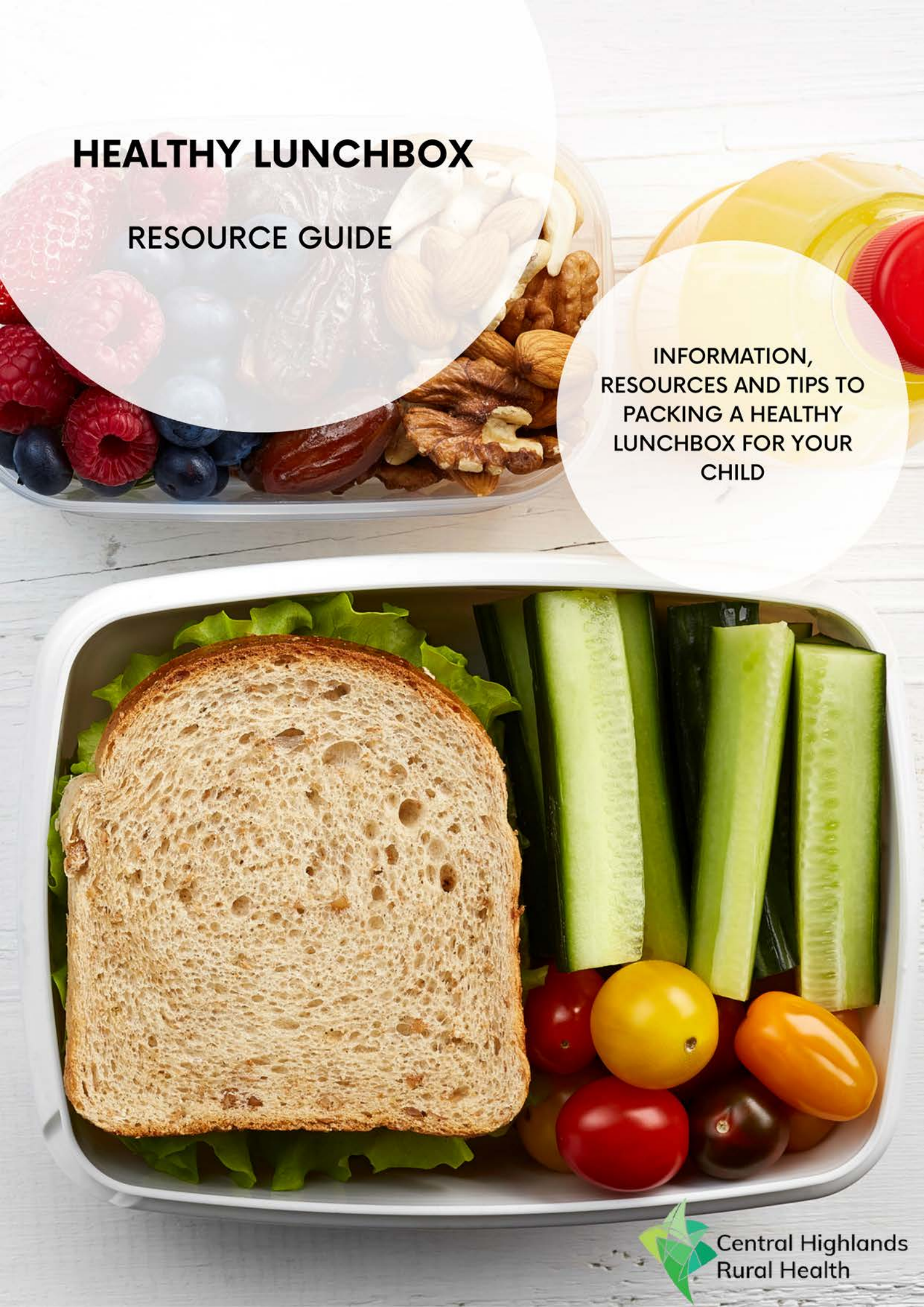


HEALTHY LUNCHBOX

RESOURCE GUIDE

INFORMATION,
RESOURCES AND TIPS TO
PACKING A HEALTHY
LUNCHBOX FOR YOUR
CHILD



Central Highlands
Rural Health

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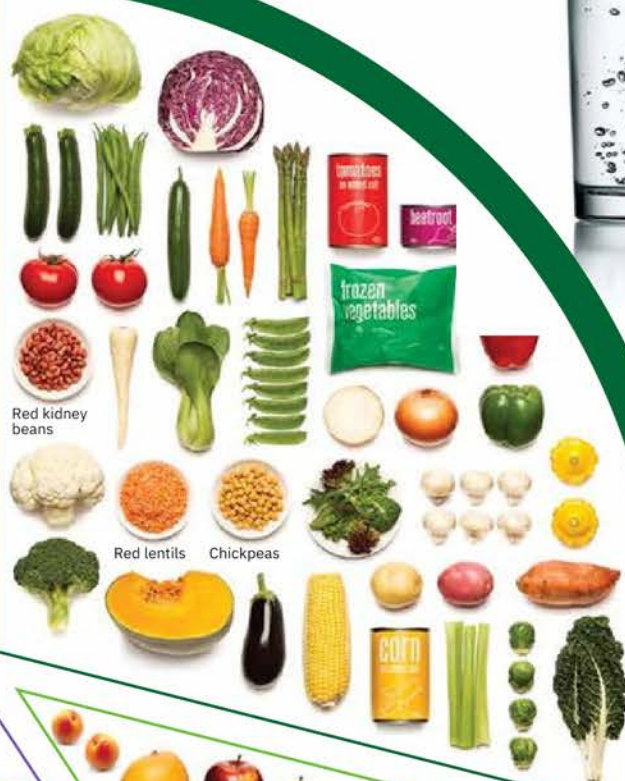
Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods
from these five food groups every day.
Drink plenty of water.

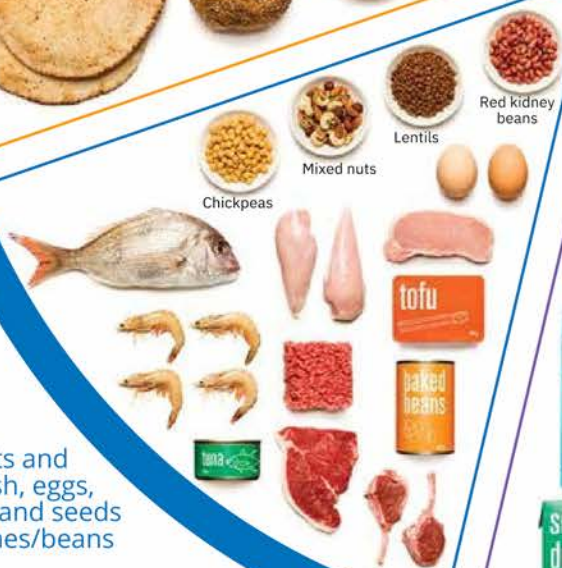
Grain (cereal) foods,
mostly wholegrain
and/or high cereal
fibre varieties



Vegetables and
legumes/beans



Lean meats and
poultry, fish, eggs,
tofu, nuts and seeds
and legumes/beans



Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or
alternatives, mostly reduced fat



Fruit



Use small amounts



Only sometimes and in small amounts





Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Guide to Healthy Eating

Eat different types of foods from the five food groups every day.



Drink plenty of water.

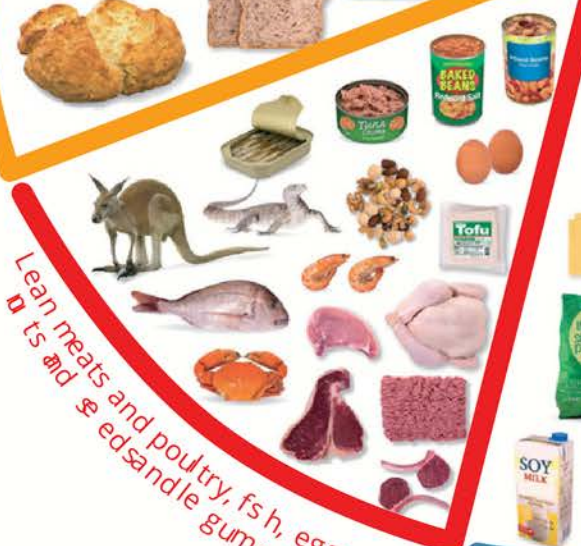
Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties



Vegetables and legumes/beans



Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, legumes/beans



Fruit



Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat



Use small amounts



Only sometimes and in small amounts



Healthy Lunchbox

Did you know children consume around **30%** of their food intake at school?

Most of this food comes from the contents of their lunchbox.

What children eat during the day at school plays a crucial role in their learning and development.



