



TIP SHEET

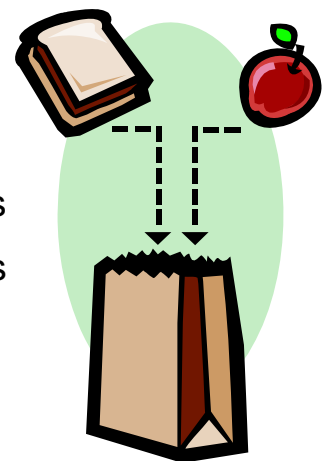
Packing a Healthy Lunch for Your Child

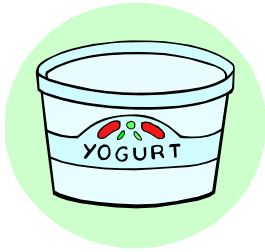
Do you pack your child's lunch or give them money for the school cafeteria? When deciding on lunch for ourselves or for our children, it is important to consider what is being consumed during the "midday meal."



TIP # 1 – An insulated lunch bag will keep your child's hot food hot and cold food cold until lunch time rolls around. This allows for many more options other than the old peanut butter and jelly standby. It is important to keep foods at the appropriate temperatures to avoid food-borne illnesses. Remember, items such as meats, dairy, and eggs are perishable. If your insulated lunch bag isn't doing the trick include a small freezer/ice pack to keep items chilled.

TIP # 2 – Prepare as much as you can in advance. Packing the lunch the night before will save you some extra time in the morning. Try preparing a salad on Sunday and portioning it out into smaller servings. These will remain as fresh lunch additions for the next two days. Wash, cut, and prepare fruits and veggies a couple nights a week, portion into smaller containers to be packed easily the night before. For example, cut up a whole cantaloupe on Sunday and portion into three small containers to be packed for lunch Monday through Wednesday. Wash and portion broccoli or baby carrots into smaller containers and pack low calorie/low fat dressing to be used as a dipping sauce.





TIP # 3 – Try to include some protein in your child’s lunch instead of mostly carbohydrates. String cheese, low fat/low calorie yogurt, almonds, and peanut butter to dip carrots or apples in are all smart choices for snacks.



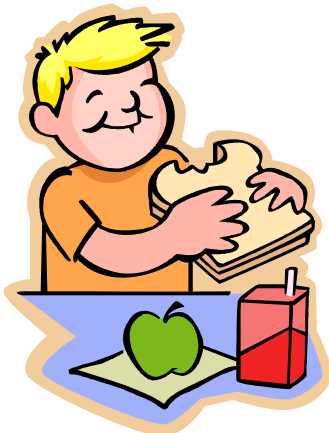
TIP # 4 – Build a better sandwich. When choosing lunch meat for sandwiches, opt for leaner cuts such as turkey or chicken instead of bologna, salami or ham (all higher salt and fat content). Use reduced fat mayo or mustard, OR skip the mayo all together and load up on tomatoes, lettuce and other veggies. Opt for

whole grain breads or pita pockets instead of the traditional white bread or white sub rolls. If making peanut butter and jelly, use all natural peanut butter (less sugar) and 100% fruit spread.

TIP # 5 – Pack water, fat free milk, or 100% juice options instead of soda, regular juice or whole flavored milks. This will cut extra calories, fat, and sugar.



TIP # 6 – If you allow your child to eat at school, look over the school menu regularly and talk with your child about the healthy options. Encourage your child to choose meals that include fruits, vegetables, lean meats, and whole grains.



TIP # 7 – Your child will enjoy healthy snacks/meals that you pack for lunch, if you are eating similarly at home. This means *you* as the adult as well as the child. Children will model what their parents do, so if you are not eating your fruits and veggies, you will have a much harder time getting your child to eat his or hers.