



# A Guide to Healthy Packed Lunches

- Packed lunches don't have to be boring.
- With a little thought and imagination they can be fun, healthy and tasty too.
- Just include something from each of the food groups then add a drink and away you go!
- The right balance of foods helps growth, concentration and wellbeing.

**Start with the basics** - bread, cereals and potatoes. These foods are carbohydrates that give us energy.



Try different types of bread, e.g. sliced bread, bread rolls, pitta breads, tortilla wraps, bagels, baguettes... the list is endless!



Go for a variety of breads too - wholemeal, granary, high fibre white, brown or white



Why not try basing your lunch on rice, pasta or potatoes sometimes instead of sandwiches, e.g. pasta salad.

## Feeling fruity?

It's important to eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day. These foods contain vitamins and minerals which help you stay fit and healthy. You won't be stuck for choice when it comes to lunchtime.



- Fresh fruit e.g. apple, grapes, banana, kiwi fruit, melon



- Dried fruits e.g. raisins, apricots



- Chopped raw vegetables e.g. carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes or a mixed salad



- Tinned fruit in juice (not syrup) - pop into a small container.

**Add a tasty filling** - meat, fish and alternatives. These foods contain protein for growth and repair. Try to include lean meat, chicken, fish, eggs in your lunchbox:



- Egg mayonnaise and cucumber
- Chicken and salad
- Ham, cheese and tomato
- Tuna and sweetcorn
- Cottage cheese, grated carrot and apple
- Egg and tomato



Remember if you are using a spread, choose a reduced fat one - or do without it completely if you are using a moist filling.

## Dairy delights

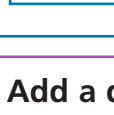
Try to include some dairy products in your lunchbox. They keep your teeth healthy and your bones strong.



- Low fat or natural yogurt



- Small pot of rice pudding



- Bite size cheese chunks

## Add a drink \*-



Drinking water keeps the body healthy and you should try to drink at least six to eight glasses of water a day.



- Milk
- Water

\* Avoid fizzy sweetened, sugary drinks



### Extra Choices

Always try to make healthier choices when you can for example:



Fruit or cheese scones

Fruit cake

Bread sticks

Currant bun



Whole grain cracker

Rice cakes

Plain biscuit e.g.

Digestive biscuit

### Keeping it cool, keeps it fresh



Place a mini ice pack in the lunchbox

Use a cool bag

Freeze water to keep the rest of the food cool

Keep it in the fridge until the morning if prepared the night before.

**Snacks containing fat, sugar or salt such as crisps, confectionary and sugary drinks should be avoided as they have no nutritional value.**

### More Information

[www.eatwell.gov.uk](http://www.eatwell.gov.uk)

Website from the Food Standards Agency containing information on healthy eating for all the family, including packed lunch suggestions.

[www.foodinschools.org](http://www.foodinschools.org)

Practical guidance on healthy packed lunches and other food in school activities.

[www.5aday.nhs.uk](http://www.5aday.nhs.uk)

Healthy eating information on how to increase fruit and vegetables intake.

[www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

For information on healthy eating and related heart health subjects.

[www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk](http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk)

Information on the National Healthy School Programme

[www.stpct.nhs.uk](http://www.stpct.nhs.uk)

For information on healthy eating and further health information

School meals are an excellent choice for your child. All recipes meet national nutritional standards, and food is prepared daily by highly trained and committed staff. Contact South Tyneside school meals service on [0191 424 7739](tel:01914247739) - you will be impressed by the great variety and value.

This leaflet can be made available in large print, alternative language or audio tape on request.  
Contact Tel: 0191 283 1122

Produced October 2006

Design by: Gateshead and South Tyneside Graphics Service,  
Public Health Development Team, South Tyneside Primary Care Trust