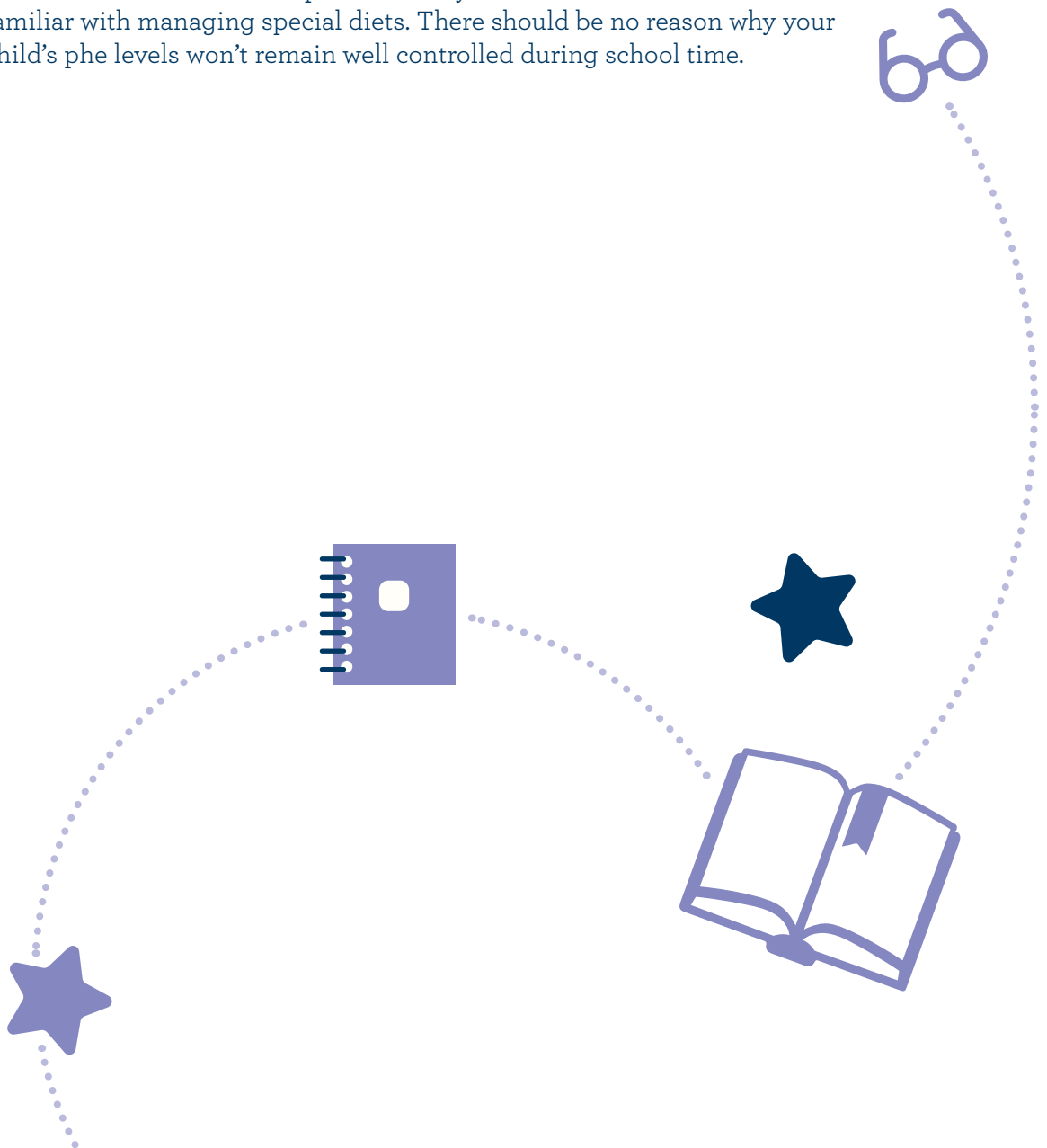


Starting School

Big School for Little Ones

Starting school is one of the major milestones in your child's life and an exciting time. It can be a little unnerving too, even if your child has already attended a pre-school, but particularly if your child has so far only been looked after by you and other family members.

