

# Wellness by the Month

## Brown Bagging – It's a Cool Thing

It seems today that everyone is packing their own lunch and that is a good thing. Brown bagging saves money, saves calories by allowing control over the nutritional content, and saves time (no running to a food line or restaurant). Make yours a winner with the following tips:

### Plan Ahead

- Grocery shop with your lunches in mind. Stock up on fruits, veggies, whole grain breads and lean protein. A good lunch should include something from the four food groups; protein, grain, fruit or vegetable and dairy.
- Wash and prepare veggies and place in small to-go containers. Look for individual sized servings if time is an issue.
- Make extra servings at dinner for next day lunches. After dinner, make your lunch.

### Try these for Size

- Whole grain bread, pita, wrap or bagel. Use lean meats or poultry, and top with vegetables such as tomatoes, spinach, peppers and onions
- Baby carrots, celery sticks or apple slices with a low-fat yogurt dip or hummus
- Baked chips or pretzels
- Reduced fat crackers and low-fat cheese
- Fruit salad or whole fresh fruit
- Mixed green salad topped with fruit or protein
- Use leftovers from dinner as salad toppings, side dishes or as an entire meal
- Low-fat yogurt with fresh fruit or whole grain/high fiber cereal
- Whole grain pasta salad with veggies or tuna
- Air-popped popcorn with a sprinkling of parmesan cheese
- Black bean and salsa side salad
- Baked potato topped with salsa or low fat sour cream

### Play it Safe

- Drink plenty of water.
- Keep perishables in a refrigerator or insulated lunch box.