



Healthy Lunchbox Snacks

Winter holidays are coming to a close and it's time to start thinking about packing those school lunchboxes again. We thought we'd take the opportunity to give you our top lunchbox snack ideas for some inspiration.

1. Fresh fruit and Vegetables

Nothing like some old school fresh fruit and chopped up vegetables to give the kids lots of nutrients and energy to get through their days. Try to mix up the seasonal produce and give lots of colours.

Think outside the square with the vegetables as not all kids like sticks of raw veg. Perhaps consider packing some leftover cooked vegetables from the night before (like broccoli, beans, peas, cauliflower, small cob of corn etc).

Some kids also love legumes like four bean mixes, chickpeas or baked beans. Packing a small container of these beans (or a mini tin directly) is a great nourishing inclusion in the lunch box. If you are packing them into small containers, give the beans/chickpeas a good rinse under cold water first to wash off some of the salty water.

2. Home baked treats

Home baked treats are always better than any processed foods you may get from the stores, and they can also make a fun weekend activity with the kids.

Preparing things like banana breads (using an extra banana instead of sugar), muesli bars/bites (including whole rolled oats as well as lots of different seeds), nut-free bliss balls, muffins or cookies (made using a combination of wholemeal flours, oats, seeds etc)

3. Calcium rich options

Don't forget about the good 'ole dairy options. They are highly nutritious and very filling. Including a cultured yoghurt (ie. Contains probiotics) or a slice of cheese, or even a tetra box of milk are all great inclusions in the lunchbox.

If dairy is not an option due to allergies, include some milk alternative options such as coconut milk yoghurt, soy cheese/biocheese + crackers, homemade sago puddings or chia puddings made using calcium fortified milk alternatives

4. Other bits and pieces

The occasional packaged items can be a good quick grab too. Ideally trying to choose some options which are not too high in fat or sugar, but also do not contain excessive amounts of salt.

Trying to choose packaged snacks that meet the following criteria:

- *Saturated fat – less than 10g/100g are a good choice*
- *Sugars – less than 15g/100g are a good choice*
- *Salt – less than 400mg sodium/100g is a good choice but products with less than 120mg sodium/100g are the best choice*

It is important to check all three of these nutrients when trying to choose healthy kids snacks (or at least snacks that are going to be included in the lunchbox on a daily basis).

For more information, or to make an appointment with a Paediatric Dietitian, please visit www.childnutrition.com.au or call for an appointment on 9527 3810.