You will be glad to know by working with the school, the metabolic team and any others involved in your child's care (such as grandparents), the process can become much smoother. Remember, it is likely there will be other children with specific dietary needs and most schools are familiar with managing special diets. There should be no reason why your child's phe levels won't remain well controlled during school time.



Here's things you can do to prepare:

Dietitian appointment

Ask your child's dietitian to help you and your child prepare for starting school. You may want to discuss the following points:

Dietitian school visit

- Your child's dietitian may be able to visit their new school to explain about PKU and your child's specific dietary management to school teachers and catering staff.

Lunch and snack planning

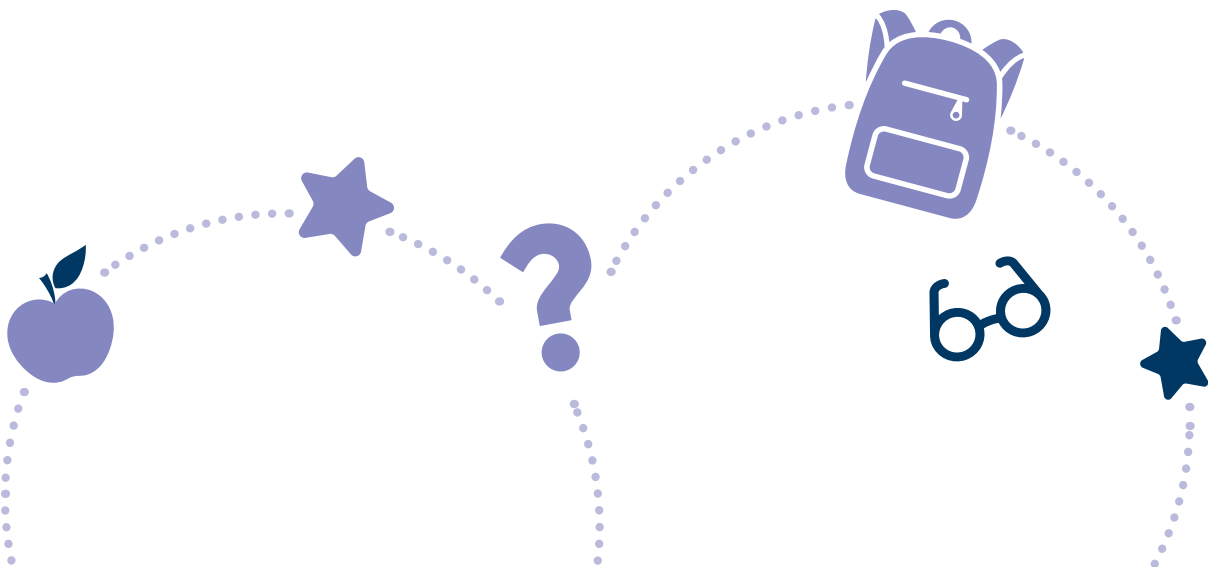
- You might prefer if your child takes a packed lunch so that you can provide appropriate choices (See 'School Lunch Planning' section for more information). Although, it's also useful to discuss alternative options and your dietitian might have some practical tips that will help you.

Phe exchange ideas

- If you require help with how and when to include phe exchanges during school hours, your dietitian will be able to help you devise a list of phe exchange options you know your child likes. This means you will always have options to chose from for lunch or snacks.

Questions

- Your child may get asked about PKU at school. You and your child's dietitian can prepare some answers to these questions in advance. This will help them feel much more confident about anything they get asked.



Informing school staff about PKU

Meeting with your child's teachers and other staff to explain what PKU is, and why your child needs to follow a low protein diet is helpful. It is important they understand PKU to give them the confidence to help support your child's needs in school.

Here are some printable resources that should help with this:

National Society of Phenylketonuria (NSPKU) guide for schools catering for a child with PKU
(www.nspku.org/download/the-pku-diet-at-school)

- This NSPKU guide can be downloaded. This gives an overview of the disorder in more detail if requested.

