

Lunchbox Ideas



Good nutrition is necessary for the active growth and development that takes place in early childhood. Good eating habits and a well-balanced diet support children's health and wellbeing, and minimise the risk of illness. Eating habits developed in the early years are likely to have lifelong influence.

Healthy eating in childhood minimises health risks and improves health throughout life. On the other hand, poor nutrition in childhood can contribute to lifestyle diseases such as obesity, cancer, heart disease and diabetes.

The goal of the healthy eating guidelines is to promote offering healthy food choices to children (whether food is provided in the setting or brought from home), while also encouraging children to eat to their own appetites, develop positive attitudes toward selecting food and enjoy eating

Australian Dietary Guidelines

Guideline 1 To achieve and maintain a healthy weight, be physically active and choose amounts of nutritious food and drinks to meet your energy needs.

- Children and adolescents should eat sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally. They should be physically active every day and their growth should be checked regularly.

Guideline 2 Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five groups every day.

- Plenty of vegetables, including different types and colours, and legumes/beans
- Fruit
- Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties, such as breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley
- Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans
- Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives, mostly reduced fat (reduced fat milks are not suitable for children under the age of two years).
And drink plenty of water.

Guideline 3 Limit intake of foods containing saturated fat, added salt, added sugars and alcohol.

- Limit intake of foods high in saturated fat such as many biscuits, cakes, pastries, pies, processed meats, commercial burgers, pizza, fried foods, potato chips, crisps and other savoury snacks.
 - Replace high fat foods which contain predominantly saturated fats such as butter, cream, cooking margarine, coconut and palm oil with foods which contain predominantly polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats such as oils, spreads, nut butters/pastes and avocado.
 - Low fat diets are not suitable for children under the age of two years.
- Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added salt.
 - Read labels to choose lower sodium options among similar foods.
 - Do not add salt to foods in cooking or at the table.
- Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added sugars such as confectionary, sugar sweetened soft drinks and cordials, fruit drinks, vitamin waters, energy and sports drinks.
- If you choose to drink alcohol, limit intake. For women who are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding, not drinking alcohol is the safest option.

Guideline 4 Encourage, support and promote breastfeeding.

Guideline 5 Care for your food; prepare and store it safely.