

## Tips for Preparing Lunch Boxes

There are many restaurants in Hong Kong where different cuisine can be found. Eating out becomes the daily habit of wage earners in Hong Kong as restaurants are easily accessible. However, it is challenging to find healthy dishes with a good combination of flavours, aromas and presentations when dining out. Particularly, dishes served in fast food shops, Chinese style tea restaurants or Chinese restaurants are often high in fat or salt, which may not comply with the healthy eating principles. In recent years, the public are increasingly aware of the importance of healthy eating so that some wage earners pack lunch to work. Below are some tips for preparing lunch boxes so that wage earners can eat healthily.

### Tip 1: Pay attention to the ratio of food portion

The Department of Health (DH) recommends that each main meal should contain grains such as **rice and noodles**, **vegetables** and **meat, fish, egg and alternatives** in the ratio of **3:2:1** by volume (see diagram on the right). It is advisable to increase your dietary fibre intake by choosing whole grains such as red rice and quinoa.



### Tip 2: Vegetables is essential

The DH suggests that adults should consume at least 3 servings of vegetables on a daily basis (1 serving refers to half a bowl of cooked vegetables or 1 bowl of raw salad vegetables). It is recommended to consume a minimum of 1 serving of vegetables during lunch as the target. Consume adequate amount of vegetables to obtain various nutrients, increase satiety and reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases such as hypertension and cardiovascular diseases.

### Tip 3: Choose low-fat meat and alternatives while adopt low-fat cooking methods

It is recommended to choose lean meat and alternatives such as pork tenderloin, skinless chicken fillet, sirloin, beef shank, fish fillet and dried bean curd. Avoid cooking methods such as deep-frying, braising and shallow frying as the aforementioned methods would elevate the fat content of food. It is advisable to use healthier cooking methods such as blanching, steaming, grilling and baking.

### Tip 4: Avoid mixing food items with sauces

Sauce, gravy and salad dressing would increase the calories and even the fat and salt content of dishes. Changing the habit of mixing rice with sauces to reduce the excessive intake of fat, salt, and sugar.