An Introduction to PKU

- This is a good way for school staff to gain a better understanding of PKU.

About Me

- This provides a summary of what PKU is and information about your child's protein substitute. It also allows you to give contact details for family members if teachers have any concerns about your child during the school day.

Information for Caregivers

- This provides basic information about PKU and your child's protein substitute. It is designed to supplement the information provided by you and your dietitian about PKU.

What to Discuss with Teachers?

- This provides a checklist of discussion points you can use to go through with school staff.



Things to discuss with your child

Talking things through with your child will give you reassurance that they understand how to manage their diet. Points you may want to discuss include:

- Recapping on foods which are permitted to include throughout the day and foods which should be avoided.
- Remind your child to leave uneaten foods/drinks in their lunch box to help keep a record of their daily protein intake.
- Explain why it is important not to swap foods/drinks with friends.
- Plan when and where to take their protein substitutes.
- How to explain PKU and their low protein diet to other children if they are asked.
- Give them positive messages that their diet is special to keep them happy and healthy.



School Lunch Planning

Protein substitute

- If your child takes their protein substitute to school with them, pack it with their lunch so they remember to take it during their lunch break.

Keep cool!

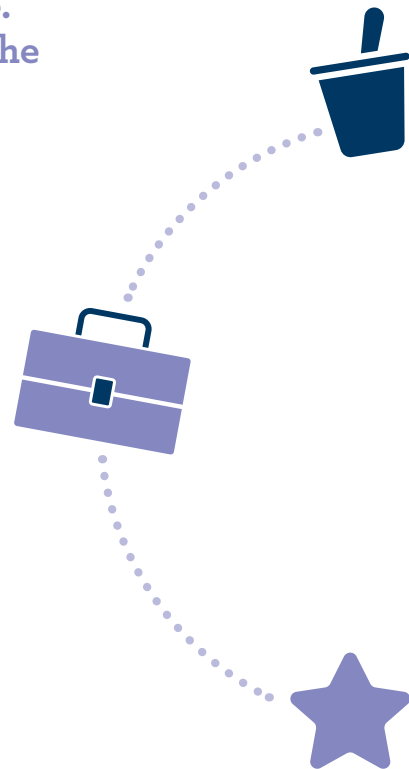
- If your child prefers, use an ice pack or cool pack to keep the protein substitute chilled in their lunch box until lunch time.

Phe Exchange Ideas

Here are some phe exchange ideas you may wish to add, depending on your child's phe exchange allowance. If you require help with how and when to include phe exchanges during school hours, your dietitian will be able to help you.

- Koko Dairy Free Strawberry Yogurt Alternative (125g pot - 1 exchange)
- Sweetcorn (35g - 1 exchange)
- Peas (25g – 1 exchange)
- 1 x Rice cake caramel flavour (13g – 1 exchange)
- Coco Pops snack bar (20g – 1 exchange)
- Quavers (16g bag - ½ exchange)

Please refer to labels for allergen and other product information.



After-School Activities

After-school activities may include physical sports. The following may help you plan for these activities:

