

Pack a Powerful Lunch

Choose the winner!

In this corner...



And in this corner...

Poor Choice

Instant Noodles in Powdered Soup Base

- Deep fried noodles are high in unhealthy saturated fat
- Soup base is very high in salt – the same as eating four single serving bags of plain potato chips
- \$0.25 to 0.33/serving

Convenience Lunch Kits

- Usually more than half the calories come from fat
- High in salt
- Crackers made with white flour provide minimal fibre
- More expensive
- \$2.29 to \$3.69/kit

Cookies Dunked in Icing

- Contain lots of unhealthy hydrogenated (trans) fat
- Both cookie and frosting are high in sugar and calories
- \$0.45 to 0.53/serving

Fruit Rolls

- Contain lots of added sugar and little real fruit
- Can stick to teeth
- \$0.31 to 0.53/roll

Pop

- One can of pop can have up to 10 teaspoons of sugar
- No nutritional value
- \$0.32 to 0.38/can

Powerful Choice

Homemade Soup with Pasta and Vegetables

- Lower in fat and salt
- Vegetables are rich in vitamins
- If instant noodles are eaten as a snack, offer whole wheat crackers, rice cakes or baked tortilla chips as an alternative
- \$0.64/serving

Made-At-Home Lunch Kit

- Pack plastic compartments with whole wheat crackers, lean meat (cut fun shapes with small cookie cutter), cheese, raw vegetables, and fresh fruit
- Lower in fat and salt
- Higher in fibre, vitamins & protein
- \$2.23/serving

Lower Fat Cookies With Yogurt Dip

- Try arrowroots, ginger snaps or animal crackers dipped in vanilla or fruit yogurt
- Yogurt provides calcium to help build strong bones
- \$0.72/serving

Fruit Salad

- Water packed mixtures have no added sugar
- Easier on teeth
- Provides vitamins and fibre
- \$0.57 to 0.70/serving

Milk

- An excellent source of calcium, vitamin D, B vitamins and protein
- Chocolate milk is a healthy, popular choice
- \$0.28 to 0.37/cup (250 ml)

VS

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Poor Choice		Powerful Choice
<p style="text-align: center;">Fruit Drinks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also called punch, cocktail, or blend. May have no more than 1-2 tbsp. of real juice per container • Contains lots of added sugar and few vitamins • \$0.26/serving 	VS	<p style="text-align: center;">Fruit Juice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% pure fruit juice is rich in vitamins • Try a fruit fizzle for variety. Mix together three parts juice to one part mineral water for a bubbly drink • \$0.30 to 0.34/cup (from concentrate)
<p style="text-align: center;">Mini Cheese and Cracker Sandwiches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contain lots of saturated and hydrogenated (trans) fat • High in salt • White crackers offer little fibre • \$0.47 to 0.66/serving 	VS	<p style="text-align: center;">Cheese (unprocessed) and Whole Wheat Crackers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher in fibre and calcium • Lower in fat • \$0.41 to 0.61/serving
<p style="text-align: center;">Sports Drinks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contain added sugar and salt to replace fluid losses • Not necessary during regular daily activities • Suggested use is for prolonged and intense physical activity (>1 hour) • Expensive • \$1.20 to 1.49/serving 	VS	<p style="text-align: center;">Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent fluid replacer • Inexpensive and readily available • A squirt of lemon or lime juice will add extra flavour • Free!

***Please note that prices are approximate and will vary depending on store chain, location, season, etc.*

My kids see the junk food ads on television as well as the cartoon characters and/or the prizes on food packages and ask me to buy the product for their lunch. What should I do?

Explain to your child that the purpose of commercials and fancy food labels is to make people buy things they may not need. Food products that are marketed to children can be high in calories, sugar, fat and salt and very low in good nutrition. Eating too much can cause tooth decay, weight gain, increased risk of disease such as diabetes and high cholesterol as well as cause poor behaviour and decrease concentration for learning.

Ask younger children to look up rather than at eye-level where unhealthy food choices are found.

Teach your child how to read food labels. Ingredients are listed from most to least by weight. Look on the ingredient list for sugar by finding words that end in "ose" (glucose, fructose, etc.) and "ol" (sorbitol, mannitol) and ingredients such as honey, molasses and corn syrup. Practice math by going to the Nutrition Facts table: 4 grams of sugar = 1 tsp. of sugar. Call the Health Unit to sign up for a free supermarket/label-reading tour.

Involve children in cooking, making grocery lists, circling foods on flyers, picking out local vegetables and fruit at grocery stores and farmers' markets, and planting seeds and watching them grow.

For more information, go to www.commercialfreechildhood.org. For a guided tour of *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating*, go to www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide.

Toll-free: 1-866-888-HKPR (4577)



Website: www.hkpr.on.ca

Adapted from *Convenience Food Frenzy!*, Leeds Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit. Produced by Public Health Nutritionists/Dietitians in Ontario, 2003.

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