

# What's for Lunch

---

Children need to eat a variety of foods everyday to be healthy. Parents can give children a healthy school lunch that tastes great and is good for them too. Many parents say one of the major problems with school lunches is when the children bring them home! Try to give kids some choice about what they take for lunch, and if possible, get them involved with preparing the 'healthier' foods. Choosing food for a healthy lunch is easy. Use Nutrition Australia's Healthy Living Pyramid to plan a healthy school lunch.

## What's a Healthy School Lunch?

- Start by choosing a variety of foods using the Healthy Living Pyramid as a guide. This will ensure that your child is receiving adequate nutrition during the day.
- Don't forget to include mainly breads and cereals (bread, rice, pasta etc), fruit and vegetables and moderate amounts of dairy and meat or meat alternatives.
- Bread is the most common lunch food for kids. A range of breads such as sliced bread (white, white high fibre, wholemeal, multigrain, rye); pita bread; kebab bread; bread rolls; and English muffins. Use a variety of fillings to keep children interested.
- The dairy products are particularly important, watch that your children are not replacing milk with juice all the time. Encourage children to drink water throughout the day.
- Save sweet and fatty treats for special occasions. In most children's lives there are more than enough birthdays, holidays and other special occasions.
- Choose healthy snack food options including cheese sticks, canned or fresh fruit, rice cakes, pikelets etc.
- Don't forget water is an ideal drink for children.

## Here is an example morning tea:

<i>Food</i>	<i>Food Group</i>
Scone	bread or cereal
Banana	fruit
Cheese slice	dairy

---

web: <http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/>

2008 © The Australian Nutrition Foundation Inc.

abn: 58 909 342 093

### And an example lunch:

<i>Food</i>	<i>Food Group</i>
Sandwiches	Bread or cereal
Salad filling for the sandwich	vegetable
Tuna or other lean meat	meat
Apple	fruit
Milk drink (frozen)	dairy

### Plan Ahead

Planning ahead for the busy times helps you get through them a little easier. Think through the lunches you will be preparing for the next week and make sure you buy the ingredients when you do your regular shopping.



### *Packing a Lunch*

When you're packing a school lunch, it is important to consider how the lunch will be kept cool.

### Keeping food cool

If food is not stored properly bacteria in and on food can grow and make us sick. That's why it is important to keep school lunches cool. Lunches kept in children's school bags all day, are likely to get warm. Foods such as meat or cheese sandwiches, milk, cheese and yoghurt need to be kept cool. Here are some ideas:

- To keep food fresh, wrap sandwiches in plastic wrap or put in snap-lock plastic bags.
- Get a lunch box that includes a small water bottle. Fill bottle with water and freeze it. Place in lunch box to keep food cold.
- Freeze small tetra packs of milk or juice
- If you make lunches the night before, keep them in the fridge overnight

***Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.***

web: <http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/>

2008 © The Australian Nutrition Foundation Inc.

abn: 58 909 342 093



## *Lunch Ideas*

- Fruit in season
  - Boiled Egg
  - Vegetables with yoghurt
  - Pita bread, filled with salad vegetables or tabouli and rissoles
  - Water
- 
- Pikelets
  - Frozen UHT Milk
  - Vegetarian pizza / or a sandwich
  - Vegetable pack
  - Fruit salad
  - Yoghurt
- 
- Fruit in season
  - Egg, tomato and cheese sandwich
  - Vegetable sticks
  - Slice of fruit loaf
  - Dried fruit and nuts
  - Frozen UHT Milk drink
- 
- Fruit in season
  - Bread roll filled with vegetables, cheese and slice of lean roast beef

web: <http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/>

2008 © The Australian Nutrition Foundation Inc.

abn: 58 909 342 093

- Frozen UHT Milk
- Grapes
- Mixed nuts\*\*

\*\* While nuts are a nutritious inclusion to the diet of children, It is recommended that you consult with your school regarding anaphylactic or nut allergy policies prior to including nuts or products containing nuts in your childs lunchbox.

***Remember!***

**Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.**



***The Tuckshop***

It is now possible for children to be well fed from the school tuckshop. The Smart Choices Healthy Food and Drink supply strategy is now mandatory in all Queensland Government Schools, and provides guidelines on the provision of health foods and drinks to children through the school system. Nutrition Australia has a “Nutrition in Schools” advisory service which tuckshop convenors develop healthier tuckshop menus. Nutritious choices from the tuckshop include sandwiches, rolls, wraps, sushi, yoghurt, salads, fruit and milk drinks. Tuckshop convenors can increase choice by stocking healthier alternatives to the traditional no-so-healthy choices such as low fat pies and low fat sausage rolls. Provide your child with guidance on how best to spend their money when purchasing food from the school tuckshop.

web: <http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/>

2008 © The Australian Nutrition Foundation Inc.

abn: 58 909 342 093