What does a healthy lunchbox look like?

A healthy lunchbox should include a variety of foods from the **Five Food Groups** and **discretionary**. It's ok to pack 'some times' or comfortable foods in moderation amounts.



Vegetables



Wholegrain carbohydrates



Protein and alternatives



Dairy and alternatives



Discretionary foods & drinks



Fruit

Tips for Creating a Healthy Lunchbox - Nutrition Australia

1

Make time to prepare food. Fresh fruit and vegetables, protein, yogurt, bread and crackers are great to have available in your fridge and cupboards at the beginning of the school week.

2

Shop wisely and save money. Buy fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables in season to ensure good quality and value for money. Give yourself permission to buy the 'ugly' carrot from the farmers market.

3

Keep it interesting but don't overcomplicate it, sometimes we don't have time for star shaped fruit.

4

Meal prep and freeze meals and snacks for the following week, if required or possible.

5

Make your own snacks from fresh ingredients and buy in bulk e.g. carrot sticks and hummus, celery and peanut butter, boiled eggs, homemade low sugar granola with yogurt and berries.

6

Look after the environment. Put sandwiches and other items in reusable containers. This uses less packaging, creates less rubbish and is more sustainable.

7

Choose a variety of foods from the 5 food groups for inspiration. Choose water as the drink of choice and set limits on drinks high in sugar such as fruit juice, cordial and soft drinks.

8

Promote water as the drink of choice by adding fruit or cold brew tea bags e.g. Red Seal hot or cold brew tea bags.

9

Follow storage instructions and keep food cold. During warmer days, freeze a water bottle or put a small ice pack in the lunchbox to keep food fresh and edible.

10

Utilize leftovers in other meals e.g. make a vegetable soup using left over roast vegetables or dip for wholegrain crackers

FOR A HEALTHY LUNCHBOX

PICK & MIX

SOMETHING FROM EACH GROUP 1-6!



Developed in conjunction with the Achievement Program to support a whole-school approach to healthy eating.

FOR A HEALTHY LUNCHBOX

PICK & MIX

SOMETHING FROM EACH GROUP



FRUIT

1

FRESH FRUIT

- Apple
- Banana
- Mandarin
- Orange quarters
- Passionfruit halves (with spoon)
- Watermelon, honeydew, rockmelon chunks
- Pineapple chunks
- Grapes
- Plums
- Nectarines, peaches, Apricots
- Strawberries
- Cherries
- Kiwifruit halves (with spoon)
- Pear

MIXED FRUIT

- Fruit salad
- Fruit kebabs

DRIED FRUIT

- Dried fruit, nut, popcorn mixes*

TINNED FRUIT/SNACK PACKS/CUPS

- In natural juice (not syrup)



VEGETABLES

2

FRESH CRUNCHY VEGIES

- Corn cobs
- Carrot sticks
- Capsicum sticks
- Green beans
- Cucumber sticks
- Celery sticks
- Snow peas
- Tomatoes (e.g. cherry and Roma tomatoes)
- Mushroom pieces

Can serve with either:

- Hummus
- Tomato salsa
- Tatziki
- Beetroot dip
- Natural yoghurt

SALADS

- Coleslaw and potato salad (reduced fat dressing)
- Mexican bean, tomato, lettuce and cheese salad
- Pesto pasta salad*

BAKED ITEMS

- Grilled or roasted vegetables
- Wholemeal vegetable muffins or scones
- Vegetable slice (with grated zucchini and carrot)
- Popcorn
- SOUP (in small thermos)
- Pumpkin soup
- Potato and leak soup

MILK, YOGHURT AND CHEESE

3

- Milk
- Calcium-enriched soy and other plant-based milks
- Yoghurt (frozen overnight)
- Custard

Tip:

- Freeze the night before to keep cool during the day

- Cheese cubes, sticks or slices
- Cottage or ricotta cheese
- Cream cheese
- Tatziki dip

Can serve with either:

- Fruit
- Wholegrain cereal, low in sugar
- Vegetable sticks
- Rice and corn cakes
- Wholegrain crackers

MEAT OR MEAT ALTERNATIVE

4

- Tinned tuna or salmon in springwater
- Lean roast or grilled meats (e.g. beef, chicken, kangaroo)
- Falafel balls
- Lean meat or chicken patties
- Tinned tuna or salmon
- Lentil patties
- Lean deli meats (e.g. ham, silveride, chicken)
- Boiled eggs
- Baked beans (canned)
- Tofu cubes
- Hommus dip
- Lean meat or chicken kebab sticks
- Peanut butter*

