

## Practical tips for healthy, safe and tasty packed lunches

### ◆ Communicate with your setting about your child's packed lunch:

- ⇒ Inform your setting of food allergies or intolerances.
- ⇒ Check if your setting has a food policy.
- ⇒ Use a cool bag and a frozen bottle of water or reusable ice pack.

### ◆ Choosing foods:

- ⇒ Vary lunchbox contents for a good balance of nutrients.
- ⇒ Seasonal fruits and vegetables add colour, texture and are often cheaper and tastier.
- ⇒ Read food labels.
- ⇒ Look out for the colour coded nutrition information on the front of packets. Remember the more green(s) on the label, the healthier the choice.

### ◆ Preparing the packed lunch:

- ⇒ Include your child in shopping, choosing and preparing what goes in their lunchbox, giving them choices within the food groups.
- ⇒ Wash fruit and vegetables, and remove any stones. Chop small fruits and vegetables, such as grapes and cherry tomatoes in half.
- ⇒ Keep it fresh. Rinsing slices of apple in dilute lemon juice, for example, will stop the slices from turning brown.
- ⇒ Think sustainably. Use containers and cutlery that can be washed and used again.
- ⇒ Label your child's packed lunch with their name

## Useful Websites

- [www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes)
- [www.nhs.uk/change4life/food-facts](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/food-facts)
- [www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/healthy-weight-children-advice-for-parents/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/healthy-weight-children-advice-for-parents/)
- [www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/school-lunch-recipes](http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/school-lunch-recipes)

If you have any queries or questions please do not hesitate to contact us.



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## Healthy Packed Lunches

### A practical guide for parents and carers

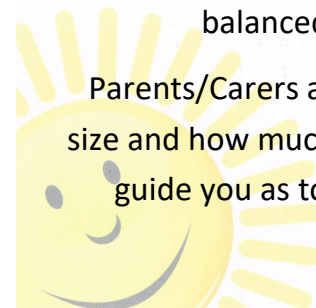
A healthy lunch every day will give your child the energy and nutrients they need to grow, develop and learn.

Early years settings are improving the food they provide and how they encourage children to eat healthily, and we need your support.

The key to a balanced, nutritious diet is variety.

This leaflet provides you with some ideas of what to include to ensure that your children's packed lunch is healthy, balanced and nutritious.

Parents/Carers also worry about portion size and how much to pack - this leaflet will guide you as to how much your child needs.



A healthy, balanced and nutritious packed lunch should include foods from the following four food groups:



**Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates**

These foods provide carbohydrate to give your child energy for the afternoon



**Fruit and vegetables**

These foods provide vitamins and minerals to help protect against illness



**Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other options**

These foods provide protein, iron and zinc to help your child grow.



**Dairy and alternatives**

These foods are a good source of calcium for strong bones and teeth



**Food and drinks high in saturated fat, sugar (and/or salt)**

Try to limit these types food and drink. Too much salt and saturated fat can increase the risk of some illnesses in later life while too much sugar can damage children's teeth



## Example packed lunches

DAY 1



Tuna & sweetcorn pasta salad  
An apple  
Small tub of rice pudding

DAY 2



Egg salad sandwich  
Small tub of tinned pineapple  
Slice of fruit cake with soft cheese spread  
Small tub of carrot sticks

DAY 3



Ham & soft cheese sandwich  
A banana  
Small tub of carrot sticks

DAY 4



Beef & onion salad sandwich  
Tub of rice pudding & raisins  
A banana

DAY 5



Mackerel potato salad  
A slice of fruit loaf  
Cherry tomatoes