



10 TIPS for Packing a Healthy Lunch for Kids OR Adults



1. **Nutritious home-packed lunches start in the supermarket.** Use the Nutrition Facts label to help choose healthy foods. Compare nutrient levels for similar foods. Select those lower in fat, sodium, and sugar.

2. **Limit cheese on sandwiches and choose low fat or fat-free varieties.** Most cheeses are high in calcium, but also contain lots of saturated fat. Low-fat alternatives contain 3 grams of fat or less per ounce.

3. **Choose lean meats.** Chicken, turkey, lean ham, low-fat lunch meats, and tuna packed in water are healthy choices for protein-packed meals.



4. **Include at least one serving of fruit.** Fruits make a sweet and nutritious contribution to lunch. They are generally rich in vitamin A, vitamin C, fiber and water. In addition to apples, oranges or bananas, try pears, sliced melon, applesauce, grapes or pineapple. Prepare fruit in various ways – whole, sliced or cubed with yogurt.



5. **Use vegetables creatively.** Garnish your sandwich with spinach, sprouts, grated carrots or tomatoes instead of just lettuce. Pack a salad and put dressing in a separate container. Cut peppers or cucumber into bite-sized pieces for dipping in low-fat sauce.



6. Make sandwiches with whole grain bread instead of white bread. Choose breads that list whole wheat as the first ingredient. They're loaded with fiber, B vitamins and iron. If the main flour listed on the label is wheat or unbleached wheat flour, the product is not whole grain. If your child doesn't usually eat whole grain bread, try making a sandwich with one whole grain slice paired with a slice of white.



7. Limit snack foods and baked treats. Baked goods can be high in sugar and saturated fat. Snack foods may be high in fat and salt. Unbuttered popcorn and pretzels can be good alternatives. Be aware that low-fat baked goods can contain high amounts of sugars.



8. Choose 1% or fat-free milk. Milk is a great source of calcium and a healthy alternative to soda. Other calcium-rich choices include non-fat yogurt, low-fat chocolate milk and calcium-fortified juices.

9. Select 100% juice, not juice drinks. Juice drinks are mostly water and sugar, and low in nutrients. A better choice is 100% juice or blends of 100% juice.

10. Packing nutritious lunches can be a fun family affair. Encourage your child to develop creativity and good decision-making skills. The end result will be a happier child eating a more nutritious lunch, lower in fat, sugar and salt than prepackaged and fast food lunches.

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