



HEALTHY PACKED LUNCHES FOR YOUR CHILDREN



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Welsh Assembly
Government
Initiative

The Importance of a Healthy Lunch

Some five million children's lunchboxes are prepared in British homes every weekday, yet a Food Standards Agency survey revealed that three out of four of these were likely to contain foods that were too high in saturated fat, salt or sugar. The same survey indicated that almost half of these lunches failed to include any fruit. Most, however, did include crisps, chocolate, biscuits, sugary drinks and other heavily processed snacks.

A diet that's high in fat, high in salt, and high in refined carbohydrates diminishes mental alertness, so a child eating these kinds of foods is likely to end up tired towards the end of the day. Also, a diet high in saturated fat and salt can lay the foundations for heart disease and high blood pressure later in life. Such a diet may also lead to obesity.

www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/mostof_childrenlunchbox.shtml

A healthy lunchbox has a variety of foods from these food groups

www.healthschool.org.uk/parents/healthier-lunches-e.pdf

Always include foods like bread, rolls, bagels, wraps, rice, pasta or potato.

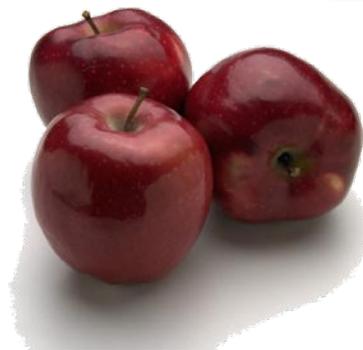


Fruit and vegetables

1 portion of fruit and 1 portion of vegetables.

Try:

Cherry tomatoes, raw vegetable sticks, fruit salad, raisins, an apple, an orange, a banana or a bunch of grapes.



Dairy foods

1 portion daily of a food rich in calcium is essential for children's growing bones.

Try:

Yoghurt, fromage frais, cheese, milk, rice pudding, custard.



Protein

A portion of a food rich in protein either on its own or as a sandwich filler.

Try: Chicken, lean meat, tuna or other fish, peanut butter, eggs or houmous.



Thirsty

Remember always include a drink.

Water, milk, pure fruit juice and fruit smoothies are good choices. It is important that your child has plenty of water to drink.



Keep it cool!

Lunchboxes should be kept cool – use a freeze block or similar. If sandwiches are prepared the previous evening, always store them in a fridge.

Menu ideas for one week

Monday

Chicken and lettuce or cheese and tomato sandwich on granary bread
Cherry tomatoes
Low sugar jelly with added fruit
Chocolate or strawberry low fat/low sugar milkshake

Tuesday

Vegetable sticks - carrot, pepper, cucumber
Slice of pizza
Yoghurt
Scone or hot cross bun
Water

Wednesday

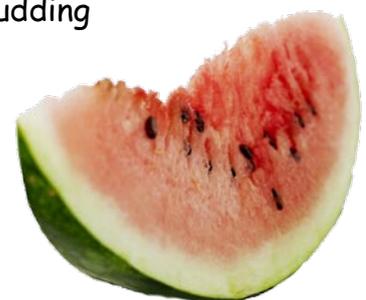
Pasta salad with sweet corn and peas
Slice of cold meat or cheese
Slice of fruit loaf
Banana or apple
Carton of unsweetened orange juice

Thursday

Houmous, (or ham) lettuce and tomato wrap
Small packet of low fat crisps
Fromage frais
Slice of melon or a tangerine
Carton of unsweetened apple juice

Friday

Wholemeal bread roll filled with tinned salmon or tuna with cucumber and mayonnaise
Small bunch of red or green grapes
Pot of rice pudding
Water



