

# Healthy Snacking

## for children ages 2 and older

Children are usually active throughout the day, so they often want a snack or meal every 3 to 4 hours. It is important to choose healthy snacks to give children the energy and nutrients they need.

Foods from the grain, fruit, vegetable, protein, or dairy food groups are packed with nutrients and make healthy snacks. Foods like chips, candy, and cookies are not as nutritious. They are usually high in salt, sugar, or fat. It is okay for your child to eat these foods once in a while, but they shouldn't take the place of healthy foods.

Keep nutritious foods at home. This will make eating healthy snacks just as easy as grabbing cookies or chips. Examples of quick, healthy snacks:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cereal bar or granola bar</li> <li>• Air-popped popcorn (minimal salt, canola oil)</li> <li>• Crackers like Melba toast, Saltines, and reduced fat Triscuits</li> <li>• Pretzels – low fat</li> <li>• Toasted cinnamon raisin bread</li> <li>• Rice cakes</li> <li>• Graham crackers</li> <li>• Animal crackers</li> <li>• Baked tortilla chips with salsa</li> <li>• Baked chips</li> <li>• Cereal (dry or with low fat milk)</li> <li>• String cheese</li> <li>• Low fat yogurt</li> <li>• Low fat milk or soy milk</li> <li>• Frozen yogurt</li> <li>• Pudding made with low fat milk</li> <li>• ¼ or ½ sandwich</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hummus with pita or vegetables</li> <li>• Nuts</li> <li>• Sunflower seeds</li> <li>• Peanut butter, almond butter, or soy nut butter (on celery, apple, or crackers)</li> <li>• Beans and tortillas</li> <li>• Soy nuts</li> <li>• Raw vegetables with reduced-fat ranch dressing or yogurt dip</li> <li>• Celery with low fat cream cheese</li> <li>• Fresh fruit</li> <li>• Dried fruit such as raisins, dried apricots</li> <li>• Frozen grapes or melon</li> <li>• Canned fruit in juice</li> <li>• Frozen fruit bars</li> <li>• Fruit salad</li> <li>• Applesauce</li> <li>• Sugar-free Jell-O with fruit</li> <li>• Homemade popsicles</li> </ul>
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Be creative with healthy snacks! Healthy snacks you can make for your child:

- **Cereal Parfait:** Layer low fat yogurt with cereal and frozen berries.
- **Trail Mix:** Mix ingredients like dried fruit, low sugar cereal (like Kix, Shredded Wheat, Cheerios, or Kashi), nuts, and soy nuts with some mini chocolate chips or M & M's.
- **Smoothie:** Blend low fat milk and fruit like bananas and berries (fresh or frozen). Add frozen yogurt to make a fruit milkshake.
- **Rabbit Bag:** Keep cut up fruits and vegetables in small plastic bags in your refrigerator. If you are adding apples, also add orange slices to keep them from turning brown.
- **Pizza Bagel:** Add tomato sauce and low fat cheese to a half of a bagel (or an english muffin). Bake or microwave it until the cheese melts.