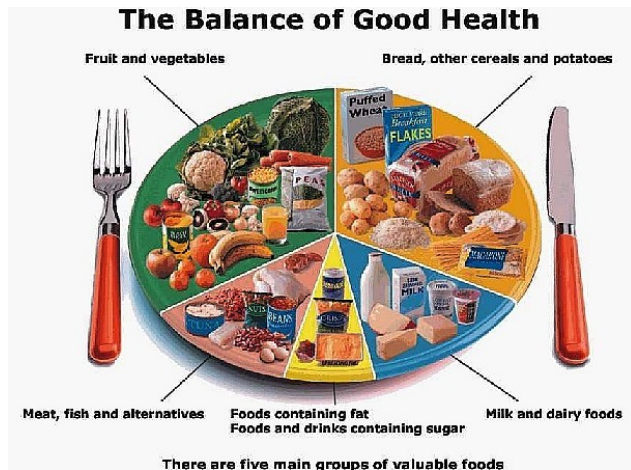


Pack-a-punch lunch

Many children take packed lunches to school instead of opting for school dinners. These can be a healthy option if they are planned carefully. Try and get your child involved in what goes into their lunch box and how it's prepared.

To make sure that you're providing a well-balanced packed lunch for your child you should base their pack-up on the Balance of Good Health model pictured below.



Reproduced with kind permission of the Food Standards Agency.

Make sure your child's lunch provides;

- 1-2 portions from the bread or other cereals group
- 1 portion of fruit
- 1 portion of vegetables
- 1 portion of milk or dairy
- 1 portion of meat or fish
- Make foods containing fat/sugar occasional items NOT everyday occurrences!
- Include a non-sugary drink. Water or yoghurt-based smoothies are good choices

Some simple ideas! Why not try ...

Bread/cereal – Different types of bread (e.g. pitta, ciabatta), breadsticks & dip, pasta/rice salads

Fruit and vegetables – Fruit or veggie kebabs, vegetable sticks and dips, salads

Milk & dairy foods – Yoghurts, milk-based drinks or smoothies, cheese and veggie kebab sticks

Meat, fish & alternatives – Use as sandwich fillings, or in salads

Fatty/sugary foods – Fruit muffins, malt loaf, homemade flapjacks/cereal bars, rice pudding

Packed Lunch Do's

- **DO ... let your child help you to choose their lunchbox. A "special" lunchbox will often add to the excitement of making their own packed lunch.**
- **DO ... give your child a choice about what they want in their lunchbox. Just make sure that the options they can choose from are healthy ones!**
- **DO ... let your child help to make their packed lunch.**
- **DO ... plan ahead. A healthy lunchbox can be a reality but you need to plan ahead for the week, write a shopping list and buy only what is on the list!**
- **DO ... try out our lunch box recipe ideas in the "Cooking for Kids" section of the website.**

Packed Lunch Don'ts!

- **DON'T ... let your child give in to peer pressure. Work together to find a "cool" solution!**
- **DON'T ... leave it until the last minute! Give yourself time to make your child's packed lunch so that you can put in a little thought and attention.**
- **DON'T ... give your child the same lunch week-in, week-out. You'd be bored too! Be inventive – use different breads, fillings, snacks etc**
- **DON'T ... fall for the packaging! Just because a product is in a nice, bright, colourful and child-friendly package doesn't mean it has a place in your child's lunchbox!**



