School Lunchbox Survey

conducted by trading standards

TVTSA
THAMES VALLEY
TRADING STANDARDS
AUTHORITIES
School lunch box survey

The importance of the contents of children's lunchboxes cannot be over emphasised. They form a significant part of a child's diet. Recent research* has found that of the 5.5 billion lunches packed for children each year, 92% were too high in fat, salt and sugar.

At lunch time children eat
- Twice as much sugar as they should.
- Close to half their daily salt intake.
- Not enough fruit
- Too much fat

Only a quarter of lunchboxes met the standards set for school lunches.

Many of the foods aimed at children and the annual £4.1 billion lunch box market are significantly high in fat, sugar and salt. Often food not aimed at children can contain less fat, sugar and salt and, could be cheaper than their 'lunch box' equivalents.

Crisps, sweets, snack bars, sugar drinks and chocolate are occasional foods and should form part of a lunch box only a couple of times per week. Fruit, vegetables and water consumption all needs to be increased significantly for optimum health.

To minimise killer diseases,
- Eat Less Fat, Sugar and Salt
- Eat More Fruit, Vegetables
- Drink More Water

* Food Standards Agency Lunch Factfile
Over 90 foods that are marketed as being suitable for children’s lunchboxes were sampled and analysed.

The foods were checked for the amounts of salt, sugar and fat they contained.

Our survey found that the levels varied considerably even in foods that on the face of it were very similar. This highlights the need to check nutrition panels carefully.

Maximum quantities for the total fat, sugar and salt at any given meal have been set and these are listed in the table below.

The values for fat, salt and sugar relate to 7-10 year olds and increase marginally up to 13 years of age:

* Source: Caroline Walker Trust
** Source: Food Standards Agency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fat*</th>
<th>Sugar*</th>
<th>Salt**</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21.7g</td>
<td>16.3g</td>
<td>1g (not more than 5g of salt a day or not more than 2g of sodium a day)</td>
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RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM QUANTITIES PER MEAL 7-10 YEAR OLDS

Did you know...
Sodium = Salt

Often the level of salt is not indicated on the label. To find out the amount of salt in a food multiply the sodium value by 2.54

Slowly reduce the amount of salt you add to food—or simply don’t add any!
On analysis we found....

Cheese Snacks

- Blue Parrot Café Cheese Spread Triangles had **3.53g of salt per 100g**. The product had **31% fat**.
- Cheese strings had **1.9g of salt per 100g and 24% fat**.

The maximum recommended amount is not more than 1g of salt in total at any meal.
The maximum recommended amount is not more than 21.7g of fat in total at any meal.

Snack Packs

- Dairylea lunchable Turkey Stack’ems had **2.8g of salt per pack 2.43% salt**.
- Laughing Cow Cheese Dippers had **0.6g of salt per pack 1.6% salt**.

The maximum recommended amount is not more than 1g of salt in total at any meal.

Sandwich Fillers

- Tesco Cheese and Spring Onion Sandwich Filler had **51% fat**.
- Princes Fresco Chinese Vegetable Deli Filler had only **1.5% fat**.

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