

The Eco-friendly Lunchbox

During the school year, packing lunches is part of many parents' daily routines. Whether or not the content of the meals will actually be consumed by their child is often a worry.

But today's parents have another concern—whether the lunchbox, thermos and food packaging they purchased for their child are safe and healthy. According to a recent policy statement by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), parents should avoid products that contain:

- Bisphenol A (BPA), which is used to

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line metal cans and harden plastic containers,

- Phthalates, which make plastic and vinyl tubes flexible, and
- Perfluoroalkyl chemicals (PFCs), which are used in grease-proof paper cardboard food packaging.

According to the AAP, BPAs can mimic estrogen and may change the timing of puberty, decrease fertility affect the nervous and immune systems,

as well as increase body fat. Phthalates may contribute to heart disease, increase childhood obesity and affect male genital development, while PFCs may reduce birth weight, fertility and immunity.

But many companies offer products that are free of BPAs, phthalates and PFCs, and they are also good for the environment, as they are reusable or biodegradable. Below are some eco-friendly lunchbox items that natural health product retailers can offer their customers.

Kid Kanteen

Playing outside is serious business. Kleen Kanteen's (Chico, CA) vacuum insulated Kid Kanteen (MSRP \$17.95-\$24.95, 12-oz. bottle) products keep cold drinks cold, while helping youngsters stay hydrated. Like all of the company's products, both its insulated- and single-wall "Kanteens" are free of BPA and phthalates. When it comes to your family's health, Kleen Kanteen isn't monkeying around. The company went beyond regulatory standards for human and environmental safety in consumer products to develop its new finish, Kleen Coat. By eliminating ingredients that adversely affect people and the environment, Kleen Kanteen has created the cornerstone of truly clean reusable products.

For more information, call (800) 767-3173 or visit www.kleankanteen.com.



Squeeze-a-Bowl

This 18-oz. silicone bowl from Oregon-based Silipint is a go-anywhere, use-for-anything, utilitarian serving bowl. From the kitchen to the campsite these bowls are great for snacking, slurping, mixing, pouring and baking, just to name a few. They are durable enough to be thrown around and sturdy enough that they won't tip over or slide off your countertops. They are safe for the dishwasher, microwave, freezer and even the oven up to 450 degrees Fahrenheit. The Squeeze-a-Bowl is made of 100 percent U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved, food-grade platinum cured silicone. It is free of BPA, BPS, phthalates, and other toxins that are commonly found in petroleum-based plastics. Each 18-oz. bowl has an MSRP of \$13.95.

For more information, call (541) 678-5044 or visit www.silipint.com.



Recyclable + Sealable Paper Quart Bag

Finally—a disposable quart bag one can feel good about using! With 50 bags per box (MSRP \$6.49), this box of Lunchskins (Bethesda, MD) is designed to fit perfectly in a kitchen drawer. Remove the peel-away strap to seal in freshness. These durable and

grease-resistant paper bags are 100 percent recyclable and 100 percent home compostable. They are perfect for sandwiches, snacks, treats and much more. Use at home or on the go!

For more information, call (301) 652-3331 or visit www.lunchskins.com.



Seal Cup Trio

Plastic-free and leakproof, ECOLunchbox's (Lafayette, CA) Seal Cup Trio is a three-piece set ideal for packing a variety of foods and keeping them separate. The steel-and-silicone containers are nesting, so you can pack up to a total of five cups of food in the morning and after



you've eaten tote them home compactly by nesting each container inside the other. The Seal Cup Trio (MSRP \$29.99) features non-toxic silicone lids and type 304 stainless containers are free of estrogen-mimicking chemicals commonly found in plastics like BPA, BPS and phthalates. All parts are dishwasher and oven safe (not for use in the microwave). The steel and silicone containers are lighter than glass containers and non-breakable. For more information, call (925) 298-9220 or visit www.ecolunchboxes.com.