

HEALTHY MEALS IN SCHOOLS PROGRAMME (HMSP)

GUIDELINES

The following criteria apply to all food and beverage sold in school canteens, cafés and vending machines serving both staff and students.

1. Food in the four food groups shall be made available in every main meal¹:
 - (1) ²Brown rice, wholegrain noodles or wholemeal bread
 - (2) Vegetables: At least two heaped dessertspoons
 - (3) Meat and alternative protein food³
 - (4) Fruit: At least half a serving (optional if fruit is served at any time during the school day e.g. during assembly, snack break, etc)

Self-service of fruit is acceptable.

2. Serve wholegrains:
 - a. Rice/porridge: Use at least 20% of unpolished rice, e.g. brown rice mixed with other types of rice.
 - b. Noodles⁴: Serve only wholegrain oriental noodles⁵/instant noodles from January 2020.
 - c. Bread: Use only wholemeal/wholegrain bread to prepare sandwiches.
3. Use skinless poultry and lean meat when preparing food.
4. Deep-fried food, pre deep-fried food (e.g. pre deep-fried chicken nuggets or pre deep-fried French fries) and preserved food (e.g. sausages, ham, luncheon meat⁶, preserved vegetables or 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).

Only fats and oils (e.g. cooking oil, margarine) endorsed with the Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS) are allowed in food preparation.

¹ Examples of main meals are economic rice, fried rice, noodle soup and fried noodles.

² Examples of food in the 'brown rice and wholemeal bread' food group are brown rice, wholemeal noodles, wholemeal pasta and wholemeal bread.

³ Examples of food in the 'meat and alternative protein' food group are chicken, fish, lentils, beans and tofu.

⁴ For spaghetti, minimum 20% of the wholegrain variant must be included.

⁵ Examples of oriental noodles include yellow noodles, kuey teow, and bee hoon.

⁶ 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 no nitrite.

6. For rice dishes, gravy, sauce or soup shall not be served unless upon request. When requested, do not serve more than two dessertspoons or one tablespoon of gravy/sauce/soup.
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 serving⁷, or commercially prepared products with the HCS or HCS-equivalent⁸.
8. Sale of drinks and desserts with less sugar:
 - a. Only commercially prepared sweetened drinks and commercially packed drinks such as canned and bottled beverages that meet the sugar level shown in the table below are allowed for sale in schools. (Please refer to the Health Promotion Board’s HMSP webpage⁹ for the list of drinks allowed for sale in schools.)

Common Categories of Drinks Sold in Schools	Sugar level (per 100ml)
	With effect from 1 May 2021*
Sweetened beverages	
Non-carbonated drinks/ Asian drink	≤5g
Isotonic drinks	≤5g
Juice drinks (at least 10% fruit juice)	≤5g
Carbonated drinks	≤5g
Juice drinks	≤5g
Fruit, fruit and veg juices	≤5g
Dairy/ creamer-based drinks	
Malted or chocolate drink	≤5g
Cultured milk drink/ yogurt drink	≤5g

**In support of nation-wide efforts to reduce sugar intake from sugar-sweetened beverages (SSB). Beverage manufacturers will reformulate their products in accordance to the measures as summarised in the table above. More information can be found on HMSP webpage.*

- b. Drinks, including commercially packed drinks and freshly brewed/squeezed beverages such as homemade barley and fruit juice, can only be sweetened with sugar. Non-sugar substitutes such as sugar alcohol (e.g. sorbitol and xylitol) and intense sweeteners (e.g. acesulfame K, sucralose and aspartame) are not allowed¹⁰.
- 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 5g/100ml.
 - solid ingredients (e.g. canned fruit in syrup, “pearl”/“bubble”, chin chow and sago) that are sweetened shall not be used.

⁷ Per serving refers to a typical serving portion of the homemade snack.

⁸ HPB shall verify if snacks without the HCS are HCS-equivalent by checking the product nutrition information panel of product specifications from suppliers.

⁹ <https://www.hpb.gov.sg/schools/school-programmes/healthy-meals-in-schools-programme>

¹⁰ 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.

- e. No sweeteners (e.g. syrup, sugar and honey) shall be added to homemade fruit juices or freshly brewed/squeezed drinks. On average, freshly squeezed fruit juices contain 8g of sugar/100g. Therefore, stall owners must dilute their fruit juices with water. Stall owners could add 1/3 cup of water or ice to 2/3 cup freshly squeezed fruit juice. Please see Annex for visual examples
9. To encourage students to opt for water as their preferred choice of drink, each school must have at least two working water coolers¹¹ within the canteen area.

¹¹ Schools shall ensure that water coolers are regularly maintained to ensure that water flow rate and temperature are conducive for drinking, and that proper hygiene around water coolers is maintained.

ANNEX:

Depending on your method of preparation, below methods are acceptable.

Method 1



2) Then fill to the top of the cup with freshly squeezed fruit juice

1) Fill 1/3 cup of water or ice

Method 2



2) Fill rest of the cup with water or ice

1) Fill 2/3 of cup with freshly squeezed fruit juice