

Healthy Meals in Schools Programme

Guidelines

The following criteria apply to all the food and beverages sold at the canteen and café for the entire school population, which includes the students and the staff. They are also applicable to all the vending machines in the school.

1. Food in the four food groups
 - (1) Brown rice and wholemeal bread¹
 - (2) Fruit: At least half a serving
 - (3) Vegetables: At least two heaped dessertspoons
 - (4) Meat and alternative protein food²shall be made available in every main meal³.

Self-service of fruit is acceptable.

2. Serve wholegrains:
 - a. Rice/porridge: At least 20% of unpolished rice, e.g. brown rice mixed with other rice of choice.
 - b. Noodles: 100% of unpolished noodles* where applicable by January 2020, e.g. 100% wholegrain yellow noodle to be served in a dish
*(*To assist vendors to include wholegrain noodles gradually, vendors serving noodles must include 20% of unpolished noodles from January 2019, and increase incrementally till January 2020 e.g. 20% wholegrain yellow noodle mixed with regular yellow noodle)*
 - c. Bread: Only wholemeal/wholegrain bread shall be used to prepare sandwiches.
 - d) Instant noodles: Use only those with the Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS).
3. Use skinless poultry and lean meat when preparing food.
4. Deep-fried food, pre deep-fried food upon purchase (e.g. pre deep-fried chicken nuggets and pre deep-fried French fries) and preserved food (e.g. sausages, ham, luncheon meat⁴, preserved vegetables and preserved eggs) shall not be sold.
5. When high-fat ingredients (e.g. coconut milk/cream, cheese, mayonnaise and cream) are used, half or more of the required amounts of such ingredients shall be replaced with reduced-fat alternatives (e.g. reduced-fat evaporated milk, reduced-fat cheese, reduced-fat mayonnaise and reduced-fat cream).

Use cooking oil with the Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS) in food preparation.

Butter, lard, hard margarine, ghee and shortening shall not be used.

¹ Examples of food in the 'brown rice and wholemeal bread' food group are brown rice, wholemeal noodles, wholemeal pasta and wholemeal bread.

² Examples of food in the 'meat and alternative protein' food group are chicken, fish, lentils, beans and tofu.

³ Examples of main meals are economic rice, fried rice, noodle soup and fried noodles.

⁴ Sausages, ham and luncheon meat that meet the following nutrition criteria are allowed to be sold in schools: <450mg/100g sodium, <10g/100g total fat and zero nitrite.

6. Gravy/sauce/oily or salty soup shall not be served unless upon request. When requested, do not serve more than two dessertspoons of gravy/sauce/oily or salty soup. This criterion is not applicable to noodles and pasta.
7. Stalls selling snacks shall only sell homemade snacks (e.g. salad and sandwiches) with the sugar content equal to or less than one tablespoon (15g) per serving⁵, or commercially prepared products with the HCS or HCS-equivalent⁶.
8. Sale of drinks and desserts with less sugar:
 - a) For commercially prepared sweetened drinks and commercially packed drinks such as canned and bottled beverages, the sugar level shall follow the table below, or refer to the list of drinks allowed for sale in schools at the HPB's Healthy Meals in School Programme website⁷.

Types of drink	Sugar level (per 100ml)
Asian drinks / Ready-to-drink tea	< 6g
Juice drinks	< 6g
Carbonated drinks	< 7g
Sports drinks	< 6g
Dairy / Soya / Malted	< 6g (added sugar)
Yoghurt / Cultured milk drinks	< 7g
Pure fruit & vegetable juices	< 12.5g (no added sugar)

- b) Drinks, including commercially packed drinks and freshly brewed/squeezed beverages such as homemade barley and fruit juice, can only be sweetened with sugars. Non-sugar substitutes such as sugar alcohol (e.g. sorbitol and xylitol) and intense sweeteners (e.g. acesulfame K, sucralose and aspartame) are not allowed⁸.
 - c) At least 10% of all the commercially prepared drinks and commercially packed drinks sold in the school shall be calorie-free (e.g. bottled water).
 - d) For homemade drinks and desserts (e.g. barley, coffee, tea, green bean soup and soya bean pudding),
 - the sugar content shall be equal to or less than 6g/100ml
 - solid ingredients (e.g. canned fruit in syrup, "pearl"/"bubble", chin chow and sago) that are sweetened shall not be used.
 - e) No sweeteners (e.g. syrup, sugar and honey) shall be added to homemade fruit juices or freshly brewed/squeezed drinks.
9. To promote the message that water is the healthiest and to encourage students to opt for water as their preferred choice of drink, each school must have at least two working water coolers⁹ within the canteen area.

⁵ Per serving refers to a typical serving portion of the homemade snack.

⁶ HPB shall verify if snacks without the HCS are HCS-equivalent by checking the product nutrition information panel of product specifications from suppliers.

⁷ <https://www.healthhub.sg/live-healthy/511/Healthy%20meals%20in%20schoolhm>

⁸ The aim is to cultivate a palate for less sweet drinks among the youths. We recognise that sweeteners may condition our palates to demand for sweet food and drinks in our diet, which may lead to excess calorie and sugar intake. Therefore, drinks containing non-sugar sweeteners are disallowed in schools.

⁹ Schools shall ensure that water coolers and proper hygiene around them are regularly maintained, and that the water flow rate and temperature are conducive for drinking.