

FOOD ON THE GO / LUNCHES

August 2010 We talked about lunches, and with all contributing, came up with a lot of good ideas for lunches and eating on the go. It is so great to share ideas – all of us learn so much!

Use the lunch size plastic containers to place leftover in and bring lunch from home. Also good for fruits, veggies. Someone mentioned they found some great small containers at Target (in the school supply area) that have a freezer “pack” right in the lid so you can just freeze the lid, then when you are ready to go place your food item in the container and click on the lid and your food will stay chilled and fresh until lunch!

Make extra when preparing dinner – plan to put together a couple containers to put into your freezer to pull out and bring with you for lunch.

Keep some of the good snack bars handy ~ in your purse, desk drawer, etc. Recommended were Nature Valley Granola Bars by General Mills (peanut and almond flavor), Wonder Bar.

String cheese.... or.....

String cheese with lunchmeat rolled around it!

Apple packets

Cheese and crackers

Fresh veggies

Quaker Rice Cakes (maybe topped with peanut butter)

Thai Kitchen soups (add water and heat)

Can of Dinty Moore

Small cans of V-8 Juice or Meijer brand vegetable juice

Hormel sandwich meat

Use the cheese packet from Kraft Macaroni and Cheese and mix with your gluten-free pasta.

Aldi has lunchmeats that are labeled gluten free

And of course, sandwiches as the bread that is available now is getting better and better. Have you tried the Udi's bread?

Or the Rudi's? Pretty good!

When eating out you can bring along your sandwich bread and just order the meat – make your own sandwich right at your table. (But you don't want to send your bread into the kitchen!) Coco Charlotte was mentioned as a bakery that has good sandwich rolls. Coco Charlotte is a gluten-free bakery on 32nd Street near Breton. Some of Coco Charlotte's baked goods can also be found at Forest Hills Foods grocery store.

When stopping for a quick bite: Uccello's has a gluten-free menu, as does Chipotle's, Olive Garden, Outback Steak, Ruby Tuesday's. ABC Pizza in Lowell offers gluten-free pizza. Some other great quick-stop restaurants are Boston's for pizza (on the Beltline by Celebration Cinema North), Noodles (also on the Beltline), Vitale's for pizza (not all their locations – call first), Red Robin, Wendy's, Chili's. Just always be sure & be safe – ask to speak with the manager and explain you need a gluten-free meal. Don't be afraid to ask if the kitchen is using safe practices – clean gloves, clean pans, utensils, etc.

Meals on the Go

August 2009 There were a lot of great suggestions regarding eating meals on the go... eating “picnic style”! Local grocery stores (like Meijer and D & W) carry Hormel Natural Choice meats. They are already cooked and great to take with you. Also Meijer brand packaged lunchmeat is gluten free.

Carry along the small containers of fruits such as applesauce, and of peanut butter, etc. There are easy to open and heat containers of soups. Try carrying along snack bars (someone mentioned you can purchase in bulk at Costco). Bring along a box of dry cereal in the car for small children to munch on. Another good idea: wrap lunchmeat around a cheese stick. Make your own mix of dried fruit, cereal, mini marshmallows, and nuts. Take along small cans of V-8 for a healthy, filling beverage. Make a lettuce wrap with an avocado/tomato/meat filling.

If you are traveling, hotels usually have a microwave you can use. Put your favorite gluten-free friendly fast-food place into your GPS – Nancy Carlson mentioned she keeps Wendy's on her GPS! Also search the internet to see if there is a gluten-free or celiac support group in the city you will be visiting. They can be a great help in locating restaurants, grocery stores. Also put gluten-free restaurants and the city name into your search window.

We heard at a previous meeting that Brick Road Pizza near downtown Grand Rapids offers gluten-free pizza and now JT's Pizza – their Cascade location - is offering gluten-free pizza on a trial basis. And as always, you may want to talk with the manager when you are trying out a new restaurant to make sure you will be eating "safe".

Campbells has methodically gone through and revised their list of which of their products are gluten free as of July 2009. You can check out their list at their website: campbellswithoutgluten.com.

We have heard that Starbucks is already starting to quietly discontinue the gluten-free Valencia Cake they carried on a test basis. Apparently, there was not enough of a demand, or they did not promote it so that people knew it was there.

April 2008 The topic was "*Food On The Go*" and there were some really good ideas from our group ~ ~ everything from packing lunches to traveling. Did you know the Slurpy's at 7-11 stores are gluten free? Some great suggestions for eating out in downtown Grand Rapids (and yes, there is a place in downtown that serves not just one - but your choice of gluten-free beer! Hmmm, how did we get on that topic!) Several people brought their recommendation of a favorite healthy protein/snack bar which is a great item to tuck into your lunch, or keep in your desk or purse. And another great idea is with the Quaker Mini Rice Cakes..... using those for the "graham cracker" part of a S'More when you are roasting marshmallows at the campfire this summer.