Tips

- Make lunchboxes fun! Pack foods attractively; cut foods into shapes; use a variety of containers. This is an opportunity to re-cycle packaging e.g. use clean, empty containers.
- Involve your child in planning his/ her lunchbox. Encourage him/her to try new foods. Variety is the key to a healthier lunchbox. Give praise, reward stickers etc if they eat the new food.
- Vary the sandwiches by using different types of bread. Rolls, granary bread, wholemeal bread, bagels, pitta bread and soft grain bread are healthy choices.
- Try alternatives to sandwiches. Rice salad, pasta salad, home-made pizza, quiche or noodles are tasty options.
- Alternatives to sugary foods and crisps could be a slice of fruit loaf, pack of nuts and raisins (check allergies) hot cross buns, pot of rice pudding, tub of fruit jelly (low sugar).
- If you include crisps only do so occasionally and choose a small pack of a low fat variety.
- If you have pasta for supper, set some aside to use in the next day's lunchbox.

Perfect Pasta

Serves 4

Preparation time less than 30 mins

Cooking time 10 to 30 mins

Ingredients

200g/7oz pasta shapes

175g/6oz broccoli

2 chicken breasts, cooked

4 tbsp honey

2 tbsp rice vinegar

2 tbsp soy sauce

1 tbsp sesame oil

150g/5oz sweetcorn

2 spring onions

Method

1. Cook the pasta shapes according to the packet instructions. Add the broccoli for the last three minutes.
2. Shred the cooked chicken into bite-sized pieces. Remove any bits of skin.
3. Carefully slice the spring onions.
4. Make a dressing by mixing together the honey, vinegar, soy sauce and sesame oil.
5. Mix together the pasta, broccoli, chicken, spring onions, sweetcorn and the dressing.
6. Your pasta salad is now ready to eat.

Mango, strawberry and banana fruit smoothie

Makes 1 glass

Preparation time less than 30 mins

Cooking time no cooking required

Ingredients

3 strawberries

100g/4oz peeled and chopped mango flesh

1 small or ½ medium banana

1 orange, squeezed

1 passion fruit (optional)



Method

Wash and hull the strawberries and then simply blend all the fruit together.

Carrot and Pineapple Muffins

Makes 12 muffins

Preparation time less than 30 mins

Cooking time 30 mins to 1 hour

Ingredients

100g/4oz plain flour

100g/4oz plain wholemeal flour

1 tsp baking powder

¾tsp bicarbonate of soda

1½ tsp ground cinnamon

½ tsp salt

200ml/7fl oz vegetable oil

90g/3½oz caster sugar

2 eggs

120g/4½oz finely grated carrots

225g/8oz tinned crushed pineapple, semi-drained

100g/4oz raisins

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.

2. Sift together the flours, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, cinnamon and salt and mix well. Beat the oil, sugar and eggs until well blended. Add the grated carrots, crushed pineapple and raisins. Gradually add the flour mixture, beating just enough to combine all the ingredients.

Chicken Wrap

Serves 8

Preparation time 1-2 hours

Cooking time 10 to 30 mins

Ingredients

2 garlic cloves, crushed

1 orange, juice only

2 tbsp light soy sauce

3 tbsp clear honey

½ tsp mild chilli powder

8 chicken thigh fillets

8 small tortillas

8tbsp mayonnaise

small bag torn iceberg lettuce

Method

1. Put the garlic, orange juice, soy sauce, honey and chilli into a bowl. Season and mix well.
2. Trim any excess fat from the chicken thigh fillets. Put into a large shallow roasting tin in a single layer, then pour over the honey mixture and turn the fillets over to coat well. Cover with cling film and leave to marinate in the fridge for 1 hour.
3. Preheat the oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7. Remove the cling film from the roasting tin and turn the chicken in the honey marinade once more.
4. Put the roasting tin in the oven and cook the chicken for 25-30 minutes, turning halfway through and basting with the glaze, until the chicken is tender and slightly blackened.
5. Remove the chicken from the roasting tin and leave to cool. Cut the chicken into strips and set aside.
6. Lay a tortilla on a clean board. Put a spoonful of mayonnaise into the centre and spread out a little. Add a little iceberg lettuce and top with several strips of chicken.
7. Fold the tortilla up over the filling, leaving the chicken slightly sticking out. Fold in both sides of the tortilla. Fold a paper napkin lengthways and use to wrap around the tortilla to secure. Repeat to make eight wraps in total.

