

# navigating the lunch line

**We are what we eat :** food is the fuel our bodies run on - shouldn't yours run on the best? Making the right food choices can boost your energy, aid in weight management, prevent colds, virus and disease and promote overall healthy body function and keep you looking and feeling great!

Avoid the afternoon crash that comes from making poor lunch choices. Be sure to eat a balanced, wholesome, energy-packed lunch that will keep you satisfied until dinner.

It is easy to make healthy food choices, no matter which lunch line you may find yourself standing in:

**Make smart decisions about toppings and spreads, which can add unnecessary and empty calories:**

- Load up sandwiches, salads and wraps with fruits and veggies
- Use mustard instead of mayonnaise and choose light salad dressings
- Garnish with nuts and seeds, which are healthy and flavorful
- Skip the cheese and bacon when you can or choose low-fat options like mozzarella or American cheese and turkey bacon

**Go for whole grains:**

- Get the most from your grains by eating them whole. Make sure you're buying not just wheat but WHOLE wheat and other WHOLE grains
- Choose brown rice, whole wheat pasta and whole grain breads and pizza crust

**Forget the frying:**

- Frying foods is the least healthy way to prepare them – ask for your food to be poached, grilled or baked

**Add smart sides:**

- Include vegetables with every meal, especially dark leafy greens and bright colored vegetables
- Try legumes, like chick peas and beans; they pack a protein punch and do not contain the fat and cholesterol found in meat

**Satisfy your sweet tooth:**

- Try fruits on their own or with low-fat or frozen yogurt or ice cream
- Enjoy popcorn, pretzels, graham crackers, gelatin or low-fat puddings
- Drink 100% fruit juices instead of alcohol, caffeinated beverages or sodas

**Eating healthy snacks throughout the day and staying hydrated with plenty of water can eliminate making poor lunch choices and over ordering. Take a few minutes before ordering and try to make the best food decisions possible every time you eat.**



**Superfoods are packed with high levels of the “good stuff” (like vitamins, minerals, fiber, and anti-oxidants) while containing relatively low levels of the “bad stuff” (like fats and sugar). They include almonds, apples, broccoli, blueberries, red beans, salmon, soy, sweet potatoes, vegetable juice and wheat germ.**



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for the kids

Children do not always make the best food decisions for themselves. Educating your children on what foods to eat and which foods to eat only once in a while can be challenging. Young, developing bodies need plenty of whole, natural foods to grow strong and healthy. Packing your children's lunches will ensure they are getting the nutrition they need:

- Include at least one fruit and one vegetable – cut them up into fun shapes and pack with a side of peanut butter or a healthy yogurt based dip. A banana with a message from you written on the peel is sure to draw attention!
- Add lean meats, like turkey or ham or a salmon or tuna salad to whole grain bread. Top with lettuce, tomatoes, pickles – any veggies you can sneak in there!
- Calcium is essential for growing bones. Add low-fat milk, yogurt and cheese cubes. Make sure your kids get the calcium they need.
- Include milk, water or 100% juice. Avoid sending them off with soda.
- Avoid packing commercially processed foods. Opt for homemade oatmeal cookies, nuts and seeds, gelatin, soy or low fat puddings or graham crackers.

**Encourage good eating habits by teaching your kids to choose these types of foods when purchasing snacks or lunches for themselves. And remember....kids tend to learn by example, so make sure you are setting a good one!!**



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