

## What about drinks?

The cheapest, healthiest and most thirst quenching drink for children is plain water. Children also need milk for building strong bones and healthy teeth.

Drinks that are not needed as part of a healthy diet include fruit juice, cordials, soft drinks, sports drinks, flavoured waters, functional waters, large serves of flavoured milk and energy drinks. These drinks can fill children up and lead to a decreased appetite for other foods. They can have high sugar and energy content, which can lead to overweight. They can also damage children's teeth. It is best to provide these drinks only occasionally or on special occasions.

Fluid requirements increase as children get older and vary between individual children. Children need more fluid on hot or humid days, or if they are sweating or physically active.

A growing number of energy drinks are being marketed to children. Energy drinks may contain caffeine or guarana (a herbal source of caffeine). Caffeine can cause harmful health effects and addiction in adults, and the same results are likely in children. These drinks are not recommended for consumption by children.

**Tip** Tap water is cheaper and better for the environment than bottled water.



## Food and drink at school

The Smart Choices Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for Queensland Schools is all about offering healthy food and drink choices to students in Queensland schools. Smart Choices provides guidelines for all situations where food is supplied in the school environment. This includes tuckshops, vending machines, fundraising, classroom rewards and school camps.



## Keep it safe

Food poisoning is very common in Australia. Sometimes the food that makes us sick can look, smell and taste normal. Two key factors in preventing food poisoning are to keep hot food hot and cold food cold. Foods not only taste better at the correct temperature, but they are also safer to eat.

- Tips**
- include a frozen drink or small freezer brick in your child's lunch box
  - pack lunches in a cooler bag or insulated lunch box
  - freeze yoghurt or milk to keep at a safe temperature
  - clean lunch boxes regularly
  - make sure school bags containing lunch boxes are stored in the shade
  - wash hands before preparing and eating food.

## What about physical activity?

Children and young people aged 5 to 18 years need to do at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day, but more is even better! Use of electronic media for entertainment (e.g. computer games, TV, internet) should be limited to no more than two hours a day.

## Need more help and advice?

For further information, contact:

Queensland Health  
13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)  
[www.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.health.qld.gov.au)

Department of Education and Training  
Smart Choices  
[www.education.qld.gov.au](http://www.education.qld.gov.au)

Nutrition Australia  
[www.nutritionaustralia.org](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org)

Queensland Association of School Tuckshops  
[www.qast.org.au](http://www.qast.org.au)

Go for 2&5®  
[www.gofor2and5.com.au](http://www.gofor2and5.com.au)



Queensland Health  
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# Great lunches and snacks for hungry kids



Lunches and snacks play a big part in supplying your child with their daily nutritional needs. Good nutrition can help children to:

- 🍓 build healthy bodies and minds
- 🍓 stay alert in class and be energetic all day
- 🍓 maintain a healthy weight
- 🍓 fight infections.

Breakfast is also essential for children. Some of the lunch and snack ideas in this brochure can be used for breakfast.

Children have periods of fast growth and are generally very active. This means their nutritional needs are high. However, children don't always know what food is best for them – they need to be guided.

Queensland children are generally healthy, but most eat too many unhealthy 'extra' foods like chips, lollies and soft drink. Include important foods like fruit, vegetables and dairy products in lunchboxes. If children don't eat these foods at school, it can be difficult to offer enough at other meal times.

Eating habits are generally formed in early childhood, so give your child the best start by packing a healthy lunch box. Being a good role model yourself will also send a powerful message to your children.

## What should I put in my child's lunchbox?

Healthy eating means choosing a wide variety of foods everyday from the five food groups in the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating. Include at least one item from each of the five food groups in your child's lunchbox for healthy growth and development.

The five food groups and some suggestions for lunchboxes are:

- 🍓 Breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles: Use different types of bread like bread rolls, wraps, pita, flat bread, bagels, foccacias, rice cakes or corn cakes. Try multigrain crackers, or leftover pasta, rice or low fat noodles.
- 🍓 Vegetables, legumes: Add fresh salad vegetables to sandwiches, rolls and wraps. Use in sushi fillings, fried rice or savoury muffins and scones. Add bean mix to salads or pack baked beans.
- 🍓 Fruit: Fresh or tinned in natural juice are the best choices followed by dried fruit. Juice is not needed as part of a healthy diet. Avoid dried fruit bars and straps which can be higher in sugar, lower in fibre and stick to teeth.
- 🍓 Milk, yoghurt, cheese: Low fat varieties are recommended for children aged over two years. Custard and flavoured milk are also dairy foods, but choose smaller serve sizes as these contain added sugar.
- 🍓 Lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts, legumes: Try tuna, egg, sliced lean cold meats, chicken, tinned bean mix, baked beans or peanut butter.\* Avoid fatty meats like salami, devon and chicken loaf.

\* Parents should be aware that there may be students who are allergic to certain foods. Schools should inform their community about ways to reduce the student's risk of exposure to allergy causing foods.



## What about extra foods?

Extra foods are low in nutritional value; high in saturated fat, sugar or salt; can contribute excess energy (known as kilojoules or calories); and can lead to tooth decay and dental erosion. Examples include soft drinks, lollies, deep fried foods, crisps and chips, chocolates, pastry-based foods, cakes and doughnuts.

These foods are not essential for your child's growth and development. It is best to offer extra foods only occasionally or on special occasions.

## Lunch ideas

There are plenty of foods that can add variety and make a healthy and tasty lunch. Try these ideas:

- 🍓 Sandwiches: Vary the bread and the fillings. Some interesting combinations are tuna, corn and sweet chilli sauce; roast vegetables, pesto and baby spinach; chicken, lettuce, grated carrot and mayonnaise; avocado, refried beans, reduced fat cheese and salsa; and baked beans and reduced fat cheese.
- 🍓 Mini pizza: Top half a bread roll, muffin or pocket bread with tomato paste, ham, pineapple, capsicum and onion. Sprinkle with reduced fat cheese and grill until golden.
- 🍓 Rice salad: Add chicken or lean meat, carrot, celery, pineapple or other combinations to left over rice.
- 🍓 Finger salad pack: Combine a selection of meat, reduced fat cheese, egg, vegetable sticks and serve with a bread roll.
- 🍓 Winter warmers: Fill a small flask with leftover vegetable soup, spaghetti bolognese, noodles and vegetables, or stir-fry with rice. Some schools may have a microwave to reheat food.

## Snack ideas

Many children are hungry at morning and afternoon tea time, and some are hungry all the time, especially very active or older children. Encourage nutritious snacks from the five food groups, rather than extra foods. Try these ideas:

- 🍓 fresh or canned fruit, or fruit salad in a tub with yoghurt
- 🍓 crunchy vegetable sticks like capsicum, celery, and carrot with a vegetable-based dip like hummus, salsa, guacamole or eggplant
- 🍓 tub of yoghurt or custard, or a carton of milk (choose reduced fat varieties)
- 🍓 reduced fat cheese sticks or cubes, hard boiled egg, or small tin of baked beans
- 🍓 wholegrain crackers, rice cakes or corn cakes with vegemite, reduced fat cheese or peanut butter\*
- 🍓 homemade muffins or slices with added fruit or vegetables
- 🍓 plain, fruit or savoury scones and pikelets.