Cold Chicken and Pepper Risotto

Serves 2

Preparation time 30 mins to 1 hour

Cooking time 10 to 30 mins

Description

If taking this dish on a picnic, pack the lettuce leaves and risotto separately, and assemble when ready to eat. Little gem lettuce leaves work particularly well.

Ingredients

350g/12oz Italian easy cook long grain rice

2 medium breasts of chicken

2 whole yellow peppers

1 whole red pepper

2 lemons

8 tbsp Italian extra virgin olive oil

flatleaf parsley, chopped

lettuce leave

handful walnuts

salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Method

1. Boil the rice and allow to cool.
2. Grill the chicken on each side until cooked and allow to cool. Slice into $\frac{1}{2}$ cm/ $\frac{1}{4}$ in strips.
3. Roast the peppers in the oven for approximately 20 minutes. Once cooled, peel the skin, take out the seeds and slice them into strips of approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ cm/ $\frac{1}{4}$ in each.
4. In a large bowl mix the chicken and peppers together. Add the walnuts and salt and pepper to taste. Squeeze the two whole lemons and extra virgin and stir well. Lastly add the rice and allow to rest for 5 minutes before serving.
5. Place a large lettuce leaf on a plate and add the risotto mixture in the middle, decorate with some parsley. Serve immediately.

Tortilla Wedges

Serves 6-8 as a snack

Preparation time less than 30 mins

Cooking time 10 to 30 mins

Ingredients

6 tbsp olive oil

1 large onion, thinly sliced

2 garlic cloves, crushed

4 medium-sized potatoes, thinly sliced

5 eggs, lightly beaten

flaked sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method

1. Heat 3 tbsp of the olive oil in a frying pan and gently fry the onion, garlic and potatoes for about 15 minutes until almost tender. Tip the potato mixture into a large bowl and leave to cool for 5 minutes. Add the beaten eggs and leave to stand for 10 minutes.
2. Place a medium-sized non-stick frying pan, approx. 23-25cm/9-10 in, over a low heat and add the remaining oil. Season the potato and egg mixture generously with salt and pepper, then pour into the pan. Leave to cook for 15 minutes until almost set.
3. Gently slide the tortilla on to a plate and place another plate on top, flip over and then slide back into the pan, now with the uncooked side down. Continue to cook for a further 5 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature, cut into wedges.

Fruit Crisps

Serves 6-8

Preparation time less than 30 mins

Cooking time over 2 hours

Description

Ideal snack food, these unusual fruit crisps are great for packed lunches and picnics - a great way to get kids to eat fruit too!

Ingredients

500g/1lb 2oz caster sugar

a selection of thinly sliced pears, pineapples, orange, lemon, apple or banana

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 70C/150F/Gas 4. Place a sheet of greaseproof paper on a baking sheet.
2. Pour 500ml/17fl oz of water and the sugar into a pan, bring to the boil.
3. Place the fruit slices in the syrup and boil for 3-4 minutes. Drain in a colander.
4. Arrange the drained fruits in a single layer on the baking sheet and bake for approximately six hours to dry out.

NB: Depending on the fruit, they may take less time to dry out. We advise that you keep checking them after three hours.

Mini Fruit Kebabs and Dip

Serves 4

Preparation time less than 30 mins

Cooking time no cooking required

Ingredients

2 kiwi fruit

16 small strawberries, washed and hulled

8 canned apricot halves in natural juice, drained and halved

16 pieces pineapple, fresh or canned in natural juice

Dip:

220g/8oz low fat natural fromage frais

1 tsp almond essence

Method

1. Peel the kiwi fruit using a vegetable peeler and cut each into eight equal pieces.
2. Thread one piece of each fruit onto 16 cocktail sticks or small skewers.
3. For the dip, mix together the fromage frais and almond essence.

