

Practical Tips for a Healthy Lunchbox

- Try to vary the contents of the lunchbox daily. That way you can ensure your child is getting the variety of nutrients their bodies need to function and grow.
- Involve your child in preparing their lunchbox. They are more likely to enjoy food they have made themselves.
- To keep food fresh, make sure it is stored properly: lunches packed the night before need to be stored in the fridge. If using rice, make sure it is cooled quickly and stored in the fridge overnight. To keep your lunch fresh during the day, use a cool bag and put in a frozen drink or reusable ice pack.
- If your child refuses to eat brown bread, try a lighter variety or make sandwiches using a slice of white and a slice of wholemeal bread.
- For variety, use pitta strips, crackers, bread sticks, or fruit and vegetable finger foods with a dip.
- Always try to add a little salad to a sandwich. To avoid soggy sandwiches, dry the salad before adding it to the sandwich or put it in a separate sandwich bag or tub.
- Make a fruit smoothie by blending juice and fruit together, or a yoghurt or milk drink by mixing yoghurt or semi-skimmed milk with pureed fruit.
- You can use leftovers; for example, rice and curry vegetable pizza or pasta and sauce.
- Make a salad using rice, potato or pasta from the night before, mixed with vegetables, beans and so on.

Food Safety

- ✚ Always wash your hands before handling food.
- ✚ Wash fruit and vegetables before use.
- ✚ Keep your lunch cool. Use a cool bag and put in a frozen drink or reusable ice pack.
- ✚ If you pack a lunch the night before, keep it in the fridge overnight.
- ✚ Put food in clean containers, wrappers or bags.
- ✚ If using rice ensure that it is cooled quickly and stored in the fridge overnight.

For more information and advice go to:

www.eatwell.gov.uk/

www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/packedlunches/

Contact Information

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Healthier Packed Lunches for Children

What you need to know

Eating well is important. Children need to eat well as it will give them energy and nutrients to grow and develop, be healthy and active.

A healthy, enjoyable lunch gives children the energy they need to learn and play at school.



Use the information in this leaflet to help make your child a healthier packed lunch.

What is a healthy packed lunch?

A healthy packed lunch is a balanced meal providing a variety of nutrients, to be found in four food groups:

Starchy Foods

Base each meal on a starchy food, such as bread, potato, rice, pasta, yam.

Starchy foods give energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

- Bread, try different types, such as pitta, wraps chapattis, bread rolls or crackers.
- Other starchy food, such as pasta, couscous, rice or noodles.



- ✓ Whole grain varieties are best for fibre, which is vital for a healthy

Meat and Alternatives

Add some protein, for example meat, fish, eggs, beans or pulses. Protein foods build muscles and provide minerals.

- Lean meats, such as chicken, turkey or ham.
- Include oily fish, such as pilchards, sardines or mackerel at least once every three weeks.
- Egg, such as quiche or boiled eggs.
- Dishes containing pulses, beans, for example, dahl or bean salad.



Meat products such as sausage rolls, pies and pastries and fried foods should not be included more than once a week.

The school has a no nuts policy as some children are allergic to these.



Milk and Dairy Foods

Include a dairy product or dairy alternative, such as cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or yoghurt drink. These foods provide calcium necessary for strong bones and teeth, as well as providing protein and vitamins.



Fruit and Vegetables

Don't forget to include fruit and vegetables. You can use fresh, frozen, tinned or dried. Fruit and vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals and fibre necessary for the body to function properly and to keep you strong and healthy.

- Add tomato, cucumber or lettuce to a sandwich.
- A vegetable dish such as salad or roast vegetables.
- Fresh fruit, such as apples, bananas etc.
- Dried fruit, such as raisins or apricots.
- Fruit salad (fresh or tinned)
- Dips such as cherry tomatoes, celery or cucumber sticks, are good with a dip.



All packed lunches should contain a piece of fruit, vegetable or salad.

DRINKS - Help children to concentrate, especially water.

Water is freely available at school. Other healthy drinks such as milk, fruit juice, fruit smoothies should be included.

FIZZY DRINKS are not allowed.

Chocolate bars and sweets are not allowed.