Can serve with:

- Wholegrain sandwich, roll, pita or wrap bread with salad
- Rice and corn cakes
- Wholegrain wheat crackers
- Side salad
- Vegetable fritatta
- Chicken drumsticks
- Savoury muffins or scones

Can serve with:

- Side salad
- Steamed or roasted vegetables

GRAIN AND CEREAL FOOD

5

MAINS

- Wraps
- Sandwiches
- Rolls
- Toasted sandwiches

Tip: Use breads such as

- wholemeal, multigrain, rye, sourdough, pita, flat, corn, mountain, lavash, white fibre-enriched, soy and linseed, herb, naan, bagels, focaccias, fruit bread and English muffins.

- Pasta dishes
- Rice, quinoa or cous cous dishes
- Noodle dishes
- Sushi

SAVORY BAKED ITEMS

- Homemade pizzas
- Wholemeal savoury muffins or scones (e.g. ham, cheese and corn muffins)
- Vegetable based muffins
- Pasta or noodle bake

SWEET BAKED ITEMS

- Fruit loaf
- Wholemeal muffins

SNACKS

- High fibre, low sugar cereal (e.g. muesli)
- English muffins
- Crackers
- Crisps/cakes
- Rice cakes
- Corn thins
- Wholemeal scones
- Pikelets
- Crumpets
- Hot cross buns (no icing)

WATER

6

- Take a water bottle (for refilling throughout the day)

Tip:

- Freeze overnight to keep foods cool in lunchboxes

Sweet and savoury snack

- foods (e.g. muesli/fruit/nut bars, biscuits, crisps, cakes, muffins, slices) should be limited in lunchboxes. They can lead to excess energy intake if consumed in large amounts.

- Sugar sweetened drinks and confectionery should not be provided in lunchboxes. They can lead to excess energy intake and tooth decay.



For more information about healthy eating and for many tasty recipes, visit the Healthy Eating Advisory Service:
<http://heas.health.vic.gov.au/>

*Check your school's policy regarding the use of nuts and products containing nuts.

Get your kids involved



IN THE KITCHEN

- Select easy lunchbox recipes to cook up on weekends
- Share simple tasks such as cracking eggs, stirring and measuring ingredients
- Help kids build their own lunchbox by keeping a selection of healthy grab and go items
- Encourage kids to fill their drink bottles with water

Set healthy lunchbox rules that include choosing a food from each food group

AT THE SHOPS

- Allow kids to choose their own fruits and vegetables
- Set limits on highly processed foods
- Ask kids to help look for products with the most stars

Look for four or more stars on packaged snacks



IN THE GARDEN

- Set up a vegetable patch or pot with some easy to grow vegetables and fruit
- Let children plant and pick their own vegetables, for snacks.
- Set garden tasks such as weeding and watering



Easy grow ideas are cherry tomatoes, snow peas, baby cucumbers, and strawberries



www.healthylunchboxweek.org



Reading food labels



Most packaged foods have an ingredient list and Nutrition Information Panel (NIP). Know what to look for to choose the healthier product.

INGREDIENT LIST

Ingredients are listed in order of most weight to least. If a source of sugar, salt or saturated fat is listed in the first three ingredients, it may not be the healthiest choice.

HOT TIPS

Sugar may be listed as syrups, sucrose, maltose, glucose, fructose, honey.

Salt may be listed as sodium, sea salt, sodium bicarbonate, rock salt.

Saturated fat may be listed as palm oil, coconut oil, tallow, butter, cream, copha, lard.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PANEL (NIP)

When reading the NIP always compare similar products, for example compare one brand of yogurt with another brand of yogurt.

