

## More tips

- The simplest way to reduce consumption of unhealthy snacks is simply not to buy them on a regular basis.

Children will tend to snack on what is readily available, so stock the fridge and cupboard with healthy snacks and let them make their own choice and develop healthier habits.

- Set limits on snacks like chips, cookies and chocolate. They may taste good but provide few nutrients and tend to be high in calories, fat, sugar and salt. Explain to your child that these are treats for occasional use.



*Apple Slices  
& Nut Butter*

- Limit soft drinks and other sugary beverages as they can interfere with the appetite at meal times.

They are also high in calories and may contribute to excess weight gain, and they can be harmful to teeth.

- Juice should also be limited to one small glass daily (if at all) - encourage your child to eat whole fruit and drink water.
- Do not use snacks as a reward.



*Whole Grain  
Crackers &  
Cheese*

Making your own healthy snacks with your children can be fun!

**National Nutrition Centre  
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**MOTHER & CHILD  
NUTRITION SERIES**

## Snacks

**Healthy Foods for  
Children & Young People**



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## Snack smart!

Snacks are foods and beverages offered between meals. Children should get most of their calories (energy) from their meals but well-chosen snacks can provide additional energy and nutrients, including **fibre**. Fibre helps to prevent constipation.



*Veggies & Bean Dip*

Snack foods and beverages should be low in saturated fat, trans fat, sodium (salt) and added sugar.

Excess sugar can cause cavities (tooth decay) and the extra calories can contribute to overweight and obesity.

Diets high in added sugars, saturated fat, trans fat and sodium may also increase risk of diabetes and heart disease in later life.

## Choosing snacks

Many convenience snack foods are high in calories, fat, sugar and salt.

Although snacks should appeal to the appetite, they should not be selected based on advertising, packaging or taste alone.

If choosing packaged snacks, stick to 100 calorie snacks, two a day max.



*Fruit & Cheese Kebabs*

Juice and other sugary beverages can also interfere with appetite for meals so encourage water - plain, sparkling or flavoured (with no added sugar).

## Timing of snacks

Snacks given too close to meal times can discourage children from eating their meal and may lead to more snacking later on. Allow at least two hours between snacks and meals.



*Cinnamon Popcorn*

## Ideas for nutritious snacks

- ✓ Sandwiches made with whole wheat or multigrain bread
- ✓ Whole wheat or multigrain crackers with low fat cheese, nut butter or a bean dip
- ✓ Whole grain cereals with skimmed or soy milk
- ✓ Nuts or trail mix (in moderate amounts)
- ✓ Skimmed or soy milk beverages
- ✓ Yogurt
- ✓ Fruit: fresh, dried or canned (in water or juice), snack cups or apple sauce
- ✓ A handful of cherry tomatoes or vegetable sticks with a bean dip (like hummus) or salsa
- ✓ Low fat popcorn or baked chips
- ✓ Whole grain muffins, oatmeal cookies, cassava pone, whole wheat coconut bread, banana bread or fruit cake made using recipes with less sugar and fat

To reduce fat when baking, replace margarine or oil in recipes with an equal amount of fruit purée, such as apple sauce or mashed banana.