

What's in a wrapper? Quick lunch ideas

Providing healthy lunches that children will eat is often a challenge, try not to always rely on packaged food as these are usually high in salt, sugar or fat and low in the nutrients needed for growth and development.

What about muesli bars and crisps?

Active children can snack on these occasionally although they shouldn't be everyday foods. Choose plain bars that are not coated in chocolate/carob or yoghurt. Fruit rolls contain mainly sugar and stick to the teeth causing decay. Remember **seasonal fruit and vegetables are cheaper than crisps and bars**. Cut fruit and vegetables into bite-sized pieces to make it easier for children to eat e.g. orange quarters, carrot sticks.

Compare the fat and sugar content of these lunches priced from a school canteen menu:

<i>Pie, crisps, cookie and fruit drink</i> Cost: \$6.20	<i>Salad roll, apple, popcorn and flavoured milk</i> Cost: \$4.50
<i>Tsp of fat: 17</i>	<i>Tsp of fat: 6</i>
<i>Tsp of sugar: 13</i>	<i>Tsp of sugar: 6</i>
<i>Calories: 1534</i>	<i>Calories: 620</i>

The salad roll lunch is a much healthier choice and better value for money providing essential nutrients so your child will be alert and ready for learning in the afternoon.

Quick lunch combo ideas

pita bread toasted and cut into triangles with hummus dip tomato quarters pottle of fruit salad plain biscuit	peanut butter sandwich kiwi fruit raisins popcorn
wholemeal cheese and marmite or chutney sandwich grapes fruit biscuits	cheese and crackers leftover pasta salad radishes, fresh peas fruit bun watermelon pieces
spaghetti/creamed corn or baked bean and cheese toasties apple muffin unsalted nuts and raisins	pizza bread custard/yoghurt pottle vege sticks e.g. carrot, cucumber plain muesli bar banana
monkey roll – banana in bread cheese and carrot sticks boston bun pear	filled roll-grated cheese & carrot, lettuce, radish, cucumber, beetroot orange quarters pikelet and jam

Include a frozen water bottle in the lunch box to keep food chilled and fresh; an insulated lunch box is a good idea.

Water is the best drink for children. Sipping on juice and soft drinks contributes to tooth decay, a 600 ml bottle of fizzy drink can provide up to 20 teaspoons of sugar!

Support your school to offer healthy lunch choices.