Nutrition Information		
Servings per package: 1		
Serving size: 30g		
	Per Serve	Per 100g
Energy	432kJ	1441kJ
Protein	2.8g	9.3g
Fat	0.4g	1.2g
-saturated	0.1g	0.3g
Carbohydrate	18.9g	62.9g
-sugars	3.5g	11.8g
Fibre	6.4g	21.2g
Sodium	65mg	215mg

Energy:
For packaged snacks look for less than 600kJ per serve

Saturated Fat:
Aim for the lowest per 100g, less than 3g is best

Sugar:
Aim for less than 15g per 100g

Sodium:
Foods with less than 400mg per 100g are good, but less than 120mg are best

Fibre:
Not all labels include fibre. For breads, cereals & crackers look for more than 5g more per 100g



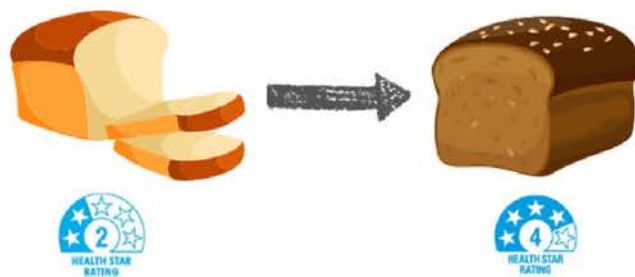
Reading food labels















HEALTH STAR RATING

Health Star Ratings are a quick and easy way to compare products. The more stars the healthier the choice.

Remember to always compare products within the same category.



Recommended minimum health star rating of common pre-packaged snacks

Breakfast Cereal  	Sweet snack foods  	Savoury snack foods  
Dips eg. Hummus  	Processed meats  	Muesli Bar  

Not all packaged foods have a Health Star Rating. For an easy way to compare products, use the FoodSwitch Australia app developed by the George Institute for Global Health. Visit www.foodswitch.com.au to learn more.



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Healthy Snacks

Snacks are a great opportunity to increase nutrient intake, sustain energy levels, help the body recover from exercise and give kids the option to try new foods.

Snacks don't need to be complicated or expensive.

Nutrition Australia recommends snacks low in salt, sugar and saturated fats.



Did you know?

Many children consume 1-3 snacks whilst at school, which can be dependent on appetite, physical activity level and the nutritional value of the foods they consume throughout the day.

Children who participate in physical activity often require snacks to **fuel their body and brains** and to reduce risk of illness and injury following exercise.



Healthier lunchbox swaps



TRY OUT THESE SIX HEALTHIER LUNCHBOX SWAPS



SWAP OUT

White bread, rolls, wraps, crackers and crispbreads



SWAP IN

Wholegrain or high-fibre options



SWAP OUT

Butter on bread, rolls or wraps



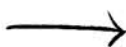
SWAP IN

Avocado, hommus or plant-based dips and spreads



SWAP OUT

Cordial, juice poppers or sugary drinks



SWAP IN

Water or plain milk or milk alternative



SWAP OUT

Potato chips



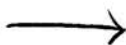
SWAP IN

Veggie sticks with hommus



SWAP OUT

Sweet and savoury biscuits



SWAP IN

Plain popcorn or basic pikelets



SWAP OUT

Iced cakes, muffins and buns



SWAP IN

Homemade fruit loaf or muesli slice



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Disclaimer: It's ok to include some of the foods on the left, especially if they are foods that make your child feel safe

Build your own sandwich or wrap

Whether you're fueling your child for school or sport, these 5 simple guidelines will be a lunchbox hit.

1

Choose a smart wrapping e.g. wholegrain bread, roll or wrap

2

Choose a spread e.g. try smashed avocado, hummus, ricotta or cottage cheese, pesto, roasted pumpkin, mustard, tahini or nut butter

3

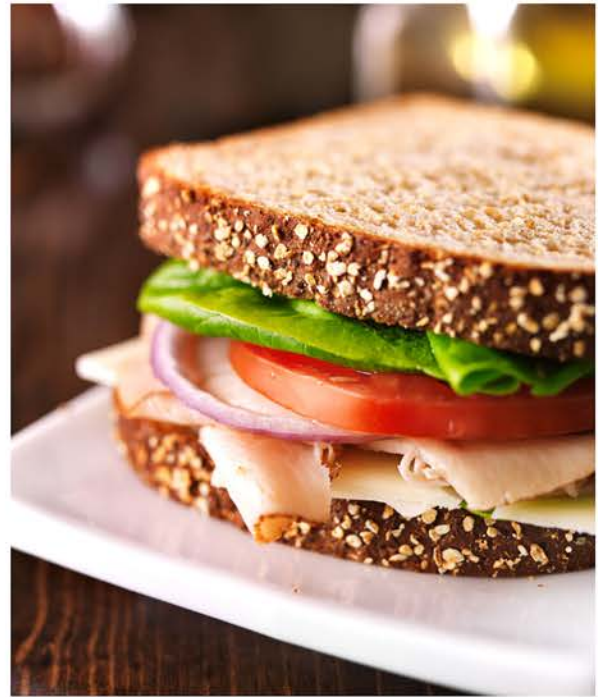
Pick your protein e.g. chicken breast, roast beef, lamb, tinned tuna, salmon, smashed egg, ricotta or cottage cheese, veggie patties made with beans or legumes like chickpeas

