

LOSE THE LUNCHABLES™

Families are busy these days and often save time by using pre-packaged lunches (eg. Lunchables™) for kids. They may be a quick and easy timesaver... but are they a healthy choice for your child?

Nutrition Nibbles

Although pre-packaged lunches are convenient and there are lots to choose from, many contain higher fat and salt items like processed meat, processed cheese dips, deep fried chips and higher fat crackers. In addition, the cost is almost double that of buying individual items and making the alternative... your own pre-packaged lunch.

Lunchables™ alternative: Do it yourself lunch packs

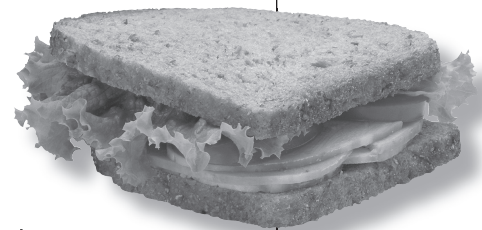
You will need:

- a thermal reusable lunch bag
- an ice pack
- Reusable, dishwasher-safe plastic containers such as Gladware or Tupperware

What to do"

Take note of what your child enjoys in a pre-packaged lunch
Purchase similar healthy "whole foods". eg:

- assorted bread, buns and crackers (*preferably whole grain*)
- unprocessed sliced meat (*from deli or use leftovers*), hard boil eggs if your child likes to eat them
- unprocessed cheese (*purchase shredded or cut from a block of cheese*)
- precut vegetables (*or precut your own, store in ice water in the fridge for a few days*)
- salsa for dipping
- fresh fruit or small containers of canned fruit
- small containers of white, chocolate, or flavoured milk (*not necessary if your child's school has a milk program*)
- Pack foods in reusable containers, in amounts your child will eat. Ask your child to help prepare/pack their lunch... it increases the likelihood that they will eat it!
- Keep meat, cheese and milk cold - place them beside the re-usable ice pack in your child's lunch bag
- Ask you child to bring home all the containers – as well as uneaten food (*ask why those foods weren't eaten and modify with their input*)



Homemade Lunch-ables:

- contain healthier food choices
- taste better
- cost way less than commercial Lunchables™ (about 1/2 as much)
- are environmentally friendly... there is less garbage with reusable plastic containers

Brought to you by Registered Dietitians
at Dairy Farmers of Manitoba.