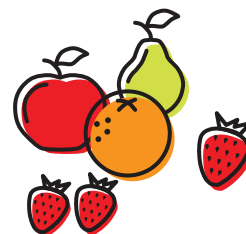


Tips for a well-balanced lunch



What should a child's lunch contain? Fuel for energy, variety, pleasure and something new to create positive experiences for your child and open them up to other foods.

Tips to make life easier

- ▶ **Plan** lunches for the whole week (so you only have to think about it once!)
- ▶ **Double** dinner recipes to put in lunches and to freeze in individual portions.



Get your child excited about lunch

Ask them to help you make their lunch. They can tell you what they do and don't like and how much they want to eat. Preparing food is a great way to spend time with your child. It will also increase their independence and make them more likely to eat if they have helped prepare it.



Meeting your child's needs

Lunches should include a variety of foods to give your child energy, nutrients needed to grow and enough fuel to tide them over until their next chance to eat. Mix and match:

Vegetables and fruits	Whole grain foods	Protein foods	
Fresh vegetables: bell peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, carrots, etc.	Whole wheat bread: flour tortilla, ciabatta, bagel, English muffin, baguette, pita, sliced, etc.	Milk	Meats: pork, chicken, beef, lamb, veal
Cooked vegetables: cauliflower, broccoli, carrots, peas, zucchini, etc.	Pasta (whole grain or multi-grain)	Enriched soy milk	Fish and seafood: tuna, salmon, crab sticks, herring
Vegetable salad: carrot and raisin salad, tomato salad , green bean and mustard salad, corn salad, etc.	Couscous, barley, millet, bulgur, quinoa, brown rice and wild rice	2%+ fat milk	Eggs
Fresh fruit: apple, kiwi, clementine, banana, strawberries, pear, etc.	Lowfat, low salt crackers	Cheese (cheddar, mozzarella, ricotta, cottage)	Legumes: lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, hummus
Frozen fruit: blueberries, raspberries, chopped mango, etc.	Homemade oatmeal cookies or whole wheat cookies	Milk-based desserts: pudding, tapioca, custard, rice pudding	Tofu
Unsweetened fruit compote, fruit salad in water or unsweetened juice	Homemade desserts made with oats (cookies, cakes, granola bars)	Homemade smoothie	Seeds (sunflower, pumpkin, soy beans)
Fruit crisp	Breakfast cereals that do not list sugar as the first ingredient and that contain at least 3g of fibre per portion		Pea or soy butter (alternative to peanut butter)
Dried fruit	Plain rice cake		*Limit deli meats in lunches Most have limited protein and too much salt and nitrites
			*Use leftover meat you have cooked.

*Adaptation du guide d'application du volet alimentation de la Politique-cadre pour une saine alimentation et un mode de vie physiquement actif

Choosing beverages

Choose water for student's lunches. Plain milk or enriched soy beverages are also a good choice. Put them in a fun bottle to compete with juice boxes!

Juice should be served in limited quantities due to its high sugar content. Even if it is 100% juice, it still contains a lot of natural sugar. It is not very nutritious and takes up space in children's little bellies that could be filled with nutritious foods.

Different types of sandwiches

- 1 - Vary the type of bread. Try tortilla, ciabatta and even homemade crepes.
- 2 - Fill them with something different, like fish, tofu, eggs, legumes or meat (roasted chicken, pork fillet, roast beef, etc.).
- 3 - Add crunchy, colourful fruit slices (apple, pear, peach) or vegetables (lettuce, radish, cucumber, grated carrots, avocado, spinach).

Colourful salads for mornings when there are no leftovers from the night before

Throw together salad for a main dish by combining a grain product (e.g., pasta, quinoa, rice) + vegetables (e.g., spinach, zucchini, marinated artichokes, lettuce) + a source of protein (e.g., leftover meat, tofu, legumes, cheese). Dress it with a bit of olive oil, lemon juice and herbs.

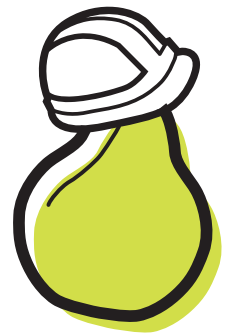
Providing cold lunches or a thermos eliminate the waiting line for the microwave and so have more time to eat

Dessert

Offer a nourishing dessert to round out the meal, such as a piece of fruit, a milk-based dessert or a home-made dessert. Decide with your child how often they have chocolate milk, cookies, cereal that is higher in sugar, pudding, etc.

To get kids to eat fruits and vegetables instead of bringing them back home

- ▶ **Protect:** place a whole banana, peach or pear in a container.
- ▶ **Vary:** try mini veggies (cherry tomatoes, mini bell peppers, baby carrots, etc.) and fruit and vegetables cut up different ways (e.g., slices, sticks, julienne).
- ▶ **Reinvent:** serve fruits or vegetables with yogurt dips and make your own fruit deserts (e.g., salads, crisps, parfaits).



For a safe and healthy lunch



- ▶ Use microwave-safe containers.
- ▶ Preheat a thermos by pouring in hot water and letting it sit with the lid on for 10 to 15 minutes before filling it with heated food.
- ▶ Put an ice pack in the lunch box to keep foods cool.
- ▶ Wash out lunch boxes every evening with hot water and soap to kill bacteria.

In addition to food, little love notes or words of encouragement can make their ways into lunch boxes to brighten your child's day!

