

Make Your Lunch As Healthy As You Can



Lunch is the second most important meal of the day. It refuels your body after a long morning. It gives you energy to be active all afternoon.

Eating a healthy lunch:

- ▶ Gives you the nutrients and energy you need.
- ▶ Helps you think and feel better.
- ▶ Makes you less hungry later.
- ▶ May help keep your weight down.

Don't let lunch become your breakfast

- ▶ Don't skip breakfast. Skipping meals often leads to overeating. That's because you soon get very hungry. Then you may eat RED food or oversized portions at lunch.

Make careful choices if you eat at a restaurant or school cafeteria

- ▶ Avoid RED foods at lunch. Get the school or restaurant menu ahead of time. Plan your choices.
- ▶ Bring your lunch on days when there are few GREEN or YELLOW foods to eat. Pack fruits and vegetables to take. Prepare it the night before so it's ready in the morning.
- ▶ Don't eat from the vending machine. Most of these foods are RED foods, high in sugar and fat. They make it hard to control your weight.
- ▶ Keep healthy snacks in your locker, backpack, or desk at work. That way you can avoid vending machines if you get hungry during the day.
- ▶ Drink low-fat milk or water. Both are healthier than soda, juice, or whole milk.
- ▶ Include a variety of foods from the five food groups.
- ▶ Eat fruit for dessert. Avoid RED food desserts or snacks like potato chips, cupcakes, cookies, and gummy bears.
- ▶ Use lettuce, tomatoes, pickles, and peppers to add flavor to your sandwich. Don't make sandwiches with lots of butter, mayonnaise, cream cheese, or sugary spreads.

Additional resources

- ▶ Eating Smart – Breakfast and Lunch: LC 7
- ▶ Change Your Home to Promote Healthy Eating: Magnetic Memo 8

Suggested activity

Plan two healthy lunches you can take to school or work. Make sure you have these foods at home or ask your parents for help keeping these items on hand.

My notes

1 Limit RED foods 2 Increase GREEN activity 3 Hold Family Meetings 4 Keep Track of Weight



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Especially for the Family Support Person

Why is it so hard for him to eat a healthy lunch at school or work?

- ▶ Schools serve a lot of RED food because that's what young people want. This is one reason so many young people are overweight or obese.
- ▶ He's around people eating RED junk food every day. Eating fruits and vegetables instead of pizza may make him stand out. Or so he may think. And he may want to fit in.

How can I help him make the best choices, even when his friends are not?

- ▶ Review the reasons healthy eating habits are so important.
- ▶ Talk to him about his feelings. Ask him:
 - ▶ How does he feel when his friends eat junk food?
 - ▶ How does it feel having to be careful about his weight and his diabetes?
- ▶ Encourage him to get the support of a few friends. He can't do it alone. He needs your support at home, and he needs support from friends away from home.
- ▶ Help him plan to eat healthy lunches. This may mean taking his lunch sometimes. Make sure he takes food he really likes. That way he won't be so tempted to eat RED foods.
- ▶ Practice ways he can turn down RED food.

What else can I do?

- ▶ Remind him not to skip breakfast. That will only make him want to eat RED foods later.
- ▶ Make sure you serve healthy meals at home.
- ▶ Make grocery lists and shop for the healthy foods you need.
- ▶ Buy fruit and other healthy snacks he can keep in his backpack, locker, or desk at work.
- ▶ Model the eating habits you want to teach him.
- ▶ If he is living away from home, use family meetings to remind him to do these things on his own.

Additional resources

- ▶ Be a Model and a Coach for Healthy Eating: LC 7
- ▶ Change Your Home to Promote Healthy Eating: Magnetic Memo 8

Suggested activity

Help him plan healthy lunches he can eat when he is away from home. Make sure he has foods on hand he can take.

My notes

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