

CAN WE AFFORD TO EAT HEALTHY FOOD?



Feedback we are getting from concerned students, teachers, parents, canteen and school food service staff is that prices of healthy foods are sky-rocketing and it is becoming more difficult to eat well. So we put on our detective hats and went shopping to see for ourselves.....and indeed we found that prices have increased – and not just the healthy food. Food in general is expensive – and it doesn't help when our spare cash is often absorbed by the rising cost of other essentials such as petrol.

For this issue of Healthy Nibbles we have focused on snacks and what we did find, however, was that it is the same price or less in some cases to select the healthy choices compared to those that are packaged and highly processed – so why not take these options.

To start with, and to help you get your 5+A Day we looked at the fruit and vegetables which range in price depending on season – kiwifruit 20c, carrots 22c, mandarins 27c, bananas 35c, pears 40c, apples 50c and canned fruit 50c per serve with 3 serves per can. Of course, fruit may not fill you up after school when you are ravenous but makes a good, cheap snack between meals to keep your nutrients up.

It is common for older students to stop at the dairy for snacks after school. A well known local dairy sells pies for \$2.50 and 1.5l fizzy drink for \$2.50 also or the local fish and chip shop sells one fish and a scoop for \$3.20 or a burger for \$2.70 – “Not that expensive!”, you might say but think how it adds up if you spend like this several days a week. If you went home and made your own snack it is much cheaper. Some options are bread at 5c a slice, pita pockets at 31c each and wraps at 61c each and fill them up with some shaved ham and salad vegetables for just over a dollar. And, when it comes to drinks, even if you buy your first one so you have the sipper bottle – water is always delicious and free straight from our taps.

Sweet biscuits are particularly expensive for such a small serving size with Toffee Pops and Squiggles at 28c per biscuit. For a more substantial snack try a sweet sandwich with bread at 5c per slice, a pikelet at 36c or a crumpet at 21c. Another sweet snack is dairy food at 99c a pottle compared to fruit yoghurt, of which one brand is usually on special at 50c a pottle.

Overall – we agree with your concerns – it can be difficult to afford the foods you would like, whether they are healthy or not! But, whatever your budget, wouldn't it be better to spend what you have on the healthy options if they are similar prices or less than the others – your body deserves it!

We would be interested in your feedback on this especially if you have some favourite healthy snacks!

Healthy Nibbles

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Authorised by: Nutrition and Physical Activity Team
For more information visit: www.cph.co.nz

Canterbury

District Health Board
Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha