Serve with Natural Yoghurt, Fat-Free Yoghurt or Milk

### Cooked Breakfasts:

- Poached Egg served on Low G.I. seeded bread (Woolworth's or Sasko Low G.I.)
- Scrambled Egg served on Low G.I. seeded bread (Woolworth's or Sasko Low G.I.)
- Toasted slice of Low G.I. bread with Peanut Butter (preferably Peanut Butter with no sugar added, available at Woolworth's).
- Toasted slice of Low G.I. bread with fresh avocado pear
- Toasted slice of Low G.I. bread with fish paste or sardines

### It's an excellent idea to add omega 3 into breakfast

Get yourself a nice jar which seals properly.

Mix together 1 measure of Sesame Seeds, 1 measure of Sunflower Seeds and 1 measure of Pumpkin Seeds and 3 measures of Linseeds. Keep refrigerated in your sealed jar, away from light and heat.

Every morning, grind 1 heaped tbsp of the seeds in a Coffee Grinder, and sprinkle over your child's breakfast Cereal. This is a good intake of Essential Fats.

### Lunchbox for School

A sandwich made of Low G.I. Seeded Bread is excellent! What you put on the sandwich is of course just as important. Here are some ideas:

- Peanut Butter (preferably Sugar-Free ~ Woolworth's)
- Fish paste
- Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato
- Thinly sliced Chicken Breast (skin removed)
- Tuna
- Pilchards
- Sardines
- Anchovies
- Egg (Boiled and thinly sliced - or mash with a bit of Cottage Cheese for a healthier version of Egg Mayo).
- Cream Cheese
- Cottage Cheese
- Nut Butter (Macadamia Nut butter is so easy to make: just throw on a baking sheet and slightly roast, then add to a blender and blend until smooth and creamy. Put in a jar that seals and keep refrigerated. Sometimes you will notice that a layer of oil forms on the top, this is because the nut sediments. Simply stir the oil back in.
- Smoked Salmon, Cream Cheese and Cucumber
- Tuna and Lettuce with Tomato
- Tuna and Mayonnaise
- Unprocessed Ham and Tomato
- Feta Cheese, Olives, Cucumber and Tomato
- Avocado (Mash a ripe avocado in a bowl, add a little salt and pepper to taste, add a dash of Vinegar and a dash of Lemon Juice and mix well. Spread on the sandwich and wrap in wax wrap or place in a zip lock bag. The Lemon Juice and Vinegar usually keep the avocado from getting discoloured or spoiled.

Often if you cut the bread or any foods into small pieces, it makes it instantly more edible especially for little ones.

- Along with the Sandwich, always add one fruit!
- Oranges cut up into wedges
- Small Bunch of Grapes
- Apple
- Pear
- Handful of Strawberries
- Plum

#### Other Lunchbox Ideas:

- Salad Fingers (Cut Cucumbers, Carrots and Cheese into sticks- also nice to have with a Plain Yoghurt Dip)
- Safari Dried Fruit Bars
- Handful of dried Apricots and Almonds (Excellent combination)
- 1 slice of Banana Bread
- Carrot or Bran Muffin
- Handful of Olives and Rosa Tomatoes
- Yoghurt (Clover Danone Vitalinea Fat Free)
- Handful of Trail Mix (Woolworth's) It is an assortment of seeds, nuts and dried fruit
- Handful of Nuts (Almonds, Walnuts) and Seeds (Pumpkin Seeds, Sunflower Seeds)
- Chicken Salad Wrap ( Sliced Chicken Breast mixed with salad wrapped in a Tortilla)
- Boiled Egg
- Handful of Baby Corn (uncooked)

#### Refreshments

**Most important drink to give your child in his/her lunchbox is clean pure water!!!!**

With this you can add one fruit juice:

- Ceres 100% Fruit Juice (small box with straw 200ml) ~ Cloudy Apple & Pear, Apple Juice)
- Liqui-fruit (small box with straw) ~ Apple juice, Cranberry & kiwi, Breakfast Punch or Peach & Orange.
- Ceres and Liqui-fruit have no added sugar!!!
- Appletiser, Grapetiser or Peartiser (Low G.I.)

It is also a good idea to dilute 100% Fruit juice with water. Just put half water and half fruit juice in a cold drink bottle and mix. This lowers the G.L. value.

#### FOODS TO AVOID!

- Rice Cakes (except if you are allergic to wheat, and then make sure you put a high protein food onto it like Salmon or Cheese.
- Doughnuts
- Hamburger Rolls
- Fritos Chips
- Nik Naks (Full of Colourants!)
- Marie Biscuits, Boudoir Biscuits, Wafer Biscuits
- Melba Toast
- Pretzels
- White Bread
- Waffles
- Processed foods

**NB! Eat fish at least 3 times per week! (Sardines, Tuna, Salmon etc)**

#### Recommended Reading:

- "The Optimum Nutrition Bible" ~ Patrick Holford (Guidance for Nutrition)
- "Smart Food for Smart Kids" ~ Patrick Holford (Easy recipes to boost your child's health and IQ)
- "Optimum Nutrition for your Child's mind" ~ Patrick Holford (Maximise your child's potential)

#### Recommended Websites:

- [www.foodinschools.org](http://www.foodinschools.org)
- [www.foodforthebrain.org](http://www.foodforthebrain.org)
- [www.freshearth.co.za](http://www.freshearth.co.za)
- [www.ecoliteracy.org/change/school-food](http://www.ecoliteracy.org/change/school-food)
- [www.gl.patrickholford.interactiveprofiling.com/](http://www.gl.patrickholford.interactiveprofiling.com/)

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