

Some useful websites

www.allergyuk.org
www.childalert.co.uk
www.foodlink.org.uk
www.food.gov.uk/healthiereating

Visit the West Wiltshire Food Safety
Team's Website at:

www.westwiltshire.gov.uk/food-hygiene.htm

**The information in this booklet is taken from the
Food Standards Agency website**

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Where people matter



Pre-packed lunches



Here are a few tips for parents and pre-school staff:

Parents

- If sandwiches are made the day before, keep them refrigerated overnight
- Whenever possible, chill food and drink before packing
- Use an insulated cool bag with an ice pack. This will help to keep food safe for longer
- Make sure that your refrigerator is maintained below 8°C
- Do not include any foodstuffs that may cause allergic reaction (eg peanut butter) although your child may not suffer from allergies, their playmates might!
- You may also wish to consider putting healthier snacks in your child's lunchbox, such as fruit instead of crisps

Pre-school staff

- Store cool bags/lunchpacks in a cool dry place, away from sources of heat (eg radiators or direct sunlight)
- Make sure food is eaten within four hours of packing
- Ensure that you educate parents about the dangers of allergies

Pre-packed lunches

Many children now bring their own lunches with them. This information is to help ensure that this food remains at its best quality during the time between preparation and consumption.

As a general rule, the kind of food which is found in packed lunchboxes is mostly “low risk” in terms of food safety (eg crisps or chocolate), and does not need to be kept chilled or refrigerated. But some ingredients are **high risk** (eg cooked meats) and these do need to be kept cool.

Food safety law requires that high risk food should be kept at a temperature below 8 degrees Celsius (8°C), and it is not easy to achieve this without keeping it in a refrigerator.



How can I ensure that my child has a healthy packed lunch?

Eating a variety of foods is important for a balanced diet and also makes it more interesting and enjoyable. But it can sometimes be difficult to make packed lunches varied, interesting and healthy.

About 1/3 of our diet should be made up of starchy foods like bread. Sandwiches are a popular choice for packed lunches. For a healthier option, make sandwiches with thickly sliced bread or rolls, and choose wholemeal varieties.

Low-fat fillings include lean meats like ham or turkey, fish (eg tuna), cottage cheese, edam or mozzarella, and other fillings such as eggs or mashed banana. Try to include plenty of salad but go easy on the mayonnaise. For variety you could use different types of bread like bagels, pitta bread or chappattis.

Other starchy foods that could be included in a packed lunch are:

- pasta
- rice or potato salad
- slices of deep-based pizza topped with lean meat, fish or vegetables
- breadsticks or crackers
- plain popcorn
- scones or malt loaf with a scraping of spread

It is recommended that at least five portions of fruit and vegetables are eaten each day. Eating fruit and vegetables as snacks between meals, as well as part of main meals, can help to achieve this - so include salad and vegetable sticks (eg carrots, celery, cucumber, pepper) in your child's packed lunch.

You could also add fresh fruit or some chopped fruit salad. Dried fruits such as raisins or dried apricots are a good addition to a packed lunch.



Should I include crisps and sweet snacks?

Foods which are high in saturated fat and/or sugar, such as cakes, biscuits, crisps, chocolate and sweets, can be included in a healthy diet but they should make up a relatively small part of the overall diet.

There is no need to cut them out completely, but if they make up a large part of a packed lunch then you should consider replacing them with healthier choices.

Why not include some yoghurt or fromage frais?