



WELLNESS WISE

NUTRITIONAL TIPS FOR PARENTS

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SCHOOL LUNCH: GOOD FOR KIDS AND GOOD FOR YOUR WALLET

As the cost of everything increases – there is one meal that is still a great value: both nutritionally and economically! School lunch is still an incredible bargain at \$1.80 for Elementary School Lunch & \$2.20 for Junior High and High School

School Lunch Includes Five Great Choices:

- Milk – Fat free or 1% - flavored or regular
- Vegetables – From fresh carrot sticks to steamed broccoli
- Fruit – Everything from pineapple to apples- fresh selections daily
- Grains – More whole grain items like rolls or sandwich bread
- Meat or meat alternate – Items like white meat chicken, bean chili, lean beef

Save Money: Eat School Lunch

- On average it costs less to buy a school lunch than to bring a lunch from home.
- The estimated national average of a school lunch from home was \$3.43 last school year.¹

**National School Lunch Average
VS Bagged Lunch**

\$2.08 \$3.43

Total savings = \$243 per year!*

(comparison of national averages)
*When lunch is purchased every day

¹ According to a meal cost analysis by Alice Jo Rainville, PhD, RD, CHE, SNS of Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI

THERE IS SUCH A THING AS A FREE LUNCH (AND A REDUCED PRICE ONE TOO)

- All children at participating schools may purchase meals through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
- Families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level are eligible for free meals.
- Families with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals; these students can be charged no more than 40 cents.
- Contact your school office to fill out a school meal application.

HEALTHY MEALS FEED EAGER MINDS

- Meals served under the NSLP must meet nutrition guidelines based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- No more than 30% of calories can come from fat and less than 10% from saturated fat.
- School lunches provide one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium and calories over the course of one week of menus.
- Students who eat school lunches consume less calories from fat than students who bring lunch from home.
- Compared to lunches from home, school lunches contain:
 - Three times as many dairy products
 - Twice as much fruit
 - Seven times the vegetable amounts
- NSLP participants have substantially lower intakes of added sugars than do non-participants.

For more information contact your district's school food services director at 630-636-2077

