



Top Tips and Ideas for Packing a Healthy Lunch

6 Tips for Packing a Healthy Lunch

One simple (and affordable) step to better health is to bring a good-for-you lunch from home. Here's how:

1. On the weekend, decide what you will eat for lunch for the week and add it to your grocery list. That way, it's quick and easy to grab healthy choices when you pack your lunch.
2. Consider batch cooking on the weekend. Make a big pot of chili, soup, or a big bowl of whole-grain and veggie salad. These will keep for a few days in the fridge and can be eaten throughout the week for lunch.
3. Take 5 minutes every night (or morning) to pack something healthy for the day.
4. Use portable containers—such as a lunchbox, thermos, and various containers with tight-fitting lids—to pack and take your healthy lunch. Extra-small containers come in handy for single servings of peanut butter or salad dressings.
5. Remember food safety—if you don't have access to a refrigerator to store your lunch, insert a cold pack into the lunch box and be sure to choose foods that will stay fresh and yummy from the time you pack them until it's time to eat lunch.
6. For days you don't have time to pack a lunch, keep some non-perishable healthy options at your desk, such as like light tuna in water, whole wheat crackers, no-sugar-added canned fruit, popcorn, and nuts.

7 Quick and Healthy Lunch Ideas

Here's how to put together good-for-you foods to make a satisfying and healthy lunch:

1. Put a healthy spin on the traditional sandwich. Use 2 pieces of thin whole grain bread and include 2 ounces reduced-sodium lean turkey, hummus, spinach, bell pepper slices, and mustard. Add some carrot sticks and light ranch dressing on the side.
2. Mix together some cooked quinoa, rinsed and drained canned white beans, chopped bell pepper, carrots, and broccoli to make a whole grain and veggie salad. Toss with some olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Add a nectarine or some grapes on the side and a small handful of dry roasted almonds, if desired.
3. Make a tuna salad with canned light tuna packed in water, light mayo, diced celery, lemon juice, and freshly ground pepper. Serve it over greens with an apple and peanut butter on the side.
4. Pack a cup of leftover chili or vegetable soup. Top it with some fresh tomatoes and nonfat plain yogurt instead of sour cream.
5. Fill a whole wheat tortilla wrap with rotisserie chicken, hummus, and greens. For more veggie goodness, add roasted or fresh pepper strips.
6. Pack a hard-boiled egg, a piece of fruit, a string cheese stick, and 5 whole wheat crackers. And bring as many carrot or celery sticks as you like!
7. Throw together a salad with romaine lettuce or spinach and any other nonstarchy vegetables that you like. Top with some cottage cheese, a sprinkle of chopped nuts, and a tablespoon of light salad dressing.