4

Layer on the veggies e.g. grated carrot, sliced cucumber, capsicum, beetroot, tomato, spinach mix, sliced roasted pumpkin, eggplant, sweet potato or zucchini

5

Tweak to taste e.g. add cracked black pepper or fresh herbs like basil or parsley



Bored of sandwiches?

Let us inspire you!

- Rice paper rolls
- Veggie scrolls
- Sushi
- Salad (include a protein, nut or fruit)
- Tuna and multigrain crackers
- Meat and 3 vegetables
- Leftovers
- Fried rice
- Vegetable gratin
- Vegetable and tuna fritters
- Ham and vegetable omelette
- Lentil and vegetable soup
- Plant-based protein with noodles and vegetables

Need more inspiration? Visit
healthylunchbox.com.au/recipes/sandwich-alternatives/

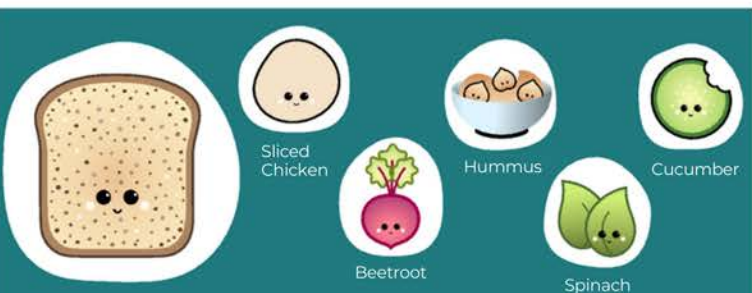
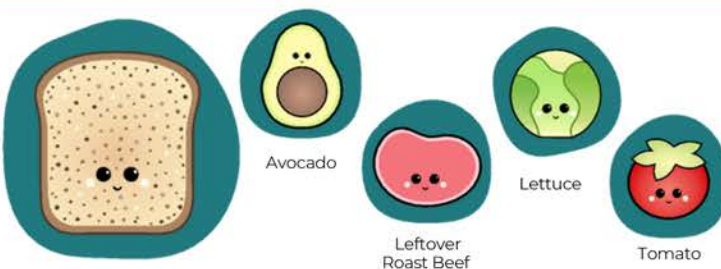
Five Days of Sandwiches

Graphics by @fineprintfood



Step 1: Choose Whole Grain Bread

Step 2: Choose Your Favourite Fillings



'Everything' Fried Rice

Prep: 10 mins

Cook: 10 mins

Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp of sesame or peanut oil
- 2 eggs, lightly whisked
- 100g prawns, peeled, deveined and chopped (optional, see Tips)
- 1 carrot, grated
- 1 celery stick, finely chopped
- ¼ Chinese cabbage, shredded
- 2 cups of cooked brown rice
- ½ cup of frozen peas or corn kernels
- 2 tbsp light soy sauce
- 2 tbsp tomato sauce



Source: raisingchildren.net.au/school-age/nutrition-fitness/food-recipes/fried-rice

Method

Heat a wok or large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add half the oil and pour in whisked eggs. Turning the wok in a swirling motion, run egg around the sides of the pan to make a thin omelette. When cooked, turn omelette out onto a board, roll up and cut into thin slices.

Reheat wok, and add remaining oil. Cook prawns in batches until cooked through and prawns change colour. Remove from wok and set aside.

Reheat wok. Add carrot and celery, and stir-fry for 3-4 minutes. Add cabbage, stirring for a further 2 minutes.

Add rice, prawns, peas, soy sauce and tomato sauce into wok. Toss until combined and heated through. Spoon into serving bowls and top with sliced egg.

Tips

If your children do not eat prawns, try this recipe with chicken strips or tofu as an alternative. You may need to modify this recipe if anyone in your family has special dietary requirements like food allergies or intolerances.

Want more recipe ideas? Visit <https://www.healthylunchboxweek.org.au/fact-sheets-and-guides> and download the Healthy Lunchbox E-Book

Banana and Oat Muffins

These banana and oatmeal muffins are a healthy and delicious morning or afternoon treat!

