



ISH PYP Snack & Lunchtime Help Sheet

At ISH we believe healthy lunches and snacks are important for active children. It is important for our families to offer healthy lunch box and snack box choices. Snack and lunchtime at our school is a social time as well as a time for refreshments. We encourage our children to bring their own cultural food and snacks, so they can communicate and interact with others. In this way our children can feel comfortable within the group. We are an international school that celebrates and acknowledges different cultural food and customs.

Eating healthy food helps children concentrate and learn. However, healthy eating changes are not always easy to make. Try to set a good example with your own lunches and snacks. Encourage children to help choose and prepare their own lunch and snack. Your child might like to make a list of the foods they enjoy. Praise your child when they choose healthy foods for their snack and lunch box.

During school hours, children are assisted with washing or wiping their hands before snack and lunch time. Children are not forced to eat or drink, but are encouraged to do so. Individual dietary needs are taken into consideration for snack and lunch time. Children will be made aware that they can have water to drink throughout the day and during periods of physical play and in warm weather, this will be strongly encouraged.

Food Suggestions for snack & lunch boxes:

- **Fruit:** best choices include fresh or tinned fruit. Dried fruit is sticky and high in sugar, so have it occasionally. Best left out of the snack and lunch box are dried fruit bars and “straps”, which are very high in sugar, low in fiber and stick to children’s teeth causing tooth decay.
- **Vegetables:** try vegetable sticks with dip or a small container with mixed vegetables such as cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, capsicum, celery sticks and cucumber. Chips and packets of crisps are best left for parties and special occasions.
- **Milk, yoghurt and custard:** it’s a good idea to sometimes include a small drink of milk (freeze overnight) wrapped in a cloth in the lunch box. Best left out of the snack and lunch box are “dairy desserts” and flavored milks, which are high in sugar.
- **Dips, cheese and biscuits:** pre-packaged or your own homemade versions of cheese and crackers are fine. Children enjoy mini packaged cheeses. Avoid sweet dips such as chocolate spreads. “Oven-baked” savory biscuits are just as high in salt and fat as chips and are best avoided.
- **Different breads and interest:** include a variety of bread, especially if children begin to lose interest in sandwiches. Try bread rolls, pita bread, flat bread, bagels, fruit loaf or buns, foccacias, scones, pikelets, muffins, crumpets, crispbreads, rice or corn cakes.
- **Vary the fillings:** fillings can include vegemite or other yeast extract, cheese (try different types), tuna, egg, sliced cold meats, baked beans, grated carrot and lettuce, chopped roast meat with pickles or chutney, and avocado. Dips like caviar, eggplant, chickpea (hummus), cucumber yoghurt (tzataiki) or spinach also make good spreads. Avoid chocolate spreads, jam and honey, and fatty meats like salami and pork fat.
- **Muffins and cakes:** try making your own muffins and cakes as a great way to include more fruit and vegetables. Examples include sultana, carrot, zucchini, banana or pumpkin. Donuts and creamy cakes are best offered at birthdays and special occasions instead of in lunch boxes.
- **Muesli and “breakfast” bar:** almost all “bars” are too high in sugar to include regularly, but cereal bars may be better for teeth than chewy sticky muesli bars. Try to avoid muesli bars and chocolate bars in lunch and snack boxes, they are usually stuck together with fats and sugars.



Peer Pressure

Food advertising and their friends' food choices will influence children. Remember that not all children go to school with snack lunch boxes filled with chips, sweets and chocolate, despite what your children think and say. It is important to keep offering healthy snack and lunch box choices in a variety of ways, as children learn to eat what is familiar to them. Remember that it may take time to change your child's food preferences to more healthy choices.

Severe Food Allergy

If your child has a severe food allergy, it is important to develop a management/action plan with your family doctor, the school, teacher and class. Our school will notify other parents