



## **10 STEPS TO A GREAT LUNCH WHETHER YOU PACK OR BUY YOUR LUNCH, FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES:**

### **1. Choose fruits and vegetables.**

Fruits and vegetables are like hitting the jackpot when it comes to nutrition. They make your plate more colorful and they're packed with vitamins and fiber. It's a good idea to eat five servings of fruits and vegetables every day, so try to fit in one or two at lunch. A serving isn't a lot. A serving of carrots would be just 10 sticks. A fruit serving could be one medium orange.

### **2. Know the facts about fat.**

Kids need some fat in their diets to stay healthy - it also helps keep you feeling full - but you don't want to eat too much of it. Fat is found in butter, oils, cheese, nuts, and meats. Some higher-fat lunch foods include french fries, hot dogs, cheeseburgers, macaroni and cheese, and chicken nuggets. Don't worry if you like these foods! No food is bad, but you may want to eat them less often and in smaller portions. Foods that are lower in fat are usually baked or grilled. Some of the best low-fat foods are fruits, vegetables, and skim and low-fat milk.

### **3. Let whole grains reign.**

"Grains" include breads, cereals, rice, and pasta. But as we learn more about good nutrition, it's clear that whole grains are better than refined grains. What's the difference? Brown rice is a whole grain, but white rice is not. Likewise, wheat bread contains whole grains, whereas 100% white bread does not.

### **4. Slurp sensibly.**

It's not just about what you eat - drinks count, too! Milk has been a favorite lunchtime drink for a long time. If you don't like milk, choose water. Avoid juice drinks and sodas.

### **5. Balance your lunch.**

When people talk about balanced meals, they mean meals that include a mix of food groups: some grains, some fruits, some vegetables, some meat or protein foods, and some dairy foods such as milk and cheese. Try to do this with your lunch. If you don't have a variety of foods on your plate, it's probably not balanced. A double order of french fries, for example, would not make for a balanced lunch.

### **6. Steer clear of packaged snacks.**

Many schools make salty snacks, candy, and soda available in the cafeteria or in vending machines. It's OK to like these foods, but they shouldn't be on your lunch menu.

### **7. Mix it up.**

Do you eat the same lunch every day? If that lunch is a hot dog, it's time to change your routine. Keep your taste buds from getting bored and try something new. Eating lots of different kinds of food gives your body a variety of nutrients.

### **8. Quit the clean plate club.**

Because lunch can be a busy time, you might not stop to think whether you're getting full. Try to listen to what your body is telling you. If you feel full, it's OK to stop eating.

### **9. Use your manners.**

Cafeterias sometimes look like feeding time at the zoo. Don't be an animal! Follow those simple rules your parents are always reminding you about: Chew with your mouth closed. Don't talk and eat at the same time. Use your utensils. Put your napkin on your lap. Be polite. And don't make fun of what someone else is eating.

### **10. Don't drink milk and laugh at the same time!**

Whatever you do at lunch, don't tell your friends a funny joke when they're drinking milk. Before you know it, they'll be laughing and that milk will be coming out their noses! Gross!