Discuss PKU with the afterschool activity co-ordinator

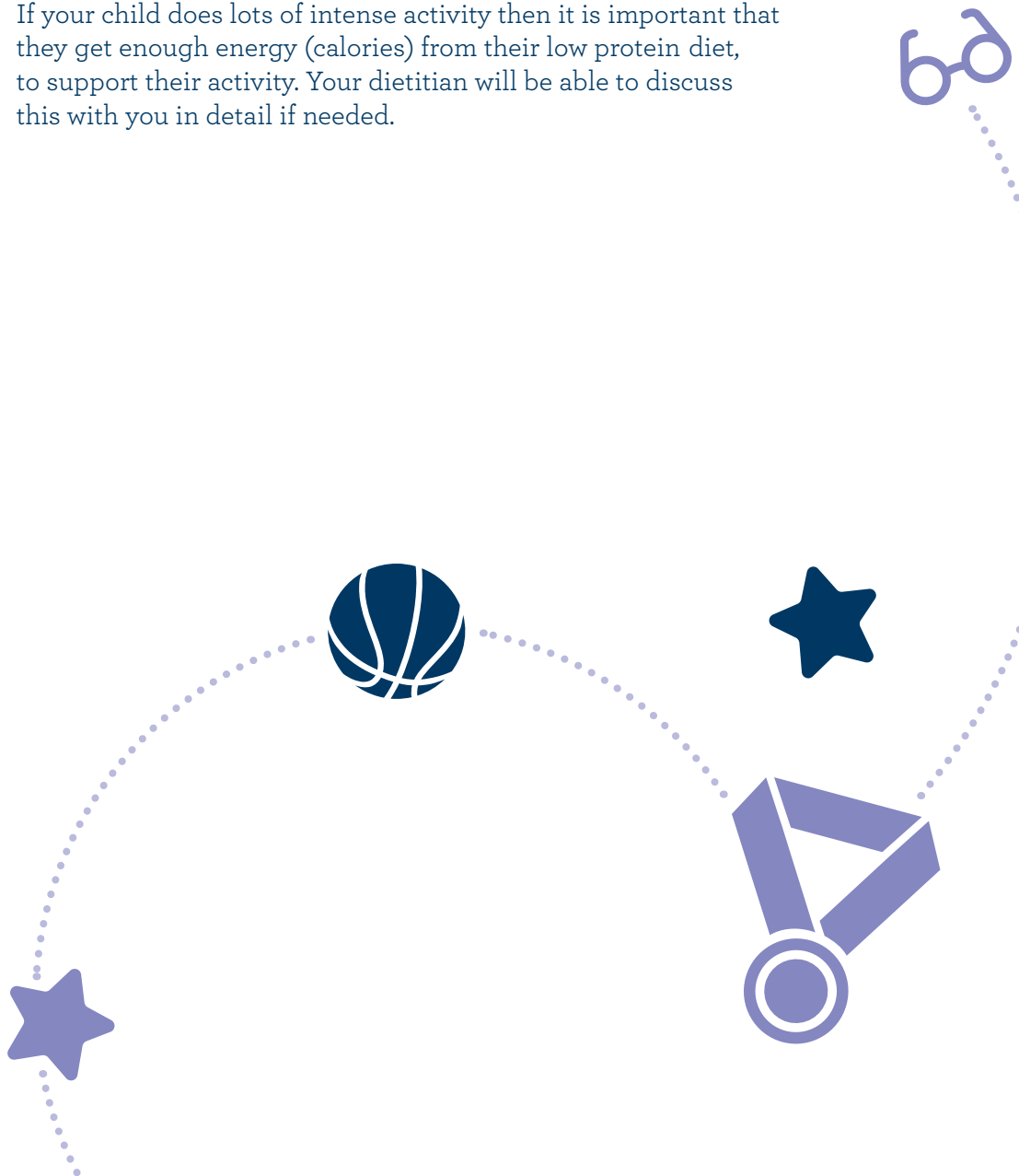
- It is helpful to tell them in advance that your child may need to take their protein substitute before or after the activity session.
- You could use 'An Introduction to PKU' to explain PKU to them.

Staying after school

- It may be useful to pack extra permitted snacks and drinks for your child, depending on the length of time and physical demands of their activity session.

What if my child is exceptionally active?

- If your child does lots of intense activity then it is important that they get enough energy (calories) from their low protein diet, to support their activity. Your dietitian will be able to discuss this with you in detail if needed.



School Celebrations and Cooking

There is no need for your child to miss out on school celebrations or cooking sessions. The following tips should help:

Request notice

- Explain to the teachers that it is helpful to be told in advance of any class celebrations or cooking sessions, so you can provide permitted ingredients or low protein foods and drinks for your child.

Keep a supply of low protein foods

- Keep a batch of low protein cupcakes or treats in the freezer so your child can take them in at short notice or provide the school with a batch for spur-of-the-moment class celebrations.

Sharing food

- Remind your child and the teacher that your child cannot swap or share foods. You may suggest putting in place a class policy about not swapping food and drinks.

Please refer to labels for allergen and other product information.

