



THE LUNCH BOX DILEMMA

Making school lunches can be a great source of stress for many parents, myself included. We can fall into the trap of giving our children exactly the same lunch day after day and wonder why they stop eating them! Or we go for the convenience packs of chips, dairy foods and muesli bars, which often children love, however they are not a healthy option.

When you're tired and busy it's hard to take the time and have the imagination to produce good healthy lunches for your children. A couple of years ago one of our Dietitians, a parent of two young boys put together these guidelines to help we parents who are struggling to put lunch boxes together.

How to put together a tasty and nutritious lunch box.

Choose from these foods to get the balance right.

- 1) Wholegrain bread, wraps, pita bread, roti, rolls, rice, noodles (not 2 minute noodles), pasta, rice wafers etc.

*Provide **Carbohydrates** to fuel brain and muscles*

COMBINE WITH

- 2) Chicken, shaved ham, lean meat, fish/tuna, eggs, cheese, peas/beans/lentils, hummus, nut butters and hard boiled eggs and nuts etc

*Provide **Protein** for sustained energy and growth*

ADD

- 3) Whole or cut-up fruit, berries, grapes, pottle of stewed/tinned fruit, salad, vege sticks, cherry tomatoes etc.

***Fruit and vegetables** provide essential **vitamins** and **fibre** for good health and digestion*

- 4) Include healthy fats for taste and brainpower such as avocado, salmon or oily white fish (tinned is fine) and nuts.

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

- 5) Dried fruit, popcorn, pikelet, small homemade muffin, or plain biscuits, bite-sized cereal eg Weetbix Bites/Miniwheats, small can creamed rice, nuts (if allowed), crackers, corn thins, low sugar yoghurts or natural yoghurt with frozen berries.

*Makes lunch boxes appealing and provide **energy***





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- 6) Fluid - Water is the best choice; the good thing is it's free from any drinking fountain and tap at school.

If you need more help putting lunch boxes together for you children, especially if you have a child with a health condition or disability, our friendly Dietitians can help, just contact us at Therapy Professionals

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