



10 ideas for a healthy packed lunch

1. For children who don't eat wholemeal bread try to encourage them to be more adventurous by using one slice of white and one slice of wholemeal. Sandwiches can become dull on a daily basis; vary them by using different types of breads such as bagels, rolls, wraps and mini pitta pockets.
2. Choose a protein and vegetable packed filling. Egg mayonnaise with watercress, salmon and cucumber, grilled or roasted chicken or beef with salad and mayonnaise, Mexican tuna with red kidney beans and mayonnaise, humous and red pepper.
3. Tuna, turkey and chicken are great fillings for wraps. Make fajitas out of them by adding some peppers and a little onion to the chicken or mix the tuna with sweetcorn and mayonnaise for tasty tuna roll ups.
4. Homemade pizza is a tasty alternative to the everyday sandwich. Be cautious with shop bought pizzas as they tend to have high levels of sugar and salt.
5. Frittatas offer a break from the norm. Choose from a combination such as cheese and onion, potato and ham/chorizo, cheese and spinach. Chicken, feta cheese, beans, chick peas and tuna are great for mixing with pasta or couscous to make a nutritional salad.
6. During the cold winter months warm food can be very comforting. Use a mini thermos flask for food such as baked beans and soup. Add small pasta shapes or broken spaghetti to the soup to make it more filling.
7. Include carrot and cucumber sticks, cherry tomatoes, celery sticks and red pepper slices. These are excellent with dips such as humous and guacamole.
8. Every lunch box should include at least one piece of seasonal fruit. Apples, pears, satsumas and clementines, grapes, bananas, cherries, peaches, nectarines, or make up a fruit salad using a mixture of fruits. Dried fruits such as raisins, cranberries, apricots and mango help to make up their five a day and are available all year round.
9. Water is the ideal thirst quencher; however fruit juice, skimmed or semi skimmed milk, yoghurt or milk drinks and smoothies can also be included.
10. Keep crisps and biscuits for the occasional home treat; they have little or no nutritional value. Homemade fruits muffins and oat slices are a good alternative.