

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.
- ◆ Wash your hands before handling food. Wash fruit and vegetables before use and put them in clean containers.
- ◆ 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 icepack.
- ◆ Keep different breads in the freezer so you can just take out and defrost what you need for one day's lunchbox. Using different breads will make the lunchbox more interesting and enjoyable.
- ◆ If your child refuses to eat brown bread, try a lighter variety or make sandwiches using a slice of white bread and a slice of brown.
- ◆ 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 container.
- ◆ Make a lower-fat salad dressing by mixing it with some low-fat yoghurt or semi-skimmed milk.
- ◆ You can use leftovers; for example, rice or 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.

For more information and advice go to:

www.eatwell.gov.uk



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Welshpool Church in Wales Primary School

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, and to be healthy and active.

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



Use this information in this leaflet to help make your child a healthier packed lunch. Please support the school's food policy by following these guidelines.

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 or pasta.

Starchy foods give energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals

- ◆ Bread, try different types such as pitta bread, wraps chapattis or bread rolls
- ◆ Other starchy foods, such as pasta, couscous or rice
- ✓ Whole grain rice varieties are best for fibre, which is vital for a healthy digestive system



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 mackerel at least once every three weeks
- ◆ Cheese, such as cottage cheese, edam or soft cheese
- ◆ Egg, such as quiche or omelette
- ! Meat products such as sausage rolls, sausages and chipolatas, pies and pastries, fried food should not be included more than once a fortnight
- ! Use butter, margarine, mayonnaise or salad dressing sparingly, because these can be high in fat, or use lower fat alternatives



or

Milk and dairy foods

Include a dairy product or dairy alternative. These foods provide the calcium necessary for strong bones and teeth, as well as providing protein and vitamin.

- ✓ Lower fat varieties are healthier

Fruit and vegetables

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

- ◆ Add tomato, lettuce or beetroot to a sandwich
- ◆ Fresh fruit, such as apple, banana or pear
- ◆ Fruit salad (fresh or tinned in juice)
- ◆ Finger foods, such as cherry tomatoes, cucumber sticks or celery. Good with a dip such as hummus or guacamole
- ✓ Use fresh fruit and vegetables that are in season to help with the environment and enjoy variety
- ✓ Aim to include at least one portion of fruit and vegetables or salad every day



For a healthier snack:

- ◆ Replace sweets and chocolate with dried fruit, a small bunch of grapes or fruit salad
- ◆ Replace cakes and pastries with fruit bread or malt loaf
- ◆ Replace salted savoury snacks with rice cakes or breadstick

Drinks Drinks especially water, help children to concentrate and feel well. Water is freely available in school. Only water, milk or pure fruit juice should be included in the lunchbox.

Snacks and confectionery Snack foods may be included occasionally, but aim to make healthier choices. Snack foods tend to be higher in fat, sugar and salt and can cause excessive weight and may lead to heart disease. High sugar foods are high in calories, and are bad for teeth. High salt foods may increase blood pressure, which can lead to heart disease and some cancers.

- ♥ Packed lunches should not contain chocolate, sweets or fizzy drinks.
- ♥ Please do not include chocolate spread filling for sandwiches.