Prep: 15 mins

Cook: 20 mins

Serves: 12

Ingredients

- 1 ½ all-purpose flour
- 1 cup rolled oats
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 egg
- ¾ cup milk or alternative
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 2 medium-sized bananas (mashed)



Source: www.allrecipes.com/recipe/6714/banana-oat-muffins/

Method

Preheat oven to 205°C (185°C fan forced). Line a 12-cup muffin tin with paper liners or thoroughly spray muffin tin with oil (cooking spray).

Combine flour, oats, sugar, baking powder, soda and salt in a medium bowl; set aside.

Beat egg lightly in a large bowl. Whisk in milk, oil and vanilla. Stir in mashed bananas.

Add the flour mixture and stir until just combined. Spoon batter into the prepared muffin cups, filling each ¾ full.

Bake in preheated oven until tops of the muffin spring back when lightly pressed. Bake for around 18-20 minutes.

Tips

Allow 5 – 10 minutes for muffins to cool down on cooling rack. Freeze leftover muffins and take them out as needed (they will keep for at least a month).

Want more recipe ideas? Visit <https://www.healthylunchboxweek.org.au/fact-sheets-and-guides> and download the Healthy Lunchbox E-Book

Vegetarian eating in children

There are 4 main types of vegetarian diets.

- **Lacto-vegetarian** diets - include plant foods plus dairy foods
- **Ovo-vegetarian** diets - include plant foods plus eggs
- **Lacto-ovo vegetarian** diets - include plant foods plus dairy foods and eggs
- **Vegan** diets - include only plant foods



Tofu or tempeh



Legumes



Eggs



Nuts & seeds



Iron fortified breakfast cereal



Calcium fortified dairy alternatives



Planning healthy vegetarian eating for children and teenagers

Vegetarian children and teenagers need carefully planned diets to ensure they get enough of the essential nutrients, such as iron, vitamin B12, calcium, omega-3, protein and zinc.

It is highly recommended that children and teenagers who eat a vegetarian diet continue to eat foods the 5 food groups, with a focus on protein rich food alternatives. Visit our Dietetics team at Central Highlands Rural Health for more information, advice and assistance.

Sample meal plan for vegetarian eating

Breakfast

- Iron-fortified Breakfast Cereal e.g. Weet-Bix with milk or calcium fortified soy milk OR
- Toast with peanut butter or baked beans and one piece of fruit

Morning tea

- Fruit and tub of yoghurt or soy yoghurt
- Cheese & crackers

Lunch

Sandwich or wrap on multigrain bread with;

- Egg & Salad
- Hommus & Avocado with cheese and salad
- Cottage cheese and salad

Afternoon tea

- Handful of almonds or mixed nuts (if child care/school policy allows)
- Vegies with hommus dip
- One cup or small popper of flavoured milk

Dinner

- Lentil curry with rice and vegetables OR
- Tomato & mushroom omelette with salad and toast OR
- Tofu burger with salad OR
- Tender fillets from the Sanitarium "Vegie Delights" range with cous cous and stir-fried veggies OR
- Quorn lasagne OR
- Quinoa with roast vegetables and tofu OR
- Pasta with lentils, tomatoes and cheese OR

Dessert

- Yoghurt OR custard

Supper

- Glass of Milo made on soy milk OR
- Custard

Drinks

- Water
- Milk or dairy alternative, up to 500mL per day

This information, with food examples, is intended for education purposes only and has no endorsement of any particular branded food product. Please consult with your doctor or other health professional to make sure this information is right for your child. **Source:** <https://www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/fact-sheets/hungry-human-beans-a-guide-to-vegetarian-diets-in-children>

Water – the drink of choice

Water is the best drink of choice for children.

Drinking water is known to regulate your child's body temperature through sweating, moisturises the skin to maintain its texture and appearance and aids in improving oral health when accompanied by brushing and flossing.



How much water to drink each day

Infants 0–6 months	0.7 litres
Infants 7–12 months	0.8 litres total (with 0.6 litres as fluids)
Girls and boys 1–3 years	1 litre (about 4 cups)
Girls and boys 4–8 years	1.2 litres (about 5 cups)
Boys 9–13 years	1.6 litres (about 6 cups)
Boys 14–18 years	1.9 litres (about 7–8 cups)
Girls 9–13 years	1.4 litres (about 5–6 cups)
Girls 14–18 years	1.6 litres (about 6 cups)

CHRH have a team of Dietitians working across all sites
(Daylesford, Creswick, Trentham and Clunes).

