

# FOOD & FITNESS

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

## SCHOOL LUNCH: GOOD FOR KIDS AND GOOD FOR YOUR WALLET

As the cost of everything increases, one meal is still a great value - both nutritionally and economically! School lunch is an incredible bargain as the national average is \$2.08. Last year the estimated national average of a school lunch brought from home was \$3.43.

Standards for school lunches require meals contain no more than 30 percent of calories from fat and less than 10 percent from saturated fat each week. 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, and seven times the vegetable amounts.

As one of USDA Child Nutrition programs, school breakfasts and lunches are prepared and served by those with training in food safety. Each district is required to have a food safety plan based on a system of food safety control. School meal programs are the only foodservice sector required by law to use such a plan.



School lunches are still an incredible bargain!

### DEAR RISK REDUCER

Costs when eating out include both the cost of the food and labor. Keep meals simple and easy and save money by eating at home.

Check out *Fast Food for Busy Families* at [www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/activity/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/activity/)

Prepare double or triple batches of recipes to have available when you are in a hurry.

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Make a list of food that can be prepared quickly and keep ingredients on hand.

Try the recipes in *Healthy Meals in a Hurry* (PM 2035) available for \$2.50 from ISU Extension county offices.

Healthily Yours,  
Barbara Anderson  
ISUE Nutrition and Health Field Specialist

## FREEZING TOMATOES

Preserve some of summer's bounty by freezing tomatoes for use in seasoning or cooking. Select firm, ripe



tomatoes with deep red color. Wash and dip in boiling water for 30 seconds to remove skins. Core and peel. Freeze whole or in pieces. Pack into containers leaving 2-inch headspace. Seal and freeze.

Stewed Tomatoes - Remove stem ends, peel, and quarter ripe tomatoes. Cover and cook until tender, 10 to 20 minutes. Place pan with tomatoes in water to cool. Pack into containers, leaving headspace. Seal and freeze.

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## IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY University Extension

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## DINING OUT DANGER ZONES

Large meat entrees pack calories - 12 oz. Prime rib has 1,445 calories. Choose fish or chicken or a small meat appetizer or share larger portions with someone.

An unlimited bread basket is a big source of calories, especially when you are hungry. Keep in mind there are around 77 calories per ounce for bread, not including butter!

Huge portions sabotage you. Consider this meal made of all large-sized portions: Whopper with cheese and mayo - 850 calories, large fries - 500 calories, large soda - 330 calories for a grand total of 1,680 calories. Choose a regular sized burger and pair with a salad with dressing on the side and diet soda or water to reduce the calories per meal to about 415.

All-you-can eat buffets invite stuffing of high-fat/calorie items. The greater variety of foods offered, the more calories consumed. Choose an all-you-can-eat salad bar and go low fat!

Going out hungry invites stuffing. Eat a small low-fat snack like fruit before you go out. You will make better choices and won't overeat.

Large desserts and baked items are tasty but usually have 500-1,000 calories per serving. Instead of indulging, choose a lower calorie dessert like fresh fruit or a small scoop of ice cream. Sharing a dessert is also a good option.



## COSTLY CONVENIENCE FOODS



Spend Smart.  
Eat Smart.  
Convenience foods are all around us. It is not necessary to pay a premium for convenience.

You can save a lot of money on groceries by

washing lettuce, peeling carrots, slicing cheese, and chopping onions. People often underestimate the amount of money they are spending for convenience and overestimate how much time they are saving.

Foods lose freshness and nutrients when pre-washed and processed. Bagged lettuce

that weighs 11 oz. is often sold at \$1.59-\$1.99 but costs up to \$2.90/lb. that way. Green and purple lettuce sold at \$1.50 per bunch weighs about 2 pounds. That makes it close to \$0.75/lb.

You can spend \$3.00 on a liter of ice tea or you can make your own for about 10 cents worth of tea bags. A pasta salad kit that contains about 80 cents worth of macaroni and seasonings may cost \$3.50. A quick look through a cookbook or a few minutes on the Internet will yield a recipe you could try instead.

Chips, pop, and sweets are costly convenience foods. Also remember they don't add nutritional value to your diet. Spend smart and eat smart by buying nutritious treats like nuts, sunflower seeds, and dried or fresh fruit.