



8 Healthy Lunch Box Ideas



With children heading back to school soon, we are getting a lot of questions from readers who want healthy lunch box ideas that kids will actually eat. I'm sure every parent can imagine the look on little John or Jill's face if they opened their lunch box to see stalks of fresh asparagus or some other healthy options. You can, however, provide a healthy lunch for your child in a way that doesn't make them want to slam the lunch box lid closed. It's time to get creative!

1

Kids simply love variations and surprise. Instead of using the same white bread everyday, try using various kinds of bread, like whole wheat, multi-grain, omega 3, or flax bread. Of course, you don't need to use traditional bread at all to make healthy sandwiches for lunch. You can use bagels, dinner rolls, or fajita wraps too! If possible, choose whole grains for a rich source of fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants.

2

Instead of using processed luncheon meat every day, try creating a healthy lunch idea by using leftover meat from the night before. For instance, try chopping up leftover chicken to make a chicken salad sandwich. You can make practically any kind of sandwich with leftover meat dishes. A teriyaki chicken breast, steak sandwich, or a grilled salmon fillet sandwich can be delicious!

3

Kids love making their own foods, so a burrito or a pita pocket they make themselves can be a fun and healthy lunch option. Prepare shredded vegetables, meat, and sauce, and let the kids assemble their own lunch at school. You control what goes in it and they choose what they like!

4

Kids love dip! Prepare diced or julienned produce to go along with a small container of dipping sauce. Or simply pack easy-to-carry fruit and vegetables like bananas, baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, and grapes. Low fat yogurt and sour cream, hummus, and tzatziki are all healthy dip choices.

5

You can pack processed fruit in the lunch box as a healthy dessert option. Canned fruit cups in water and dried fruit are not as fresh, but they are still healthy and nutritious. Re-package these canned fruits into fancy take-out boxes, like those bento boxes from Japanese restaurants, for fun and visual appeal!

6

Try preparing healthy trail mix as a snack. Mix nuts, crunchy whole grain cereals, and dried fruit such as raisins, apricots and prunes. Just make sure to control the portion sizes!

7

Try kiddie-size yogurts. They provide a good source of protein and calcium. If possible, choose a light-sweetened brand with active live bacterial cultures (probiotics) to maximize its health benefits.

8

Water and milk are the best beverage choices for kids. Another healthy lunch box choice is fortified non-dairy milk in a tetra pack. If you pack a juice box on occasion, make sure to use 100 percent fruit juice. If possible, avoid sugary drinks like fruit drink, fruit punch, and soft drinks.

Source: www.healthcastle.com.
Article written by Gloria Tsang, RD