If you are struggling with fussy eating, lunch box ideas, food allergies and intolerances, joyful eating, body image concerns or fostering a happy and healthy relationship with food, our Dietitians can help.

Call or email our intake team Ph: (03) 5321 6539,
Email: access@chrh.org.au to book your appointment today.

Tips for Intuitive Eating - Hunger Scale

Intuitive eating is a self-care eating framework, which integrates instinct, emotion and conscious thinking, whilst promoting healthy attitudes towards food and body image. Intuitive eating sets the stage for rebuilding trust in food, whilst honoring fullness and hunger levels.



Food safety and storage

Food poisoning is a serious illness but preventing food poisoning is simple.

Always remember to:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water, before handling food, between handling raw and cooked foods and after going to the toilet.
- Use separate cutting boards and knives for each type of food.
- Wash fruits, vegetables and rice to remove harmful bacteria or preservation chemicals such as sulfites.
- Keep raw meat, seafood, eggs, fruit and vegetables separate in the fridge. Wrap and store cooked foods above raw foods in the fridge.
- Keep perishable foods hot (above 60°C) or cold (below 5°C).
- Defrost frozen food in the fridge or in a microwave oven set on 'defrost'. Defrosting on the bench top or in the sink with water increases bacteria growth in foods as they defrost.



Become a waste warrior



SWAP

- Cling wrap and zip lock bags for reusable containers
- Disposable drink receptacles for durable drink bottles



Use a sandwich box to keep sandwiches fresh and in tact

REUSE

- Use reusable bags when shopping
- Try reusable food wraps such as beeswax wraps or reusable durable zip lock bags



MINIMISE

- Choose foods that create less waste to minimise use of single use plastics
- Avoid overloading the lunchbox with food that won't be eaten

Choose fruit and vegetables with their own natural packaging



www.healthylunchboxweek.org



Food Relief Guide & Local Initiatives

Food insecurity is a public health concern that can affect many individuals and families at all ages and different stages of life.

Food insecurity exists whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food or the ability to acquire acceptable food in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain.

It is not something to be ashamed of or embarrassed about. It is also important to understand that everyone has the right to access adequate and safe food and food supply.

The CHRH Population Health Team understands that children, parents and families within the Hepburn Shire and Macedon Ranges may experience levels of food insecurity and financial hardship.

Therefore, the team has put together a document with a list of organisations and community groups that offer food relief and subsidised food services to the local community.



www.chrh.org.au/articles/food-relief-resources-in-the-hepburn-shire-and-kyneton-region/

If you would like to know further information about food relief and other resources, please get in contact with the Population Health Team via email at pophealth@chrh.org.au.

Additional Resources

Get your picky eater eating veggies - Jennifer Anderson

<https://www.instagram.com/kids.eat.in.color/>

Healthy Food Guide - Discover delicious, healthy recipes that are easy to make and that you can trust are good for you. Thousands of everyday meals, plus options for dairy and gluten-free, low-FODMAP, vegetarian and vegan. All recipes are developed in collaboration with qualified nutritionists.

<https://www.healthyfood.com/healthy-recipes/>

Raise a healthy child who is a joy to feed - Ellyn Satter Institute

<https://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/how-to-feed/the-division-of-responsibility-in-feeding/>

Australian Dietary Guidelines - Eat for Health

<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/>

Discretionary food and drink choices - Eat for Health

<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/food-essentials/discretionary-food-and-drink-choices#:~:text='Discretionary'%20foods%20and%20drinks%20include,and%2For%20salt%20content%3B%20commercially>

Nutrition Australia

<https://nutritionaustralia.org/>

Healthy Lunchbox - Cancer Council

<https://healthylunchbox.com.au/>

Raising Children - Fussy eaters (suitable for 1 to 6 years)

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/nutrition-fitness/common-concerns/fussy-eating>

Raising Children - Body image in children 2 to 8 years

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/school-age/health-daily-care/mental-health/body-image-children-2-8-years>

How to raise a healthy eater: 6 ways to set your child on the path to a lifetime of positive habits - UNICEF

<https://www.unicef.org/parenting/food-nutrition/how-to-raise-healthy-eater>

Vegetarian and vegan eating - Better Health Channel

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthy-living/vegetarian-and-vegan-eating>