



# Serve Up a Healthier You

North Carolina Child Nutrition Services  
Staff Wellness Toolkit  
Newsletters

## Understanding Nutrients: Carbohydrates, Proteins and Fats

**C**arbohydrates, protein and fat provide the calories in the foods and beverages that we eat.

**T**he main job of carbohydrates is to provide energy for the body. Some examples of carbohydrate-rich foods include fruits, vegetables, grains, beans and peas, rice, pasta, bread and milk. There are two types of carbohydrates. Complex carbohydrates include starch and fiber. Fiber helps regulate digestion and provides a feeling of fullness without a lot of calories. Simple carbohydrates are sugars. These sugars can be found naturally in foods such as fruit or milk. They can also be added to foods. You may see high fructose corn syrup, cane sugar or molasses in the Ingredients list on a food label.

**P**roteins plays many roles in the body. Protein helps in the growth and repair of body tissues, like skin and muscles. They are

also part of hormones and the immune system. Proteins can provide energy to your body when there's not enough supplied by carbohydrates and fat. Protein is found in foods such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, milk, tofu, beans and nuts.

**F**ats are an important part of the diet. They are used for many jobs in the body. Extra energy is stored in the body as fat. Fat cushions our organs to protect us. It also provides insulation to keep us warm. Fat is also involved in carrying fat-soluble vitamins to parts of your body that need them. Finally, fat helps you feel full and adds flavor to food. Fats include oils, butter, margarine and lard.

**T**ips you can trust:

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Make at least half your grains whole grains.
- Switch to fat free or low fat (1%) milk.

## Cheesy Egg Scrambler

Makes 1 serving

Serving size: 1/2 pita

### Ingredients

- 1/2 whole wheat pita bread
- 1 large egg or 2 large egg whites
- 1/4 cup shredded reduced fat mild Cheddar cheese

### Tip:

- Kick up the flavor with salsa or zesty Jalapeño or Monterey Jack cheese.
- Add chopped mushrooms, onions or green peppers for extra color and more nutrition.

### Directions

1. Toast pita. Set aside.
2. Spray small skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Heat over medium heat 20 to 30 seconds.
3. If adding vegetables, sauté them first in the skillet. Cook until softened.
4. Add in egg or egg whites and cheese. Scramble until the egg is set and the cheese is melted.
5. Fill pita pocket with egg and cheese. Serve.



- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.
- Go for lean meats and poultry.
- Eat fish at least twice a week.
- Prepare foods with little or no fat. Use cooking spray or small amounts of olive or canola oil instead of solid fats, like butter and stick margarine.
- Get most of your fats from healthier food sources, like salmon, avocado, nuts and seeds.

## Tasty Ways to Enjoy Better Breakfast Bites

- **Use the power of protein.** Start with an egg or egg whites, a slice of ham, or low fat cheese or yogurt.
- **Add in long-lasting whole grains.** Whole grain cereals, breads, muffins, tortillas, or waffles can help you rise and shine. Their carbs and fiber get you going for the day.
- **Wake up with colorful fruits or veggies.** Go for fresh fruits in season. How about canned or frozen fruit in yogurt or fruit salads? Fruit is a great topping for cereal or waffles. Veggies are perfect in omelets.
- **Rethink your morning drink.** Low fat or fat free milk is a smart choice on its own, in smoothies or on cereal.
- **Eat school breakfast!** It's the healthy, low cost choice.

## Eat Smart and Move More

**R**esearch points to seven key behaviors that can help children, youth and adults eat healthier and be more active:

1. Prepare and eat more meals at home.
2. Tame the tube.
3. Choose to move more every day.
4. Right-size your portions.
5. Re-think your drink.
6. Enjoy more fruits and vegetables.
7. Breastfeed your baby.

## A Message from the Child Nutrition Program Staff Wellness Initiative

For more resources and information on staff wellness:

- Talk with the cafeteria manager at your school.
- Contact the Child Nutrition director for your school system.
- Consult the Child Nutrition staff wellness committee.
- Check out Resources for Schools at [www.nutritionnc.com](http://www.nutritionnc.com).



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Some ideas adapted from [www.eatrightmontana.org](http://www.eatrightmontana.org).  
Recipe adapted from [www.3aday.org](http://www.3aday.org).