Banana Bread

Makes 1 x 900g/2lb loaf

Preparation time less than 30 mins

Cooking time 1 to 2 hours

Description

Soft, speckled bananas are best for this recipe. The mixture also makes adorable little mini muffins if you cook them in individual cases - great for children's packed lunches. Big kids like them too!

Ingredients

40g/1½oz cherries

75g/3oz sultanas

110g/4oz butter, softened

110g/4oz caster sugar

2 large eggs, preferably free-range

3 large ripe bananas

175g/6oz fine rice flour

50g/2oz cornflour

2 tsp gluten-free baking powder

½ tsp salt

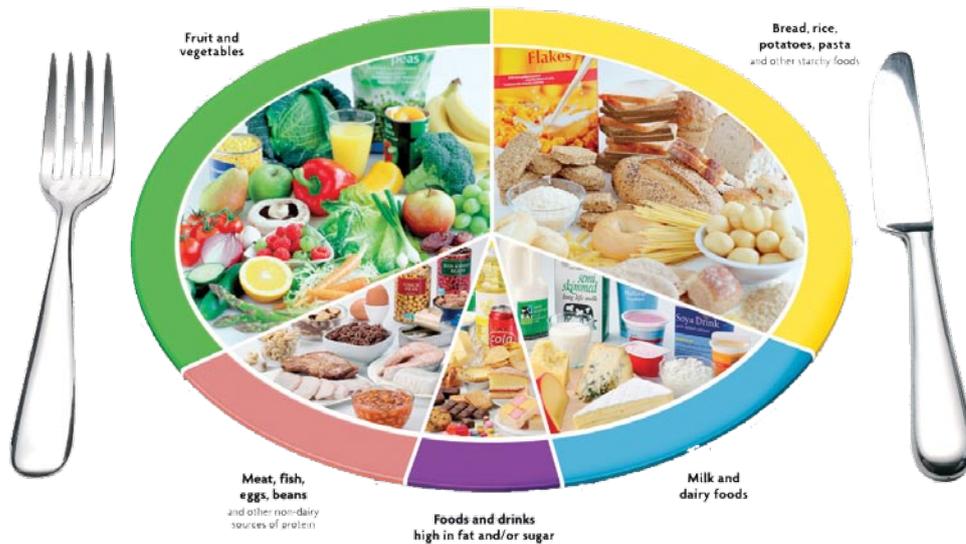
1kg/2lb loaf tin, lined with parchment paper, or 24 small paper muffin cases

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.
2. Wash and dry the cherries. Cut into quarters and mix with the sultanas. Set aside.
3. Cream the butter and sugar together until pale, light and soft. Add the eggs, one by one, and beat well between each addition.
4. Mash the bananas and add to the creamed mixture. Sift the rice flour, cornflour, gluten-free baking powder and salt together and fold carefully into the banana mixture. Very gently, stir in the cherries and sultanas, so that they are evenly distributed through the mixture.
5. Pour the mixture into the loaf tin or into 24 small muffin cases and bake in the oven for about 1¼ - 1½ hours for the loaf, 25 minutes for the mini muffins, until golden on top and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.
6. Remove the loaf from the tin and cool on a wire rack; cool mini muffins on a rack in their paper cases. Slice the loaf into eight slices to serve.

The eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



If you want to get the balance of your diet right, use the eatwell plate.

The eatwell plate makes healthy eating easier to understand by showing the types and proportions of foods we need to have a healthy and well balanced diet.

The eatwell plate shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group. This includes everything you eat during the day, including snacks.

So, try to eat:

plenty of fruit and vegetables

plenty of bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods – choose wholegrain varieties whenever you can

some milk and dairy foods

some meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

just a small amount of foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar

Look at the eatwell plate to see how much of your food should come from each food group. You don't need to get the balance right at every meal. But try to get it right over time such as a whole day or week.

Try to choose options that are lower in fat, salt and sugar when you can.