



## Alfred I. Dupont Hospital for Children – Wilmington, DE Not Your Average Kids' Meal

Alfred I. Dupont Hospital for Children (AIDHC) knows who their primary customer is—kids! Every day, their cafeteria offers a special meal with kid-friendly choices that taste good and fuel growing bodies. It's one of the many ways they cater to the health and well-being of kids both inside and outside their hospital doors.

### What Does Healthy Look and Taste Like?

To be featured on the healthy kids' menu, the meal has to appeal to kids' tastes and meet a healthy standard. AIDHC partners helped to develop these evidence-based guidelines that hospitals could use to identify a healthy kids' meal:

- Meal provides 500 calories or less
- Less than 10% calories from saturated fat
- 0 grams trans fat
- Less than 600 milligrams sodium

AIDHC recognized early on that the featured kids' meals couldn't just be about the numbers; the meal had to taste good and offer something that kids recognize. They began by offering a healthy kids' menu which included a sandwich on whole grain bread, a fruit or vegetable, and a yogurt or milk. Their wellness team has created a plan to continually expand these offerings at each station in the cafeteria. This will make it easy for kids and parents alike to find healthy choices that are also kid-friendly!

### Tips for Healthy Kids' Meals

- Make half the grains whole
- Vary protein choices provided
- Choose foods and drinks with little or no added sugars
- Offer skim or 1% milk
- Include a fruit and veggie side item
- Allow 'big' kids (anyone older than 12) to purchase these smaller portion meals

### Bringing Attention to Healthy Kids' Meals

Although AIDHC already had a health kids' meal in place, it was often overlooked. In order to get more parents and kids to choose the healthy meals, AIDHC uses the following marketing strategies:



Photo: Grab-n-go fruit and granola bars at the check-out entice visitors to make a healthy choice.

- List healthy options on the menu board FIRST
- List nutrition information (calories, fat, etc.) on the menu board
- Include healthy choices as part of your combination meals

**"I am proud to say creating a healthier food environment for our patients, families, and associates was the first chapter in creating an overall healthier hospital environment. Now there are many other areas in the hospital that want to contribute in creating a healthier hospital."**  
—Joe McLaughlin, Director of Nutrition Services